



Governor's Advisory Committee on Western North Carolina Recovery

October 13, 2025 | 10:00am – 12:00pm

Today's Agenda

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

Remarks | *Governor Josh Stein*

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

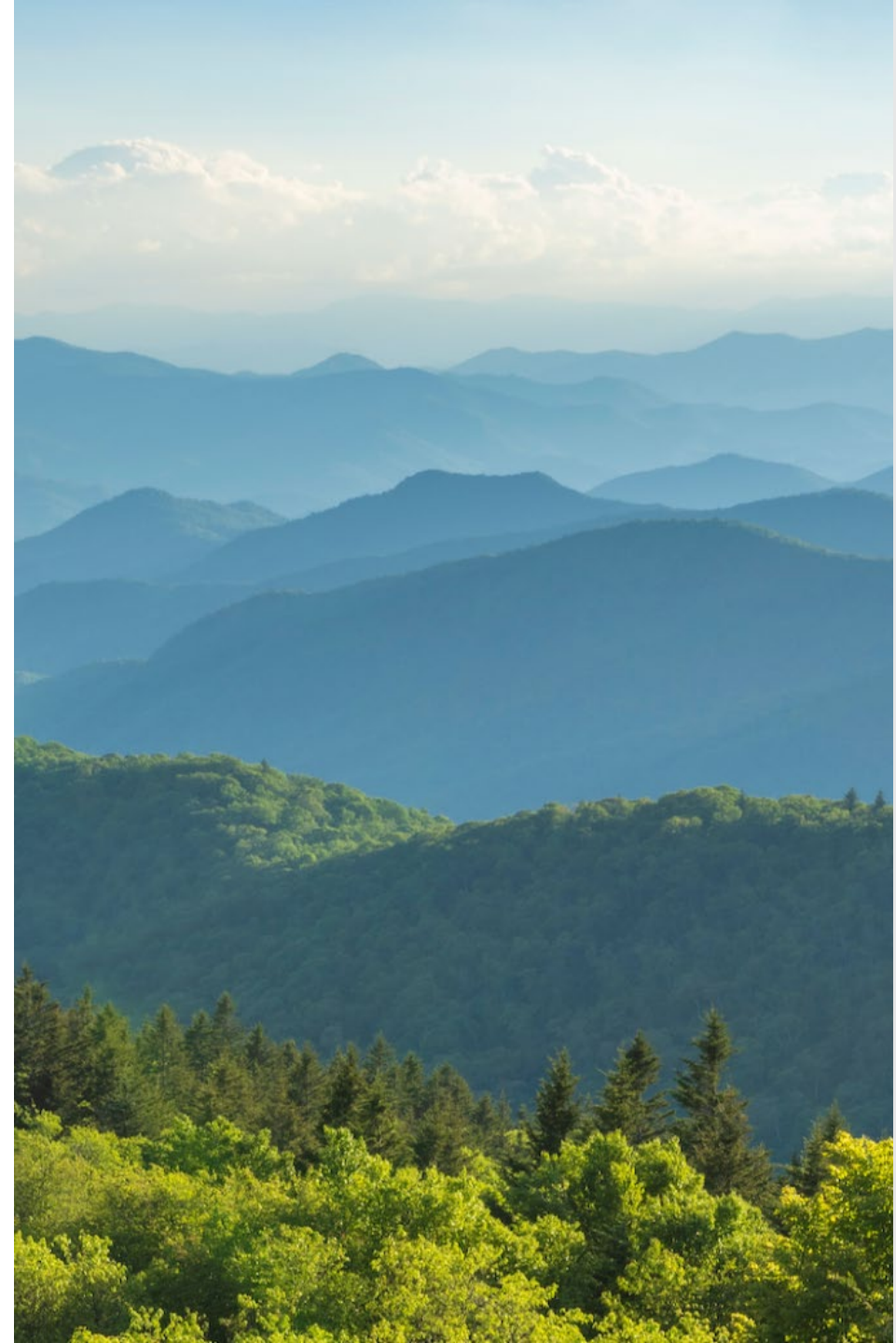
Helene Local Government Capital Grant Program / *Cole Jordan, NC Office of State Budget and Management*

Dam Repair, Recycling, and Weatherization Grant Programs | *John Nicholson, NC Department of Environmental Quality*

Housing Grants Progress Update / *Paul Langston, Baptists on Mission; Paul Reeves, Habitat for Humanity of North Carolina*

Next Steps / *Matt Calabria, GROW NC*

Adjourn





Recovery Updates

Matt Calabria, Director, GROW NC

Emily Gangi, Chief Deputy Director, GROW NC



Long-Term Economic Recovery Subcommittee Roster

Name	Title	Organization	Organization Type	County
David Jackson (co-chair)	President and CEO	Boone Area Chamber of Commerce	Small Business	Watauga
Laura Leatherwood (co-chair)	President	Blue Ridge Community College	Higher Education	Henderson
Jim Beeler	Executive Director, College Access Partnerships	Appalachian State University	Higher Education	Watauga
Preston Blakely	Mayor	Town of Fletcher	Local Government	Henderson
Jack Cecil	President	Biltmore Farms, LLC	Business	Buncombe
Sara Chester	Co-Executive Director	The Industrial Commons	Nonprofit	Burke
Casey Cooper	Chief Executive Officer	Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority	Healthcare	Swain
Cynthia Deyton	Career and Technical Education Director	Yancey County Schools	K12	Yancey
Chuck Kaylor	Chief of Staff	John M. Belk Endowment	Philanthropy	Mecklenburg
Kevin Leonard	Executive Director	NC Assn. of County Commissioners	Membership Association	Wake
Dee Dee Perkins	Business Owner and Community Leader		Small Business	Transylvania
Hillary Sherman	NC and SC Economic Development Representative	U.S. Economic Development Administration	Federal Government/ Economic Development	Buncombe
Sharon Decker (staff)	Recovery Advisor	GROW NC	State Government	Polk
Desiree Kennedy (staff)	Program Officer	GROW NC	State Government	Wake

Resilience Subcommittee Roster

Name	Title	Organization	Organization Type	County
Brittany Duncan (co-chair)	Community Strategist	Western Youth Network	Nonprofit/Advocacy	Watauga
Mary Roderick (co-chair)	Planning Director	Land of Sky Regional Council	Council of Governments	Buncombe
Heather Cotton	Planning and Development Director	Town of Marion	Local Government	McDowell
Rob Howard	President	Howard Building Science	Builder/Developer	Caldwell
Larry Leake	Attorney; Retired District Court Judge	Leake and Stokes	Law Firm	Madison
Mallory Martin	Conservation Consultant	Southeast Landscape of the Future	Nonprofit/Advocacy	Avery
Chuck McGrady	Former State Legislator; Member	NC Board of Transportation		Henderson
Van Phillips	Business Leader		Business	Mitchell
Chris Sigmon	Planner	Yancey County	Local Government	Yancey
Jessica Trotman	Deputy Town Manager	Town of Black Mountain	Local Government	Buncombe
Shea Tuberty	Professor, Water Resources Assessment	Appalachian State University	Higher Education	Watauga
Veronica Butcher (staff)	Fiscal Policy Analyst	GROW NC	State Government	
Marlena Byrne (staff)	Deputy Chief Resilience Officer	NC Dept. of Environmental Quality	State Government	

Major recovery efforts underway

Rebuilding Safe Housing

- Residents approved for more than \$524M in FEMA Individual Assistance
- 6,800+ households received help with temporary housing
- 500+ homes repaired by volunteer organizations with support from \$6 million in state funds
- NC is the fastest state in more than a decade to begin rebuilding homes after a major hurricane using HUD CDBG-DR funding

Families & Children

- 48,000+ higher education scholarships and grants
- 72,000+ households received food assistance
- More than 10,000 households received utility assistance
- 318 public schools received assistance to replace food and food-related equipment/supplies
- All 13 impacted state parks and 5 historic sites reopened, either fully or partially



Mount Mitchell State Park Reopens

Final state park to reopen following damage from Helene



- Made possible by reopening of Blue Ridge Parkway from Asheville to Craggy Gardens
- Parkway access to Mt. Mitchell only from the south and Parkway entrances near Asheville
- Parkway remains closed to the north of Mt. Mitchell from just past the park's entrance to milepost 334 near Little Switzerland
- Phased repairs to Parkway plan for reopening of more heavily damaged sections between Linville Falls and Mt. Mitchell in the fall of 2026

Major recovery efforts underway

Total Incidents

1,512

since beginning of Storm

Total Closures

1,472

since beginning of Storm

1,438

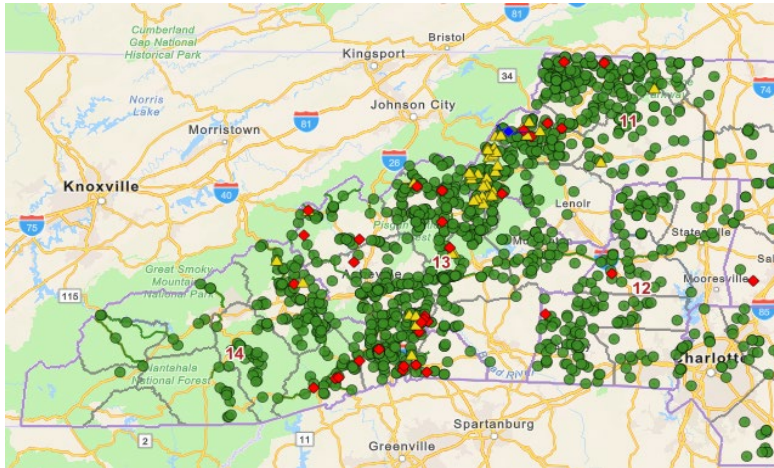
Fully Open

34

Current Closed

40

Partial Access



Restoring our Infrastructure

- 97% of state-maintained roads fully or partially re-opened
- 8.2M+ cubic yards of right-of-way debris removed
- 8.1M+ cubic yards of waterway debris removed
- \$27.7M in FEMA funds authorized to repair private roads and bridges for more than 10,000 households
- About 6,500 site assessments completed in the state's standalone private roads & bridges program

Revitalizing our Economy and Communities

- \$55M in state and philanthropically funded small business grants fully disbursed, with more than 2,100 recipients
- \$403M+ in SBA loans offered
- \$37.8M+ in disaster unemployment assistance distributed
- \$148M+ in loans offered to local government units
- GROW NC and NC Department of Commerce helping develop competitive Economic Development Administration grant applications

Pitts Station Bridge Replacement Complete

Serves Baxter Healthcare in McDowell County



- First express design-build bridge replacement completed following Helene
- Temporary modular bridge installed just 10 days after the storm and opened within 21 working days
- New bridge features a stronger base and reduced risk of debris accumulation on piers
- Part of NCDOT's effort to replace 82 damaged bridges in Highway Division 13



Selected State Program Updates



\$9.4M in Grants Announced for Volunteer Organizations Involved in Housing Reconstruction and Repair

- A total of \$28M appropriated to expand support for volunteer recovery efforts among nonprofit volunteer organizations aiding recovery in WNC.
- \$9M in grants recently awarded to 14 nonprofits
- New notice of funding opportunity coming soon for additional grant awards.



Photo Courtesy of Baptists on Mission

Applications Open - Private Road and Bridge Reimbursement Program

The NC-PRB program has 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.

<https://www.wncrecovery.nc.gov/recovery-resources/nc-private-road-and-bridge-reimbursement-program>

Pictured: A completed private bridge in Buncombe County.





Selected Federal Program Updates

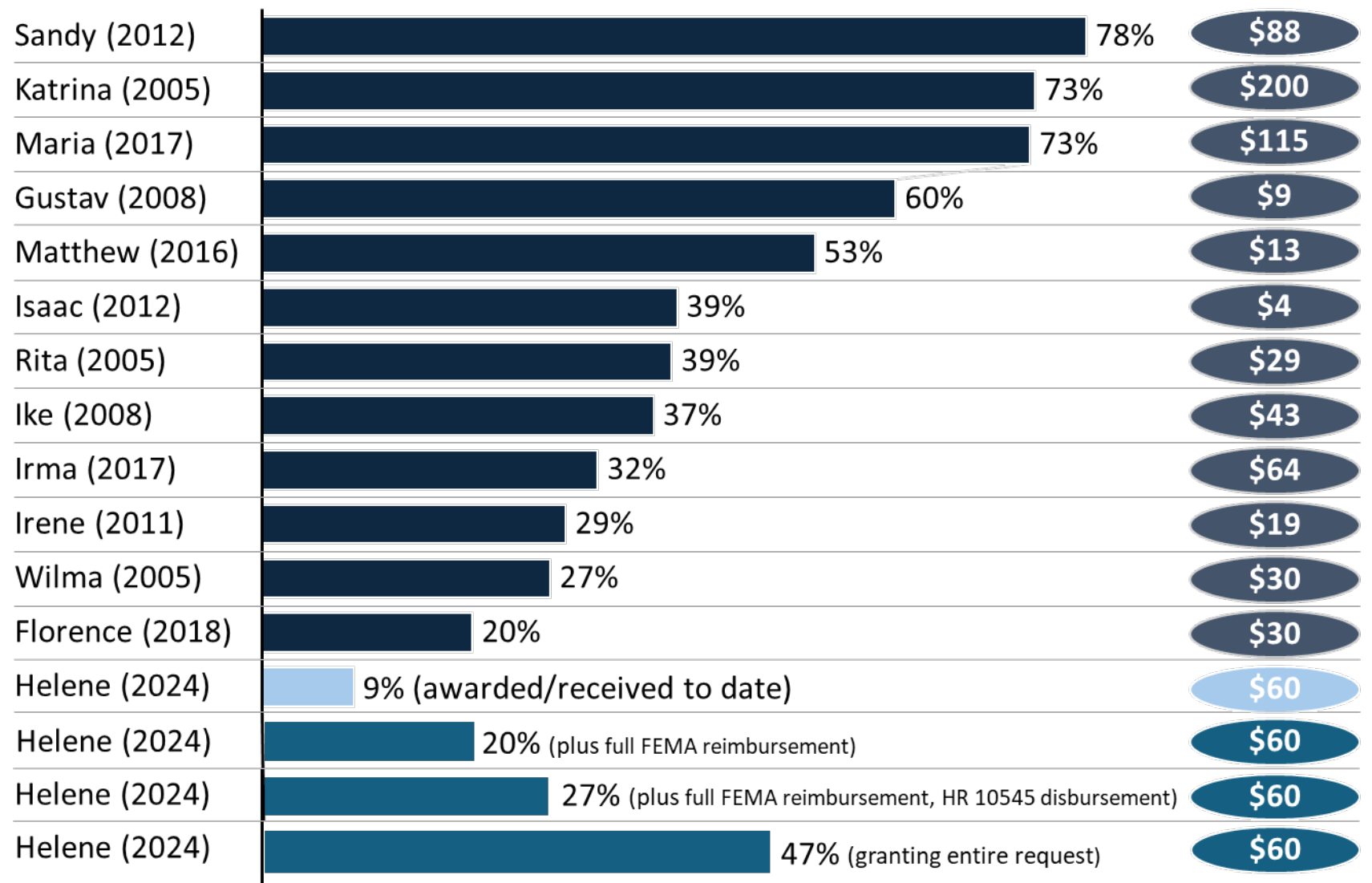
NC asking federal government to cover **47%** of damages, in line with other major storms

As of August 2025

Share of hurricane economic damage covered by federal aid (%)¹

Total U.S damage

(2024 \$B)²



1. Where available, federal aid is estimated using actuals from CBO and FEMA. In all other cases, FEMA actuals for Individual Assistance (IA), Public Assistance (PA), and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) were utilized, and non-FEMA federal aid was estimated based on the typical share of federal aid represented by FEMA funding, based on historical data.

2. Damage estimated by NOAA, including both insured and uninsured losses.

Impacts of Federal Shutdown

- FEMA Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) programs are exempt from the effects of the shutdown.
 - Reimbursement delays still possible due to other Department of Homeland Security furloughs.
 - The DRF was already nearing depletion prior to the shutdown. Immediate Needs Funding (INF) status could be implemented if the DRF is not replenished soon.
- Governor is requesting that the OMB exemption be applied to other federal agencies involved in disaster recovery work, such as HUD, USDA, and SBA.
- Remaining \$4 million of \$10 million U.S. Department of Labor Dislocated Worker Grant Program likely to be delayed. The program provides temporary employment to individuals involved in disaster cleanup and recovery.
- FEMA's authority to renew flood insurance policies expired at midnight on September 30.
- The reopened portions of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Great Smoky Mountains National Park, for the moment, remain open with some limitations to service.

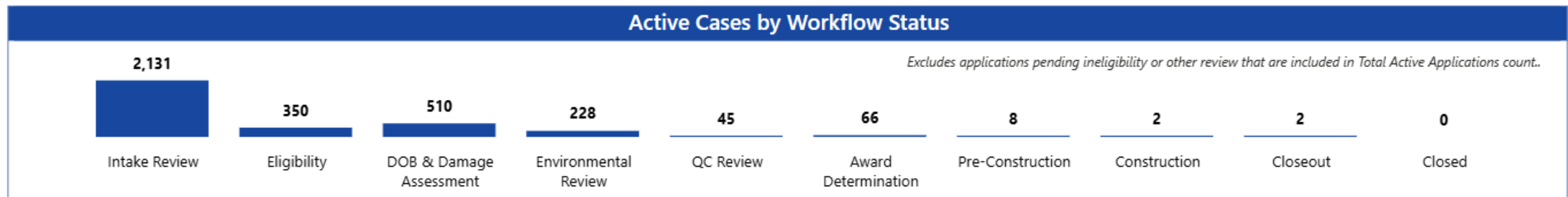
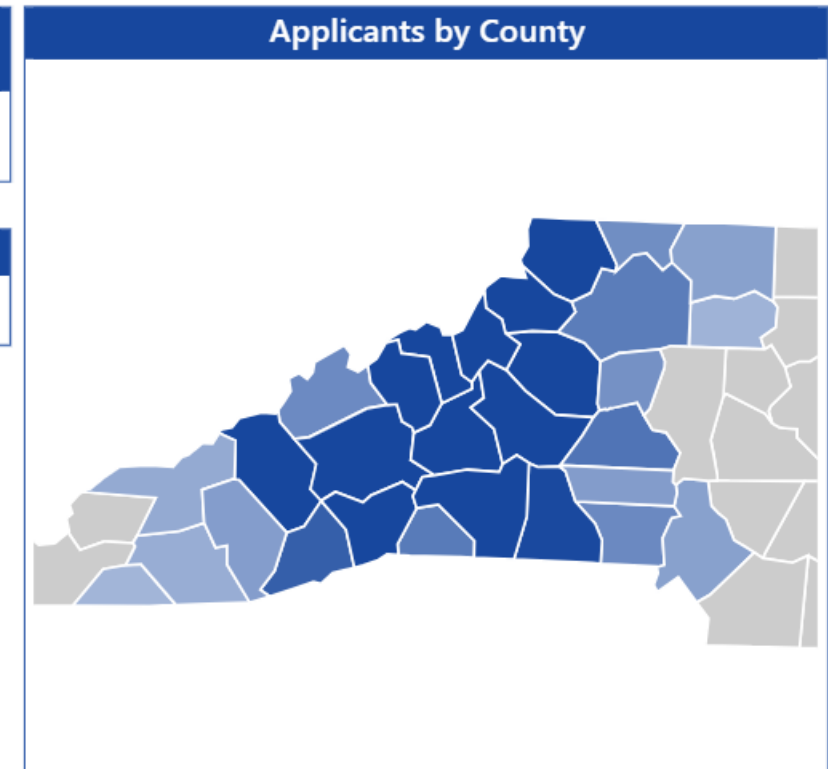
Applications in Progress But Not Submitted	Total Applications Submitted	Total Active Applications	Inactive or Ineligible Applications
1,288	3,936	3,455 i	481 i

Application Submission Deadline
December 31, 2025

Verified Eligible Phase and Priority i					
Phase	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Total
Phase 1	479	90	30	5	604
Phase 2	70	25	3	2	100
Phase 3	7	1	N/A	N/A	8
Phase 4	145	4	N/A	N/A	149

Hover over the information bubble for Phase and Priority definitions.

Applications will be processed beginning with Phase 1, followed by Phase 2, etc.



\$1.15B in Additional DOT Emergency Relief Funding Announced

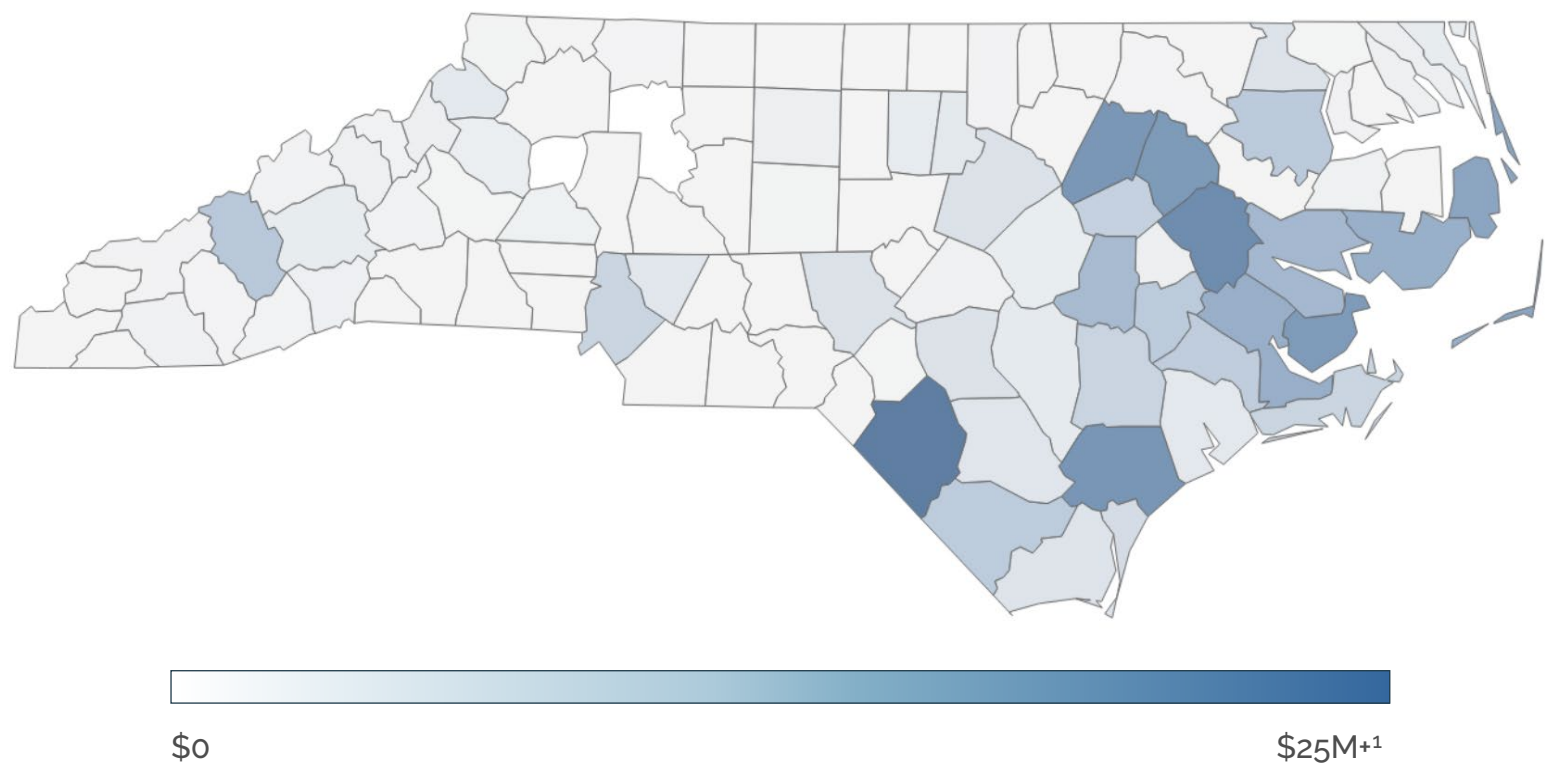
In addition to \$400M previously awarded



- U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy announced \$1.15 billion in additional Emergency Relief (ER) funding to NCDOT for Hurricane Helene repairs.
- With this latest award, USDOT has provided nearly \$2 billion total in ER funding for Helene recovery in North Carolina.
- \$400 million was previously announced to help accelerate repairs to roads, bridges, and other transportation infrastructure.
- Helene-related transportation infrastructure damage estimated at \$9 billion, with an additional \$1.3 billion needed for strengthening and mitigation.

Over the past 20 years, \$325M+ in HMGP funding has gone to 86 counties across North Carolina. The HMGP lock-in for NC post-Helene is anticipated to be about \$1.5B based on initial estimates.

Sum of federally obligated HMGP dollars by NC county, March 29, 2005-March 28, 2025



Since 2005, a total of \$327M has been obligated to 86 of NC's 100 counties

The "lock in" amount is the maximum FEMA can obligate for eligible HMGP activities

Source: [OpenFEMA: Hazard Mitigation Assistance Projects dataset](#) | [Governor Stein Federal Funding Request](#)



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

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



Helene Local Government Capital Grant Program

Cole Jordan, Grants Manager,
NC Office of State Budget and Management





Hurricane Helene Local Government Capital Grant Program Overview

- The Helene Local Government Capital Grant program was created in [S.L. 2025-26, Section 2B](#)
- Purpose
 - To provide local governments and federally recognized tribes in western North Carolina capital grants to repair, renovate or replace infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Helene.
- **Application Release Date:** Monday, September 22nd
- **Application Deadline:** Friday, November 21st



Eligibility

- Local government units or federal recognized tribes located on trust lands who have been denied FEMA Public Assistance (FEMA PA) funding may apply for a grant.
- Delays in FEMA PA decisions:
 - We are accepting preliminary or partial determinations from FEMA. Our team is working with eligible entities using the existing documentation they have received from FEMA.
- Not Eligible Recipients:
 - Non Profits and Private Organizations
 - Projects that have not applied or received any determination from FEMA



Grant Award Amounts and Application Review Process

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

Total Grant Funds Available: **\$49,750,000.00**

Maximum grant amounts set in statute:

- **County:** (20%) to one county, including grants to units of local government within that county = \$9,950,000
- **Eligible Recipient:** (5%) per eligible recipient = \$2,487,500
- Five percent (5%) per zip code if that zip code only qualifies for FEMA Public Assistance Categories A through B = \$2,487,500



Resources



[Guidance on Grant Award Amounts](#)



[Pre-Application Checklist](#)



[Weekly Informational Webinars](#)



[Application Link](#)



Contact us at HeleneCapitalGrants@osbm.nc.gov.



Dam Repair, Recycling, and Weatherization Grant Programs

John Nicholson, Chief Deputy Secretary,
NC Department of Environmental Quality



Dam Safety Grant Fund

- **\$10 Million**: Established by NC House Bill 1012 (SL2025-26), makes state funding from the legislation available to dam owners for the rehabilitation of eligible dams.
- For the purposes of this grant, “rehabilitation” means the repair, modification, or removal of an eligible dam to meet applicable North Carolina dam safety standards.
- Objectives
 - Provide financial assistance for the repair, modification, or removal of eligible dams.
 - Protect the state investment by requiring operation and maintenance of the project following completion of rehabilitation.
 - Reduce the potential consequences to loss of life, interruption of use or service of public utilities, or to property downstream of high hazard potential dams.
 - Reduce the overall number of high hazard potential dams that pose an unacceptable risk to the public.
 - Reduce costs associated with dam rehabilitation through the deployment of innovative solutions and technologies.



Dam Safety Grant Fund

- Eligible Dams: To be considered eligible for funding under this program, the following requirements must be met:
 - The dam must be classified as high hazard (Class C) regulated by the North Carolina Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources under the North Carolina Dam Safety Law.
 - The dam must have one or more existing, unresolved Notice of Deficiencies (NODs) or Dam Safety Order (DSO).
 - The dam must have damage directly resulting from Hurricane Helene, in a disaster declared county, that is to be addressed within the scope of work.
 - The grant funds shall only be used to address deficiencies and shall not be used to perform routine maintenance of a dam, to modify a dam to produce hydroelectric power, to increase water supply storage capacity, nor make any other modification to a dam that does not primarily improve the safety of the dam or eliminate the hazard potential of the dam. Federally owned or operated dam structures are not eligible.
- Eligible Recipients
 - To be considered an eligible recipient for funding under this program, the eligible recipient must include every owner of the eligible dam. Eligibility applies to both private and public entities. The final design must be in compliance with the high hazard dam requirements of the North Carolina Dam Safety Law of 1967.



Dam Safety Grant Fund

- Review and Selection Process/Technical Review
 - Review will evaluate the application for completeness, eligibility, technical approach and risk reduction. Applications will be evaluated on the following:
 - The Applicant demonstrates the capability necessary to successfully complete the proposed activities on or before the date established in the application.
 - The activities presented in the proposal demonstrate compliance with regulations, bring the dam into Satisfactory condition, and support the Dam Safety Program objectives and priorities to reduce the risk to downstream lives and property.
 - Ranking of Submittals for Funding: Applications will receive their ranking from two categories with totals calculated to produce the final ranking.
 - Dams will be ranked according to their priority rating by utilizing the Dam Safety Program Risk-Based Priority Rating System. The applications will be ranked in order of their priority rating reflecting the current condition of the dam. The review committee will compare the priority rating reflecting the current condition of the dam against the anticipated priority rating post-rehabilitation as proposed in the application. The difference in these two values will be calculated as the Risk Reduction Value (RRV).
 - Utilizing the Federal Emergency Management Agency's DSS-WISE web-based automated dam-break modeling/mapping tool, the Dam Safety Program will determine the Population-at-Risk (PAR) value, ensuring that all model parameters are consistent. The PAR values will be utilized in the calculation of the RRV, by which the application can be given a Risk-Based Priority Rating relative to others.



Dam Safety Grant Fund

- Application and Submission Information / Key Dates and Times
 - Application Start Date: October 13, 2025
 - Application Submission Deadline: December 12, 2025
 - Funding Selection Announcement Date: March 02, 2026
- Announcement Date may be extended based on the number of complete and/or incomplete applications received.



Recycling Grant

- The purpose of this grant program is to assist Hurricane Helene-impacted local governments with the implementation, expansion, recovery, and improvement of waste reduction programs in western North Carolina.
- The Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS) administers the Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure (HRRI) grant program through funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Grant D1-05D52025, Hazardous Waste Management State Program Support (66.801) through the American Relief Act of 2025.
- Amount available: \$26,355,457



Recycling Grant

- Proposals will be accepted from NC local governments impacted by Hurricane Helene for projects that will expand, rebuild, or improve waste reduction, composting, and recycling programs. Grant money may be used to build infrastructure and facilities, purchase equipment, and conduct related feasibility studies or engineering designs to divert materials from the waste stream.
 - Construct, improve, or repair a transfer station or material recovery facility for the handling, sortation, and marketing of recyclable materials;
 - Build a new or enhance an existing hub and spoke model for the collection and aggregation of recyclables in bulk;
 - Construct, improve, or repair convenience center infrastructure to more efficiently collect drop-off or special recyclables;
 - Build a new or enhance an existing household hazardous waste (HHW) program;
 - Implement a new or expand an existing composting program for yard waste, food scraps, or biosolids;
 - Build an aerated static pile composting system to enhance food waste diversion efforts; or
 - Purchase collection infrastructure such as trucks, containers, and carts to improve residential or commercial recycling programs.
- Local governments, defined as counties, municipalities, councils of governments and solid waste authorities, with a Tropical Storm Helene FEMA disaster declaration for public assistance are eligible to apply for funding from the HRRF grant program



Recycling Grant

- Application and submission information is forthcoming.
- Anticipate the week of 13-17 October

Weatherization

- On September 11, NCDEQ State Energy Office (SEO) announced a \$10 million Home Repair Weatherization Readiness Program to supplement North Carolina's existing Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).
- As part of North Carolina's Disaster Recovery Act of 2024 – Part II (SL 2024-53), these funds provide flexibility to resolve home repair issues for affected homes on the WAP deferral lists. Households are placed on the deferral list if a house needs major repairs or other work that is not eligible for WAP funding. This program seeks to also address households on the WAP's waitlists.
- The new funding covers counties damaged by Hurricane Helene and identified as "Most Impacted and Distressed" under the State of North Carolina Action Plan.

Weatherization

- SEO is awarding \$6 million in readiness funding to the Western Piedmont Council of Governments and \$4 million to the following current WAP service providers:

Blue Ridge Community Action

Macon County Government

Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission

Mountain Projects Inc.

Community Action Opportunities

WAMY Community Action

Four Square Community Action

Yadkin Valley Economic Development District

ICARE Inc.

- The program's goal is to serve more than 575 households



Weatherization

- As part of North Carolina's Disaster Recovery Act of 2024 – Part II (SL 2024-53), these funds provide flexibility to resolve home repair issues for affected homes on the WAP deferral lists. Households are placed on the deferral list if a house needs major repairs or other work that is not eligible for WAP funding. This program seeks to also address households on the WAP's waitlists.
- Families may have been deferred in the past because their home needed a repair that wasn't covered by weatherization funds. These readiness funds can also be used to make some home repairs so that more homes are moved off the deferral list and eligible for the WAP program.
- Intent is to increase western NC's sound and efficient housing stock, reduce energy costs for the most vulnerable families and individuals, and make homes safer and more comfortable.
- Weatherization can reduce energy usage at the household level by making energy-efficient upgrades such as installing insulation, replacing inefficient HVAC systems and sealing air leaks. By making households energy efficient, we are helping to lower carbon emissions, while reducing overall strain on the electric grid, making the grid and homes more resilient to extreme weather.



Housing Grants Progress Update

Paul Langston, Missions Mobilization Consultant, Baptists on Mission
Paul Reeves, President & CEO, Habitat for Humanity of NC



BAPTISTS ON
MISSION

HELENE UPDATE

530 Homes Completed

BAPTISTS ON MISSION 

















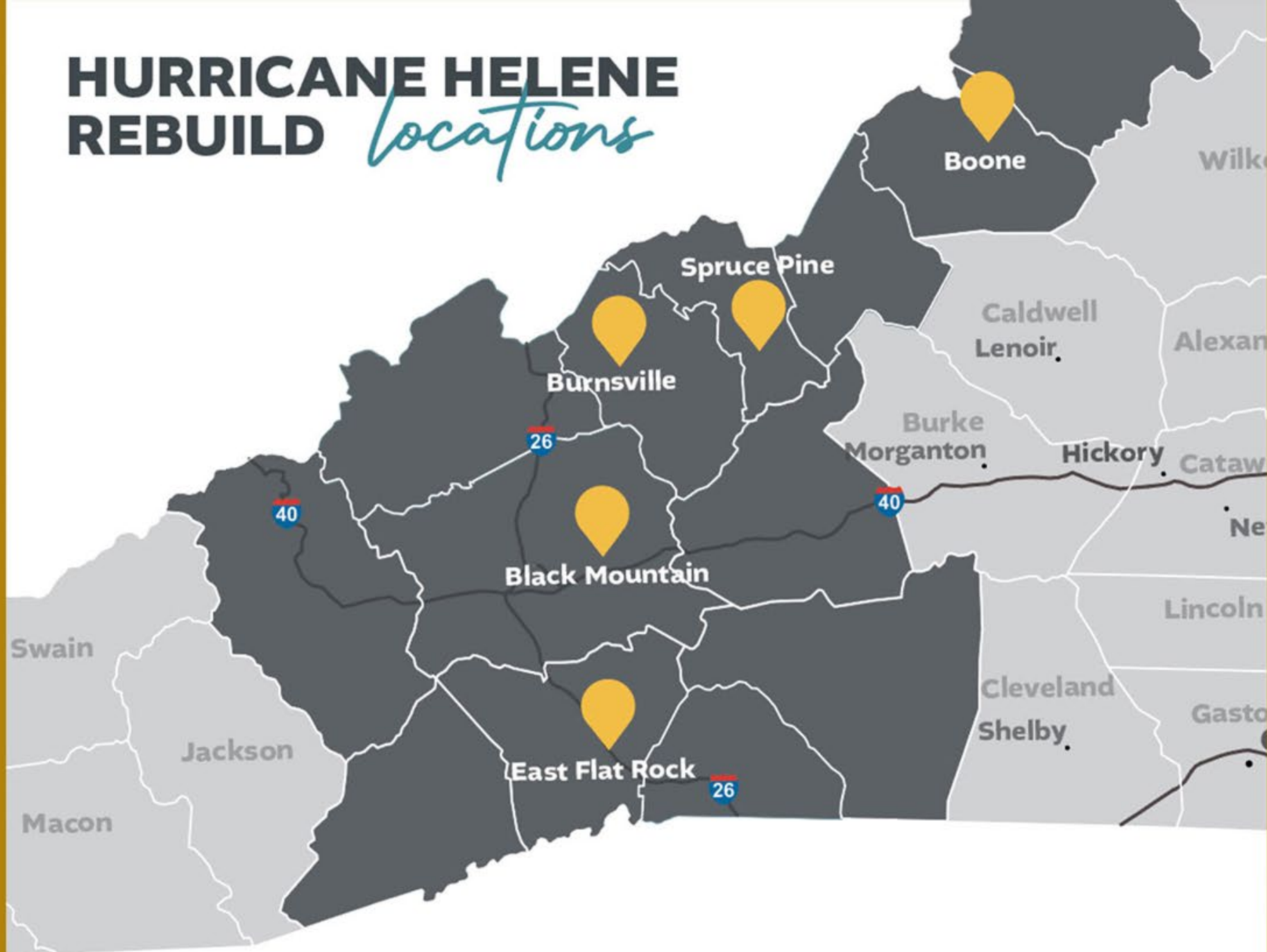








HURRICANE HELENE REBUILD *locations*











































175

















1/2 GP Mold-G



Habitat for Humanity NC

Grant Update

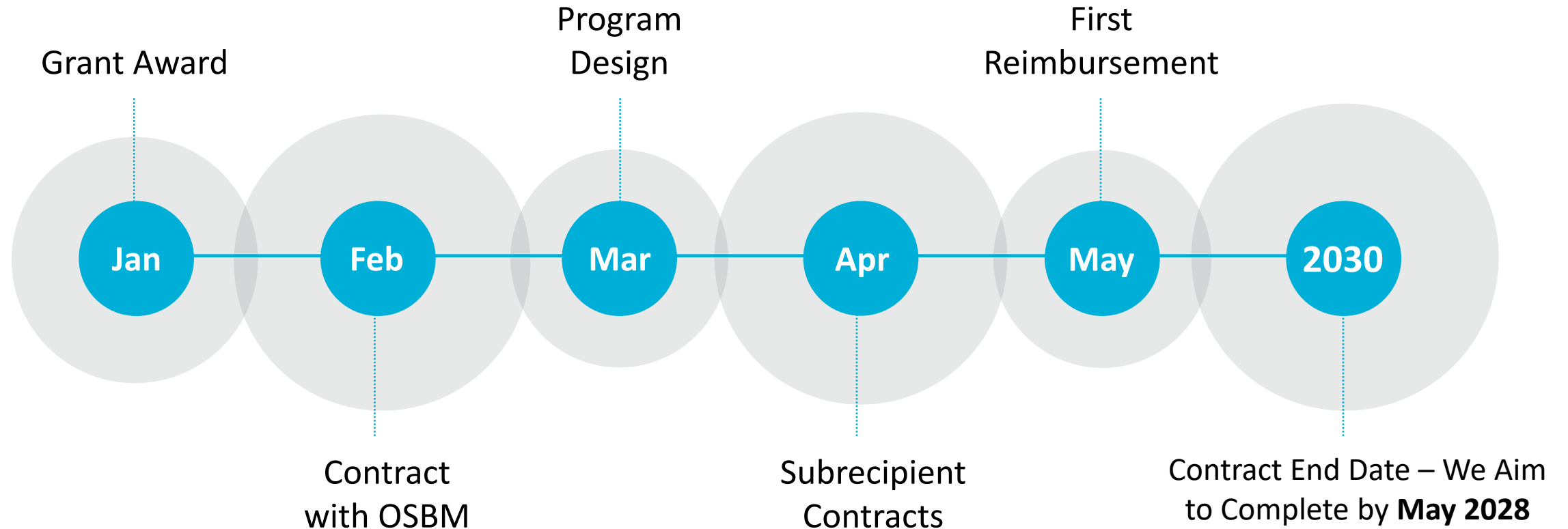
Paul Reeves



We build **strength**, **stability** and **self-reliance** through **shelter**.



Program Timeline



Program Design – Serve 178 Families

Project Type	Reimbursement	No. of Projects
Minor Repair	Up to \$10,000	138
Major Repair	Up to \$20,000	28
Housing Replacement	Up to \$100,000	6
Temporary Housing	Up to 6 months / \$12,000	10



Program Progress

15 Subrecipient contracts signed with Habitat affiliates

13 Projects have been reimbursed (\$137,810)

- 9 Minor Repairs, 3 Major Repairs, and 1 Temporary Housing

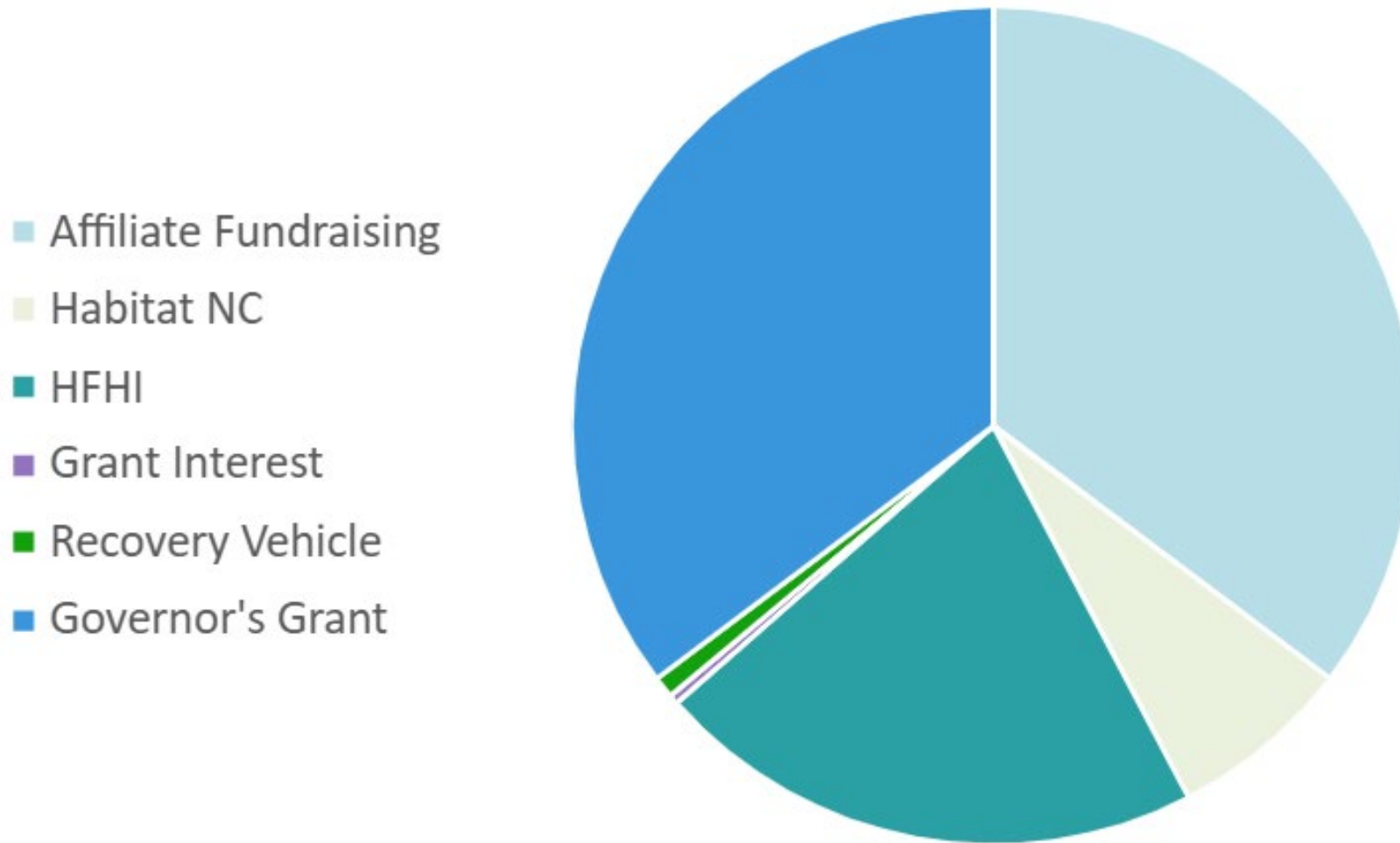
18 Projects have reserved funding (\$856,800)

- 9 Major Repairs, 6 Housing Replacements, and 3 Temporary Housing

\$994,610 in total project funding obligated or reimbursed

- 52 families served

Leverage and Looking Ahead



- Leveraging other funding sources
- \$250,000 gap funding opportunity
- Addition of new subrecipients
- Coordination with Commerce Dept

Challenges

- **Serving 178 families**
 - Limited opportunity to fund large projects
- **Competition with other funding sources**
 - Relationship with funders
 - Ease of use
 - Reimbursement vs. up-front
- **Subrecipient capacity to serve**
 - Staffing
 - Tools and equipment
 - Subcontractor availability



Dollars in Action: Johns Family Site Preparation

The Johns family lost their home of 25 years in a catastrophic mudslide. Transylvania Habitat immediately provided a temporary rehabilitated home, and with \$10,000 of grant funding, they have cleared the site for their new permanent home. Volunteers have already framed it out, and the home will be completed in early 2026.



“Transylvania Habitat was a blessing to me 25 years ago when I bought my first home, and they’re a blessing again today. We’re taking it one day at a time, but knowing a new home is being built gives us hope for the future.”



Next Steps

Next meeting: Friday, November 14, 10:00am – 12:00pm
at Mayland Community College (Spruce Pine)



Stay Connected WNC Recovery

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



Website: wncrecovery.nc.gov

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

Monthly Newsletter: bit.ly/GROW-NC-news