



Governor's Advisory Committee on Western North Carolina Recovery

November 14, 2025 | 10:00am – 12:00pm

Today's Agenda

Call to Order | *Senator Kevin Corbin, Co-Chair*

Welcome | *President John Boyd, Mayland Community College*

WNC Recovery Updates / *Matt Calabria and Emily Gangi, GROW NC*

WNC Technical Assistance Partnership for Local Governments
| *Dean Aimee Wall, UNC School of Government*

Remarks | *Governor Josh Stein*

Cashflow Challenges for Local Governments / *Rose Vaughn Williams, Executive Director, NC League of Municipalities; Nathan Ramsey, Director, Land of Sky Regional Council; Kevin Leonard, Executive Director, NC Association of County Commissioners; Ryan Cody, Town Administrator, Town of Marshall; Phillip Barrier, County Manager, Avery County*

Next Steps / *Matt Calabria, GROW NC*

Adjourn





WNC Recovery Updates

Matt Calabria, Director, GROW NC

Emily Gangi, Chief Deputy Director, GROW NC



Major recovery efforts underway

Rebuilding Safe Housing

- Residents received \$573M+ in FEMA Individual Assistance
- 6,900 households received temporary housing
- 5,300+ applications received for Renew NC single-family housing program
- 525 homes repaired or replaced by volunteer organizations with \$16M in state funds

Restoring our Infrastructure

- 7m+ cubic yards of right-of-way debris removed
- 7m+ cubic yards of waterway debris removed
- All site assessments (more than 6,500 in total) completed in State's Private Roads & Bridges Program
- \$33.1M in FEMA funds disbursed for private roads and bridges

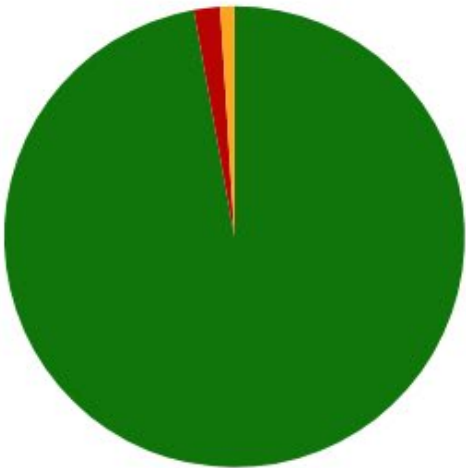
Revitalizing our Economy and Communities

- \$55M in state and philanthropic funded small business grants fully disbursed, with more than 2,100 recipients
- \$414M+ in SBA loans offered
- \$39M+ in disaster unemployment assistance distributed
- \$148M+ in loans to local government units

NC Department of Transportation has reopened more than 98% of state roads (97.2% fully reopened, 1% partially reopened)

Total Incidents
1,520
since beginning of Storm

Total Closures
1,505
since beginning of Storm

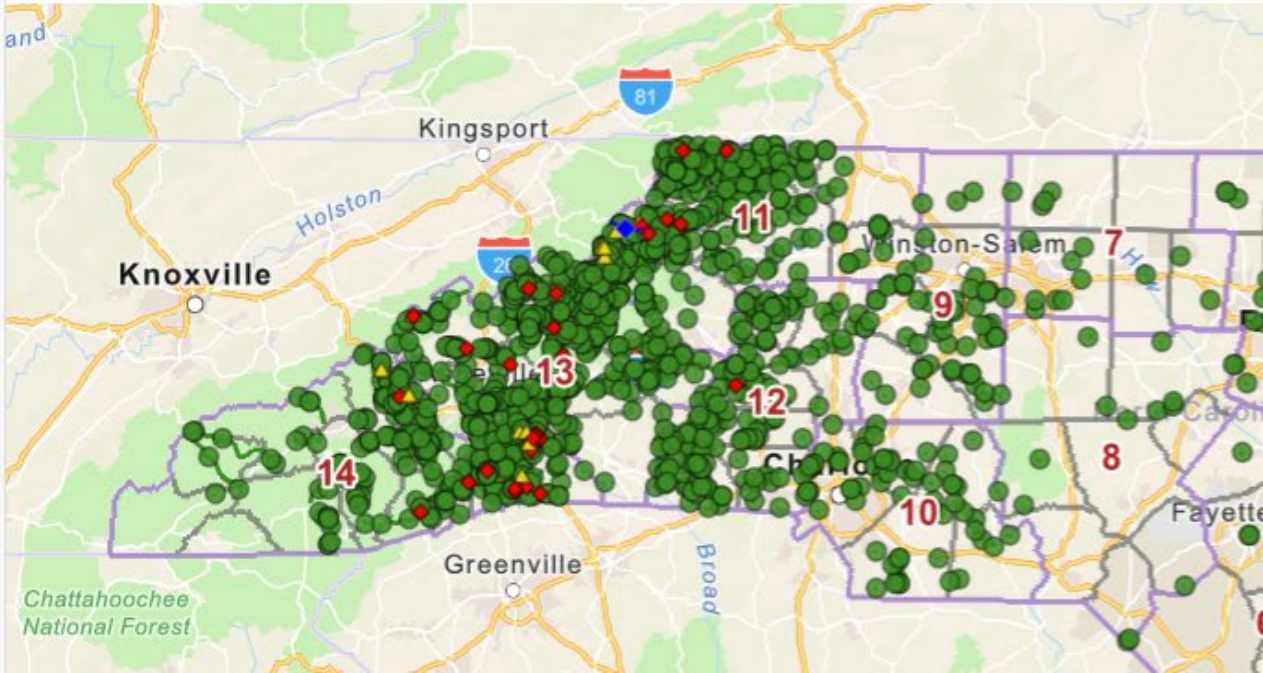


- Fully Open 1,477
- Current Closed 28
- Partial Access 15

1,477
Fully Open

28
Current Closed

15
Partial Access





Selected State Program Updates



Nearly \$14M in NC Small Business Infrastructure Grants Awarded

Part of **\$55M appropriation** from the NC General Assembly to assist small businesses by expediting infrastructure repairs impacting the operation and patronage of small businesses in the affected area.

Nearly \$32 million remaining; max award per project: \$1 million.

Eligibility: Local governments impacted by Hurricane Helene and designated under a major disaster declaration from Helene. Special consideration given to local governments in Tier 1 and Tier 2 Counties.

Timeline: Applications accepted on a rolling basis; awards announced:

- June 30, 2025 – *\$7.3m announced for the Village of Chimney Rock, Town of Clyde, Town of Gamewell, and City of Morganton*
- November 12, 2025 – 19 awards for \$13.8m
- February 28, 2026 (anticipated)
- June 30, 2026 (anticipated)



Second Round of NC Small Business Infrastructure Grant Awardees

City of Asheville

Town of Black Mountain

Town of Bryson City

Buncombe County

City of Hendersonville

Town of Hot Springs

Town of Maggie Valley

Town of Marshall

Town of Spruce Pine



Expanded Eligibility - Local Government Capital Grants Program

OSBM is now accepting applications. The deadline to apply is November 21, 2025.

Award amounts are based on statutory caps per recipient and county. For this reason, grant applications are evaluated and grants awarded after the deadline closes, not on a rolling basis.

- Purpose: To provide local governments and federally recognized tribes in WNC capital grants to repair, renovate or replace infrastructure damaged by Helene.
- Eligibility: Local government units or federal recognized tribes
- Projects that are not eligible for FEMA Public Assistance reimbursement are eligible to apply for a grant; projects are no longer required to be denied by FEMA Public Assistance to be eligible.
- Not-eligible recipients: Non-Profits and Private Organizations



osbm.nc.gov/grants/helene-local-government-capital-grant-program

Recreation Grants Announced

\$26.5 million in matching grants announced by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

The Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program under the federal Department of the Interior, recently awarded more than \$26.5 million in matching grants to support outdoor recreation projects across North Carolina. Two western North Carolina projects were awarded:

The Town of Lawndale in Cleveland County and Cleveland County Water were awarded \$500,000 for improvements to the narrows segment of the Stagecoach Greenway.

Buncombe County secured \$4.5 million for land acquisition to preserve the highly visible and ecologically significant ridgeline of Deaverview Mountain. The mountain boasts peaks of more than 3,000 feet and offers sweeping views of Asheville and the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains.



Photo credit: Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy

Broadband Recovery Program for Hurricane Helene

NC Dept. of Information Technology announces \$50M for broadband recovery work

Purpose: Rebuild, repair or replace broadband infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene.

Eligibility: Internet service providers with infrastructure projects in the 39 Hurricane Helene disaster-designated counties, including the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Interested broadband providers may submit applications and estimated costs through the [Broadband Infrastructure Office Data Exchange](#).

Deadline: November 24, 2025 by 11:59 PM



Photo courtesy: French Broad Fiber

Disaster Relief and Mitigation Fund (DRMF)

NC Emergency Management is now accepting applications for grants funded through DRMF.

- A state-funded grant program established in 2021 and reauthorized by the General Assembly for Helene earlier this year.
- Eligible applicants are units of local government and nonprofit organizations.
- Funding can be used for flood mitigation, transportation infrastructure resilience against natural disasters, and engineering assistance grants to local governments to identify and design shovel ready projects.

Deadline: November 28, 2025 (no later than 5 PM).



Now Open: Grants for Volunteer Organizations Active in Housing Repairs & Rebuilds, Phase 2

Phase 2 of a \$28M appropriation for nonprofit volunteer organizations aiding rebuild and reconstruction efforts in WNC. More than \$9M was awarded to 14 nonprofits in October.

Eligibility: Volunteer organizations actively involved in actual and ongoing repair and reconstruction projects for homeowners affected by Helene.

**Organizations do not need to be a member of NCVOAD.*

Deadline: December 11, 2025 (no later than 5 PM)



ncdps.gov/VOARDGrant

Dam Safety Grant Program – Accepting Applications

Funding for dam owners to repair, modify, or remove an eligible dam to meet applicable North Carolina dam safety standards.

Learn more about the [Dam Safety Grant Program](#) and [submit applications](#) by December 12, 2025 (no later than 5 PM)

Grant Funding to Support Recycling and Waste Reduction in WNC

Supports WNC communities in rebuilding and strengthening waste reduction and recycling systems following Hurricane Helene. The program provides up to \$25M in grants over multiple phases.

Eligibility: Local governments may apply for up to \$5M per project, with no local match. Eligible projects may include but are not limited to:

- Construction or improvement of recycling or composting facilities;
- Development of regional collection (hub-and-spoke) systems;
- Upgrades to convenience centers or household hazardous waste programs;
- Purchase of recycling trucks, containers, or carts;
- Related feasibility studies or education and outreach

Deadline: January 30, 2026



For more information: [Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure Grant Program](#)

Applications Open – Private Road and Bridge Reimbursement Program

The NC-PRB program opened the application process for reimbursements for private road and bridge repairs already completed.

Part of \$25M appropriation from the NC General Assembly. Reimbursements are permitted to cover up to 50 percent of a project's total cost.

(Pictured: A completed private bridge in Buncombe County)



wncrecovery.nc.gov/recovery-resources/nc-private-road-and-bridge-reimbursement-program



Selected Federal Program Updates

Water Infrastructure Projects Awarded

More than \$86 million in grant funding for 14 drinking water and wastewater projects.

Five western North Carolina counties will receive more than \$86 million for 14 drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects as part of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency program for disaster-affected states. Notable projects include:

Buncombe County

Woodfin Sanitary District

Burke County

City of Morganton, Town of Drexel, Town of Valdese

Caldwell County

Town of Gamewell

Haywood County

Town of Waynesville, Junaluska Sanitary District

Madison County

Town of Hot Springs



The SRF Helene funding will continue to be available through year-round applications until 2026. All funded projects must ensure that the systems will be more resilient to future flooding events.

Crisis Counseling Assistance Extension Granted

\$9 million award from FEMA Crisis Counseling Assistance through two programs

- Immediate Support and Regular Support
- Program is funded through FEMA and administered by SAMHSA



Funds the Hope4NC Crisis Counseling Program

- Peer to peer support, counseling programs, 24/7 hotline, referrals to licensed mental and behavioral health professionals
- 50,209 in-person contacts between 9/28/2024 and 9/27/2025
- Continued need for crisis counseling during long-term recovery



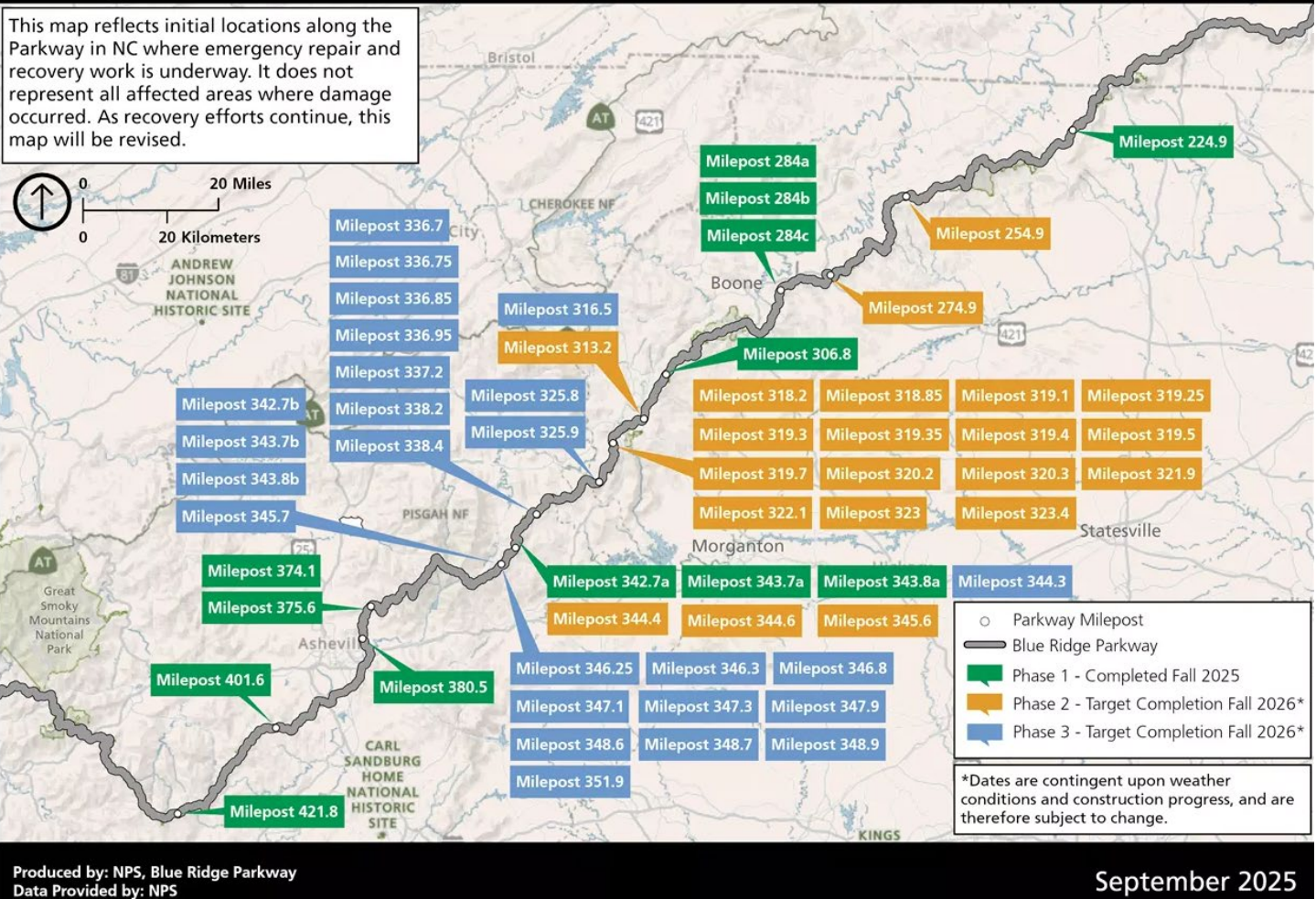
The state requested a no-cost extension to allow the program to continue beyond October 2025



This request was granted last week, allowing the program to continue into January 2026, or until funding is exhausted

Status of Blue Ridge Parkway Repairs and Closures

The BRP remains closed for Helene repair work from MM 316.5 (Linville Falls) to MM 355.3 (Mt. Mitchell) with the exception of a 6-mile stretch (fully or partially open) near Little Switzerland



September 2025



EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant Program - \$1.45B in Economic Recovery Funds

Funds open to all 2023 & 2024 federally-declared disaster zones

First come, first served – EDA encourages applicants to work with their local Economic Development representatives to submit competitive projects ASAP

80% EDA funded / 20% cost share from applicant

Eligible Entities include units of government, economic development districts, institutions of higher education, and nonprofits working with local government

GROW NC seeking to increase the # of proposals from NC

- Working directly with communities to develop projects and encourage timely applications
- Additional \$6M in State Helene aid for local government capacity to assist with EDA and other applications

Questions can be directed to: Hillary Sherman
EDA NC Economic Development Representative
828-707-2748 | hsherman@eda.gov

eda.gov/strategic-initiatives/disaster-recovery/supplemental/2025

Three Funding Pathways

- **READINESS PATH** – Capacity building and strategic planning projects that set the stage for future investment
 - Max award: \$500,000
 - No application deadline
- **IMPLEMENTATION PATH** – Standalone construction and non-construction projects that help communities recover from natural disasters and advance recovery and growth
 - Max award: \$20m
 - No application deadline
- **INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION PATH** – Coalition-led, multi-project portfolios that transform regional economies through targeted industry development
 - Max award: \$50m
 - Application deadline: March 3, 2026

GROW NC & State Resources to Support EDA Applicants

Technical Assistance

- In partnership with the regional Councils of Governments, NC Association of County Commissioners, and NC League of Municipalities

Return on Investment (ROI) & Impact Analyses

- Partnership with NCGrowth to provide ROI and Impact Analyses for eligible applicants
- Interested applicants can submit requests through an online form

Additional EDA Information

We continue to encourage applicants to get applications in as soon as possible.

- No deadline for Pathways 1 & 2 but funds are first come, first served
- An EDA representative is meeting with local communities to offer assistance
- GROW NC is ready to help where we can – please let us know where we can be helpful

EDA Point of Contact:

Hillary Sherman, EDA NC Economic Development
Representative

828-707-2748 | hsherman@eda.gov

GROW NC Point of Contact:

Desiree Kennedy, Program Officer
919-819-7523 | desiree.kennedy@nc.gov

Additional federal updates

- FEMA Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) programs:
 - Local governments seeing reimbursement delays.
 - 90+ FEMA PA projects totaling **\$155M** recently approved by the Secretary of Homeland Security.
 - Projects must still go through the Defend the Spend process with the Department of Government Efficiency before money goes to local governments.
- USDA announced the reopening of county offices nationwide, allowing the continuance of certain services, including disaster aid.

Governor Stein Announces Nearly \$22M in Contributions for Food Assistance in NC

The State of North Carolina and partners stepped up to [donate nearly \\$22M to fight hunger](#) in North Carolina given the impacts on SNAP from the federal government shutdown. This includes a \$10M grant from the State to local food banks across NC. The following food banks serve WNC:

- **MANNA Food Bank** works alongside 220 nonprofit pantries, meal sites, and other community-based organizations to help neighbors access free food in 16 WNC counties. Use MANNA's [Food Finder Tool](#), a searchable map, to help locate food access organizations and distributions in your community.
- **Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC** has a "[Find Food Now](#)" tool where users can enter their zip code to find help across their 18-county footprint.
- **Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina** serves 24 counties, including 14 in North Carolina. Second Harvest has a [list of local food pantries and soup kitchens](#) by county.



Local Government Helene Recovery Partnership

Aimee Wall, Dean



SCHOOL OF
GOVERNMENT

Local Government Helene Recovery Partnership

GROW NC

**NC Association of County
Commissioners**

**NC City & County Management
Association**

NC League of Municipalities

Lead for North Carolina

School of Government

Western Carolina University

Centralina COG

Foothills Regional Commission

High Country COG

Land-of-Sky Regional Council

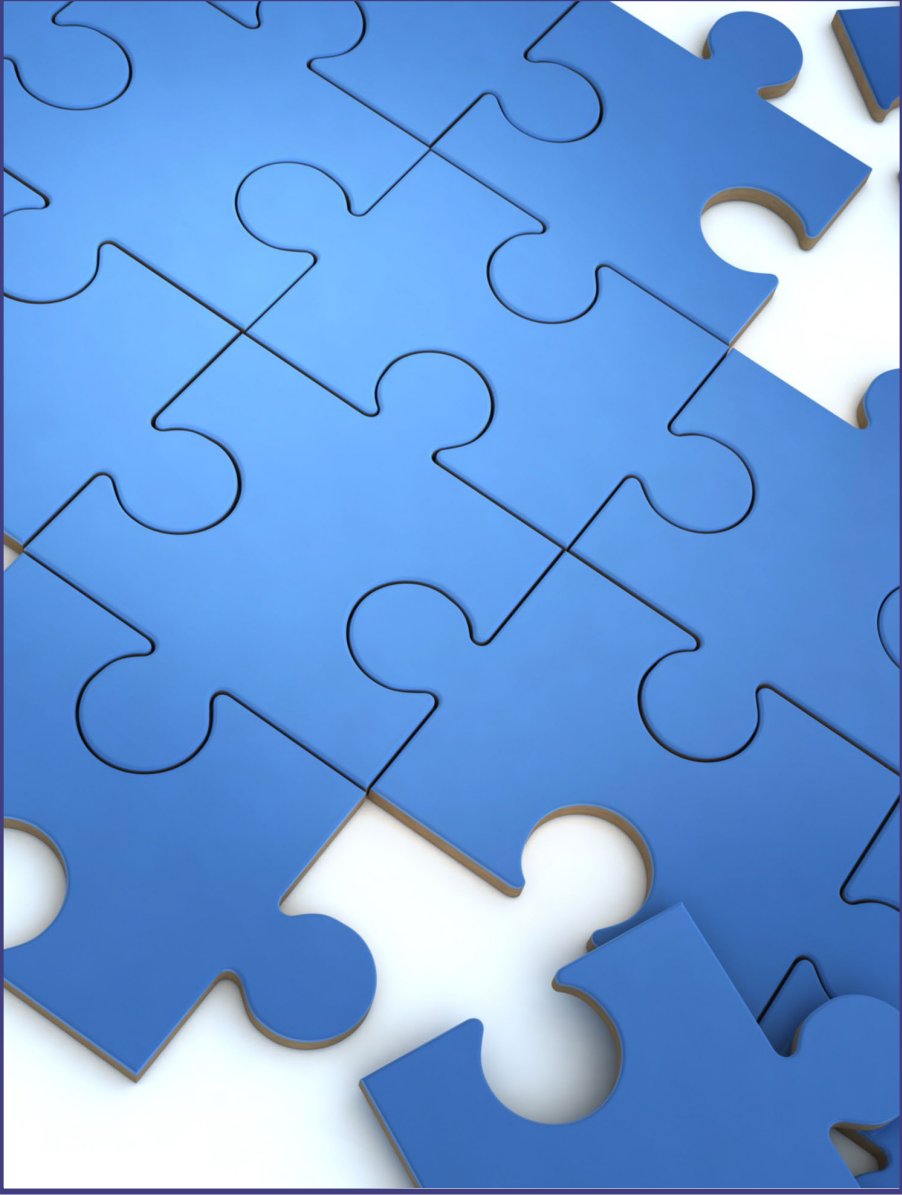
Southwestern Commission

Western Piedmont COG

When Helene Happened...

Strong Players in a Fragmented System

- Overlapping efforts
- Small jurisdictions slipped through the cracks
- Changing contacts
- And MANY players—local, state, federal—to coordinate



Pain Points

- Grant surge and staffing
- Finance backlogs
- FEMA Public Assistance churn
- Debris reimbursement timing
- Engineering and permitting delays
- HMGP landslide and slope stability risk
- Cash flow strain from reimbursement-based funding
- Match and cost-share challenges
- Procurement and compliance complexities
- Awareness and coordination gaps

July 30 Meeting: The Aim

- Think regionally
- Reduce duplication
- Make it easier for local governments to move through a complex system



WNC Recovery
POWERED BY GROWNC



Partnership Identified These Needs



Navigator
Amanda Stratton



Local Government
Disaster Recovery Portal



Weekly Office
Hour Calls



Support Partner
Meetings

Partner Highlights

- Staffing augmentation and temporary disaster recovery workers
- On-site administrative and project management support
- Financial recovery help, including budgeting, accounting, and audit readiness
- Procurement, contracting, and compliance guidance
- Grant writing, grant management, and application development
- FEMA Public Assistance navigation and support
- HMGP, CDBG-DR, and other mitigation and housing program assistance
- Workshops, office hours, and peer-learning networks
- Coordination with state and federal partners on recovery alignment
- Community engagement and recovery planning support
- Administration of buyouts, reconstruction, and watershed protection projects
- Drone, LiDAR, and field assessments to document damage
- Floodplain ordinance review and mitigation planning
- Utility resilience, regionalization, and water/wastewater funding support
- Affordable housing and community development project assistance

School of Government

- Lead for North Carolina Fellows (across WNC)
- Grants and Implementation
- Procurement and Compliance
- Land Use Planning / Code Enforcement
- Budgeting, Accounting, Cash Flow
- Emergency Management
- Mutual Aid
- Housing and Recovery Development
- Water and Wastewater Regionalization and Recovery
- Behavioral Health
- Management and Leadership
- ncIMPACT CARE4Youth

Disaster Recovery Portal



**Comprehensive
resource**



**Visible status and
routing**



Shared calendar



Template library



Common signals



Durable infrastructure

Partner Directory

The Resource Hub is a collaborative platform for organizations aiding Western North Carolina local governments in recovering from Hurricane Helene. Initially, it serves as a space for partners to share and access accurate information, with plans to later allow local governments direct access while retaining some partner-only functions for coordination.

Public View - Limited Contacts Staff Login

Partner Contacts Filter - Search for experts by name, organization, or area of expertise

Directory Who's Doing What

Search

Search by name, organization, or expertise...

Area of Expertise

All Areas of Expertise

View

All (6) Public

Showing 6 of 6 contacts

Sarah Johnson

Director of Local Government Services

School of Government (SOG)

sjohnson@sog.unc.edu (919) 555-0101

Areas of Expertise:

Community Engagement Planning Project Management

Lise Anderson

Disaster Case Manager

NC Emergency Management

landerson@ncem.org (919) 555-0105

Areas of Expertise:

Disaster Case Management Emergency Management

Niche Services:

Disaster Case Management

Sample ABC Funding

Funding Name:

Sample ABC Funding

Tier:

State

Disaster specific?:

Yes

Disaster declaration required?:

Yes

Who may declare disaster?:

State

Current Status:

Open

One time or recurring opportunity?:

Recurring

Responsible Organization:

Herrera Hartman Associates

Contact info:

Minim adipiscing ve

Assistance Type:

Appropriation

Application Link:

Current marchanta

Application Criteria:

To sustain--\$800 k

Partnership required?:

Yes

Type of Partnership:

Return quae et ut dol

Rolling/Fixed Deadline

Fixed

Single or Multiple Deadlines?:

Multiple

Application Deadlines:

November 17, 2025
November 18, 2025

Period of Performance:

2009-11-14

Calendar: Trainings, Deadlines, and Milestones

The Resource Hub is a collaborative platform for organizations aiding Western North Carolina local governments in recovering from Hurricane Helene. Initially, it serves as a space for partners to share and access accurate information, with plans to later allow local governments direct access while retaining some partner-only functions for coordination.

Public View - Limited Contacts Staff Login

Events Filter

Event Type Funding Program

All Types All Programs

Recovery Milestone

FEMA Individual Assistance Program Registration Opens

Sat, Nov 8, 2025

FEMA opens registration for Individual Assistance for eligible disaster survivors in designated counties.

Agency: FEMA

Resources, Pro Tips, Trainings

Pro Tip: Document Everything

Take photos and keep detailed records of all damage and repairs - this is critical for reimbursement

Uploaded by County Manager on January 14, 2025

Trainings

Training

Sample Training A

Sat, Nov 15, 2025 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Step-by-step video walkthrough of the application process

Agency: FEMA

Register

Training

Sample training C

Sat, Nov 15, 2025 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Comprehensive training on managing FEMA Public Assistance grants, including documentation requirements and best practices.

Agency: FEMA

Thank you



Remarks

Governor Josh Stein





Cashflow Challenges for Local Governments

Rose Vaughn Williams, NC League of Municipalities

Nathan Ramsey, Land of Sky Regional Council

Kevin Leonard, NC Association of County Commissioners

Ryan Cody, Town of Marshall

Phillip Barrier, Avery County





North Carolina Association
of County Commissioners





North Carolina Association
of County Commissioners



THANK YOU.



Recovery through Partnership





“It brings great comfort to see the League and Southwestern Commission working in tandem on behalf of our town, which has been through so much. They bring know-how and connections, but more importantly, practical day-to-day help.”

Lisa Stinnett, Town Manager, Canton

Source data current as of 08/07/2025

Amount of Applicants

508

Total Amount of Damages*

\$1,137,368,740.33

*Based on Damage Inventories submitted to-date

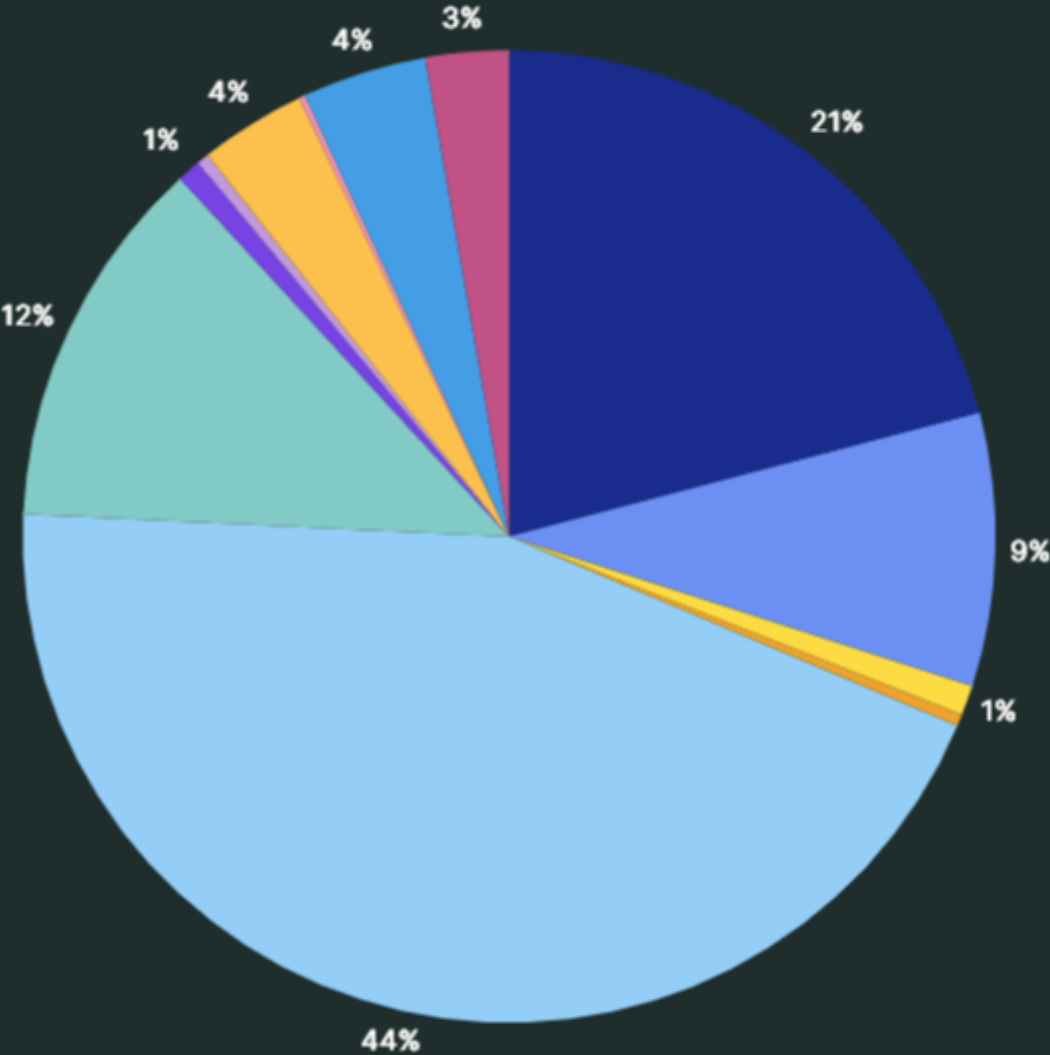
Total Obligated Federal Funding

\$529,957,834.55

Obligated Federal Funding by Applicant

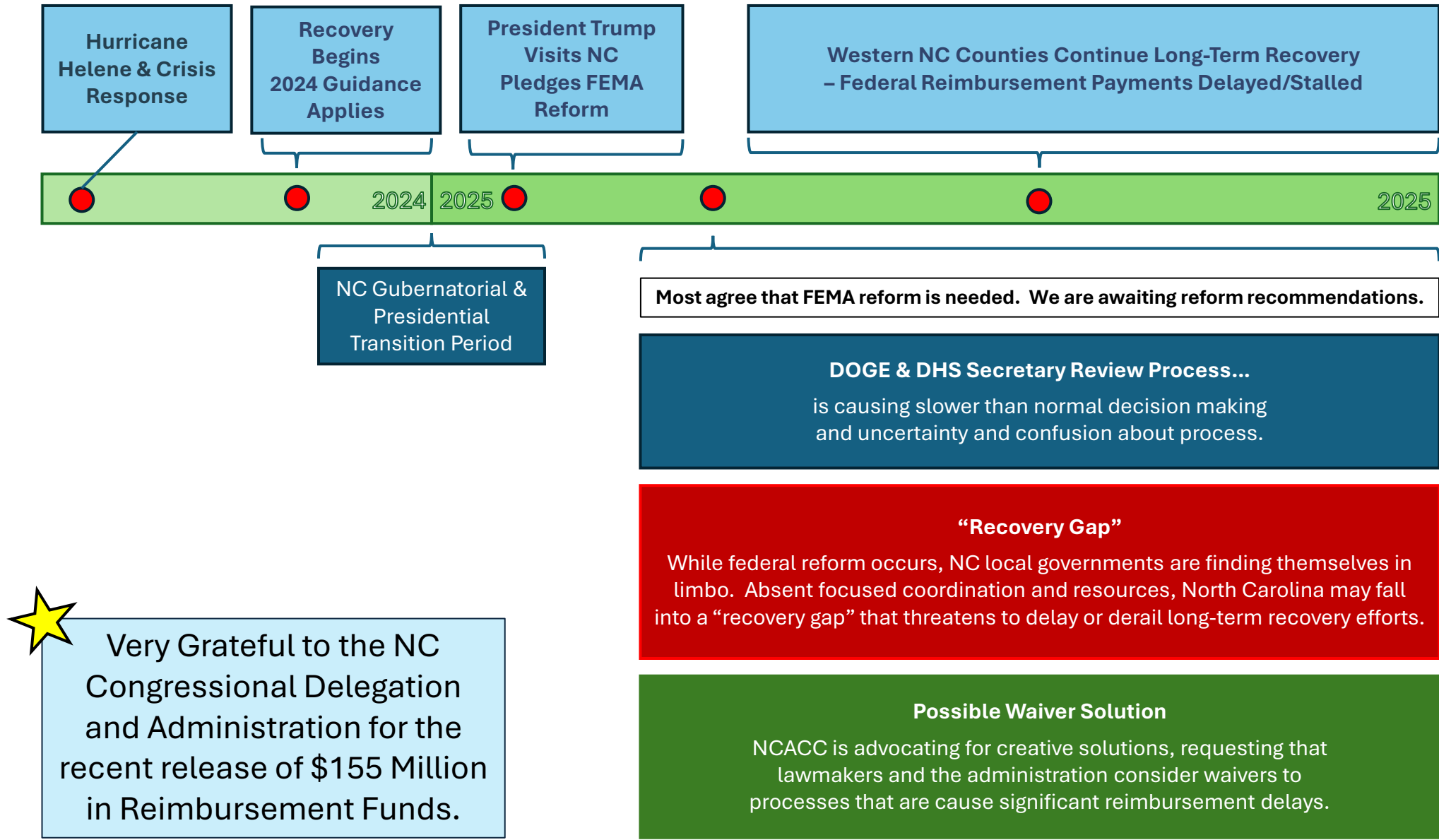
North Carolina Emergency Management	\$163,221,578.01
NC Department of Transportation	\$133,301,476.68
Buncombe County	\$35,522,348.76
Henderson County	\$16,532,644.16
Mitchell County	\$11,711,626.51
Blue Ridge Electric Membership	\$10,696,991.93
City of Asheville	\$10,353,343.23
Town of Spruce Pine	\$9,384,931.93
French Broad Electric Members	\$8,694,790.49
Rutherford County	\$7,643,529.69
Avery County	\$7,132,921.52
Town of Biltmore Forest	\$9,659,648.80

Breakdown of Applicants by Entity Type



City or Township Government County Government

+10 More



Views from the front lines of recovery...



Presentation by
Ryan Cody, Town Administrator
Town of Marshall



Presentation by
Phillip Barrier, County Manager
Avery County



Wrap Up and Next Steps

Matt Calabria, GROW NC



Stay Connected

GROW NC is sharing recovery news, resources, progress metrics, and more.



STAY CONNECTED



wncrecovery.nc.gov



wncrecovery@nc.gov



bit.ly/GROW-NC-news



[@wncrecovery](https://twitter.com/wncrecovery)