



Yadkin Riverkeeper

Protecting and Enhancing the Yadkin River

Blue Ridge NC Trout Unlimited
January 18, 2022



YRK Organizational Background

- Established in 2008 – 501(c)(3)
- 300 Members
- 14-Member Board of Directors
- 3 Full-time, 2 Part-time Staff
- >200 Volunteers
- Funding - 1/3 individuals, 1/3 foundations, 1/3 from contracts
- Environmental Advocacy Organization
- Affiliated with the Waterkeeper Alliance



YRK Major Accomplishments

- Challenging FERC Relicensing of Alcoa Yadkin Project – Improved water quality
- Successful Coal Ash Removal Litigation Against Duke Energy at Buck Power Station
- Holding Alcoa Accountable for Hazardous Waste Sites at Badin Lake
- Historic Paddle Series
- Yadkin River State Trail (YRST) Blueway Map
- Pure Farms/Pure Water Campaign
- Dance for the River

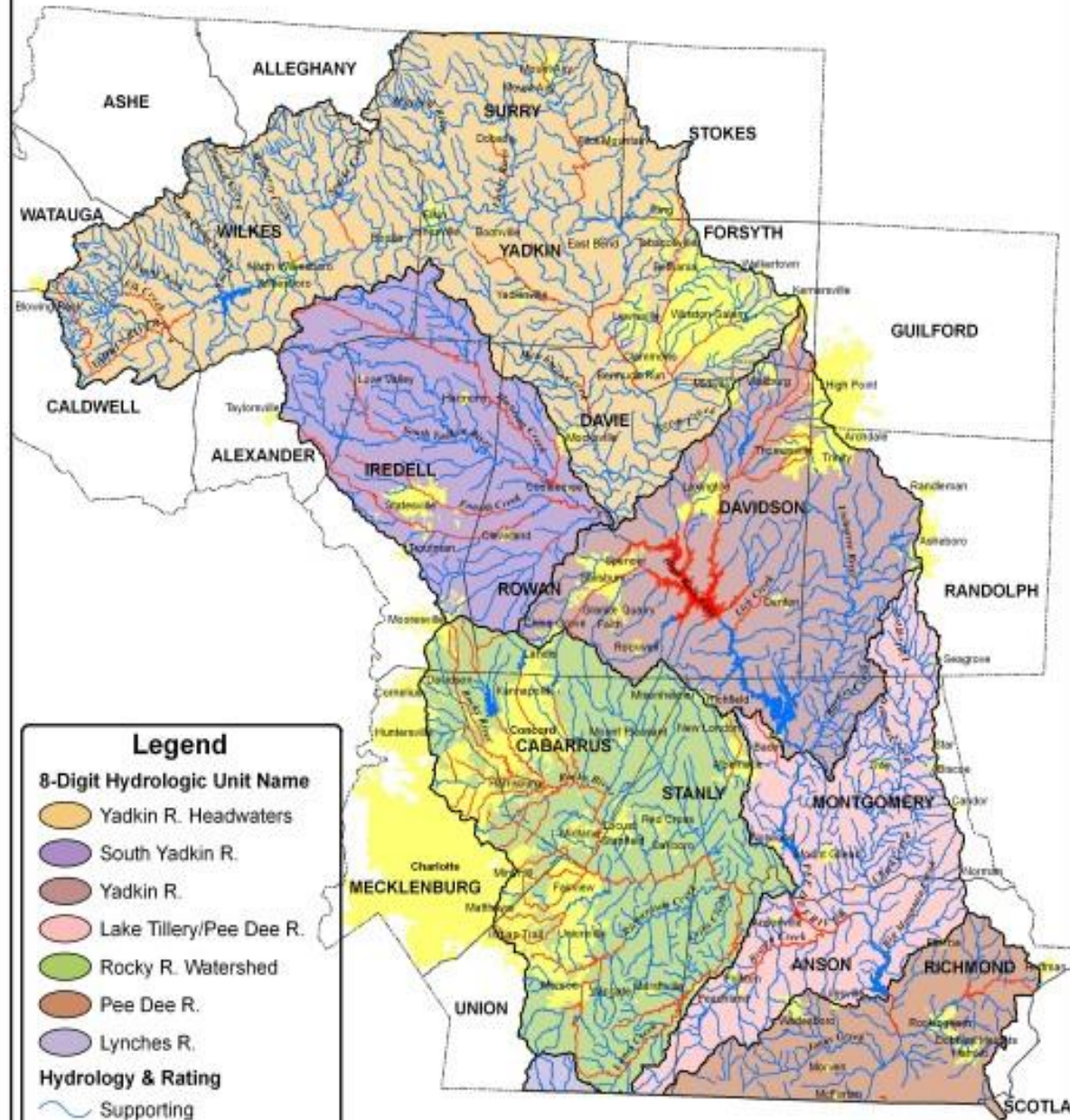


Yadkin River Factoids

- Headwaters along the Blue Ridge escarpment
- Travels 230 miles in NC through 21 Counties and 90+ municipalities
- Turns into the Pee Dee River at its confluence with the Uwharrie River in Montgomery County
- Yadkin Pee Dee Watershed – 7,200 square miles
- Drinking/industrial water supply for nearly 1.7 M people – 200 M gallons per day
- 2 M acres of working farmland in the watershed
- Highest concentration of fish weirs in SE US
- 6 hydropower dams built between 1917 - 1967
- 1 flood control dam in upper basin – Kerr Scott Reservoir
- Duke Energy Buck Power Station located on River in Rowan County
- Designated as an official state trail in 1987



Yadkin - Pee Dee River Basin



Legend

8-Digit Hydrologic Unit Name

- Yadkin R. Headwaters
- South Yadkin R.
- Yadkin R.
- Lake Tillery/Pee Dee R.
- Rocky R. Watershed
- Pee Dee R.
- Lynches R.

Hydrology & Rating

- Supporting
- Impaired



2021 YRK Milestones

- **River ReConnect Program**

- Launched Swim Guide Program
- Monthly E-news
- Forsyth, Rowan and Davidson Creek Week Programs
- High Rock Lake Clean Sweep
- Youth Environmental Educational Historic Paddle Series

- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives**

- Diversity Communications Specialist
- Board and Staff Racial Equity Training
- Racial Inequality and Justice Statement



Roadmap to a Cleaner Yadkin

August 2020

PREPARED BY:
The Piedmont Triad Regional Council
for The Yadkin Riverkeeper

FUNDED BY:
National Fish and Wildlife Founda
Wells Fargo Resilient Communitie

Roadmap for a Cleaner Yadkin

- Comprehensive, basinwide strategies for reducing nonpoint source pollution
- Closed out 2016 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Wells Fargo Resilient Communities Grant
- Yadkin River Basinwide Plan update 2021

2022 Priorities

Protecting and Enhancing the Yadkin River





Alcoa Badin Business Park (ABPP) Stormwater Permit and Hazardous Waste Clean Up

- YRK Opposed to Special Order by Consent (SOC) for ABPP NPDES stormwater permit
- Generated more than 350 public comments requesting public hearing on SOC – DEQ rejected SOC
- Represented by Southern Environmental Law Center
- Partner with Duke Environmental Law and Policy Clinic
- Recommending excavation of most dangerous hazardous waste sites near Badin Lake and Little Mountain Creek
- Developing stakeholder process as part of NPDES Stormwater Permit up for renewal in Oct. 2022

Water Quality Monitoring

Monthly chlorophyll-a, nutrient and bacteria sampling on HRL

Weekly E.coli sampling for Swim Guide sites in Summer months

Bacterial, turbidity & chlorophyll-A sampling as needed

Monthly flights and aerial surveys of watershed

Involvement with YPDRBA and YPDWVG





Water Quality Advocacy

- High Rock Lake Chlorophyll – a standard proposed by the NC Environmental Management Commission
- Pure Farms-Pure Water Agenda
 - Reduce Agricultural Nutrient Runoff
 - Increased funding for BMPs
 - Poultry siting/waste management criteria
 - Agricultural exemptions for land clearing/construction
- Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB)
 - Increased state monitoring and identification
 - HAB Monitoring and Response
 - HAB Guidance for Riverkeepers



YADKIN RIVER STATE TRAIL



Sponsor Name
Access Address
Sponsor Phone
Sponsor Website

For emergencies dial 9-1-1

Yadkin River State (YRST) Trail Blueway Map

- YRK \$40K contract w/ NC Division of State Parks
- YRK official nonprofit partner w/ State Trails
- Needs Assessment
- Mini-grants for access area improvements
- Signage at access/take out areas
- Mile Markers/
Emergency Access



YRK Sustainable Farming Initiative

- Establish Network of Sustainable, River-friendly Farmers
- Pledge to Implement Sustainable, River-Friendly Farming Practices
- Advocate for Policies and Programs that Support Sustainable Farms



Waterkeepers Carolina Plastics Project

- \$188 K NC Attorney General Environmental Enhancement Grant (EEG) to Waterkeepers Carolina
- 2-Year Grant for Sampling Streams and Sediments for Microplastics
- Year 2 - Installation of “Litter Getter” on small stream
- YRK 1 of 15 NC Waterkeeper Organizations Participating



YRK Historic Paddle Series 2021

- June 19: Falls Reservoir
- July 24: Crater Park Elkin to Carolina Heritage Winery
- August 28 – Kayak Demo- Rowan Creek Week
- September 25 – Shallow Ford
- October 9 – Roaring River to Ronda

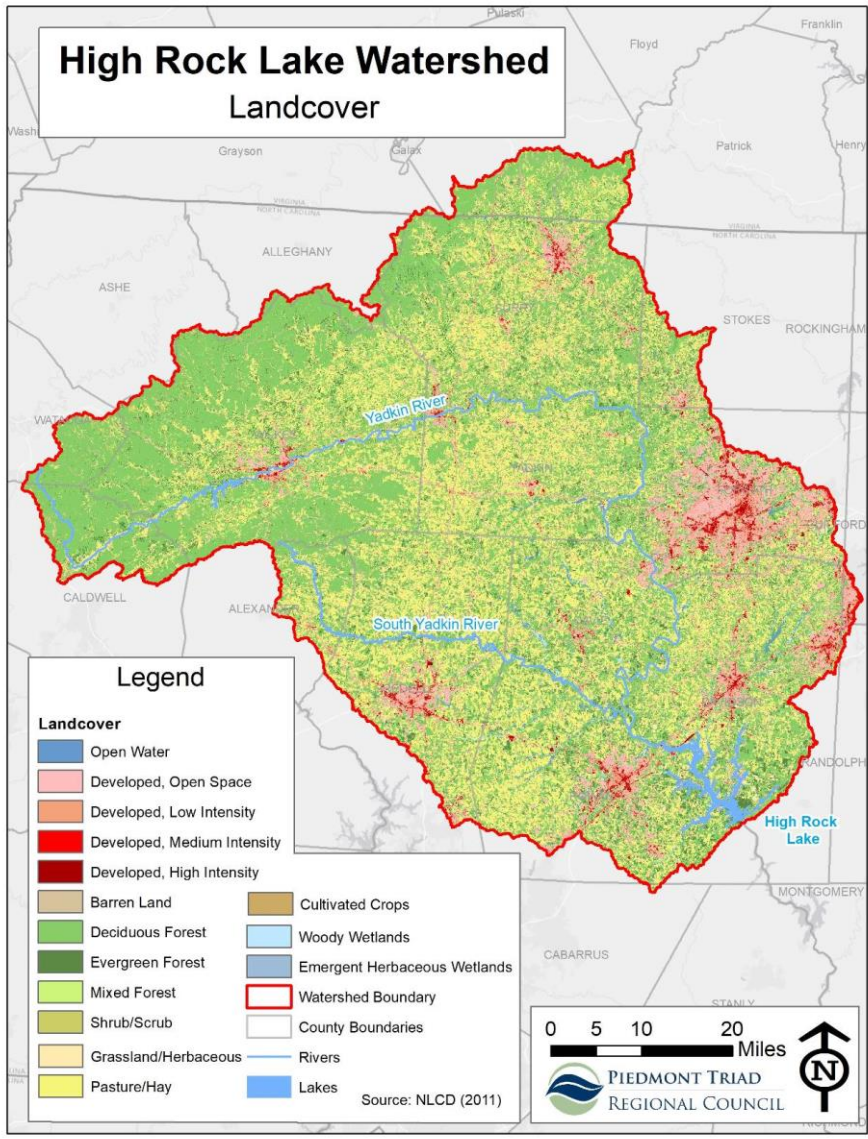
Great Yadkin River Bridge Earth Day Cleanup



2021 River/Lake Cleanups

- March 27 – Salem Creek, Forsyth Creek Week
- April 17-18 – Great Yadkin River Bridge Earth Day Clean Ups (Basinwide)
- June 4 – NC Trail Days River Cleanup Ronda to Elkin
- August 22 – Yadkin River Park
- September 18 – High Rock Lake Clean Sweep
- Sponsored by Reynolds America

High Rock Lake Watershed Landcover



Legend

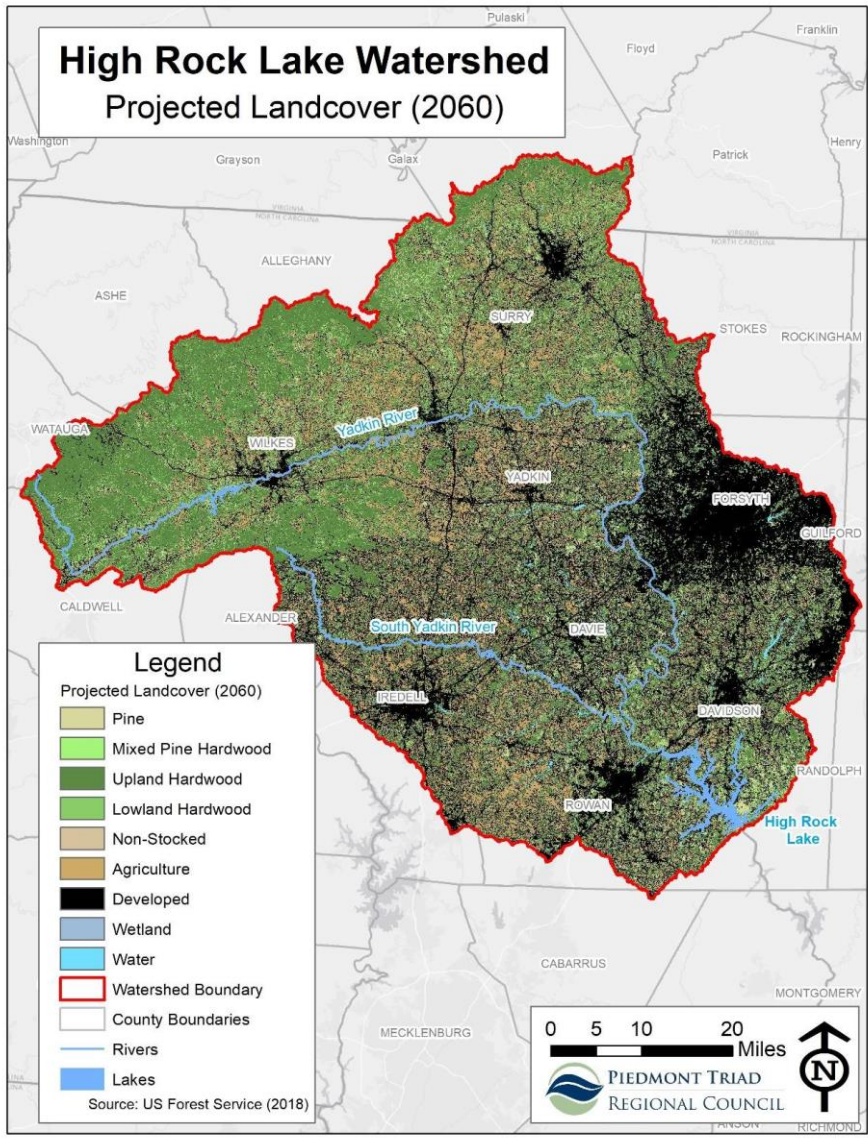
- Landcover**
- Open Water
 - Developed, Open Space
 - Developed, Low Intensity
 - Developed, Medium Intensity
 - Developed, High Intensity
 - Barren Land
 - Deciduous Forest
 - Evergreen Forest
 - Mixed Forest
 - Shrub/Scrub
 - Grassland/Herbaceous
 - Pasture/Hay
 - Cultivated Crops
 - Woody Wetlands
 - Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands
 - Watershed Boundary
 - County Boundaries
 - Rivers
 - Lakes

Source: NLCD (2011)

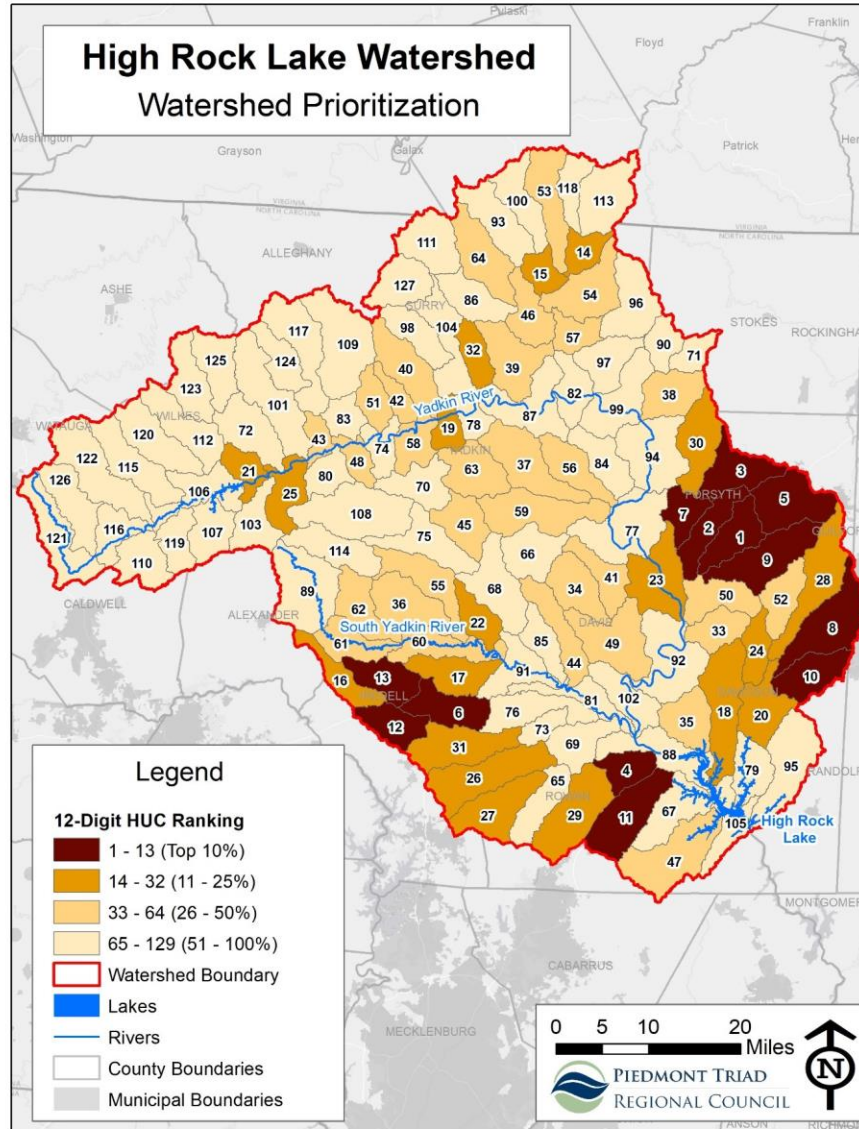
0 5 10 20 Miles

PIEDMONT TRIAD
REGIONAL COUNCIL

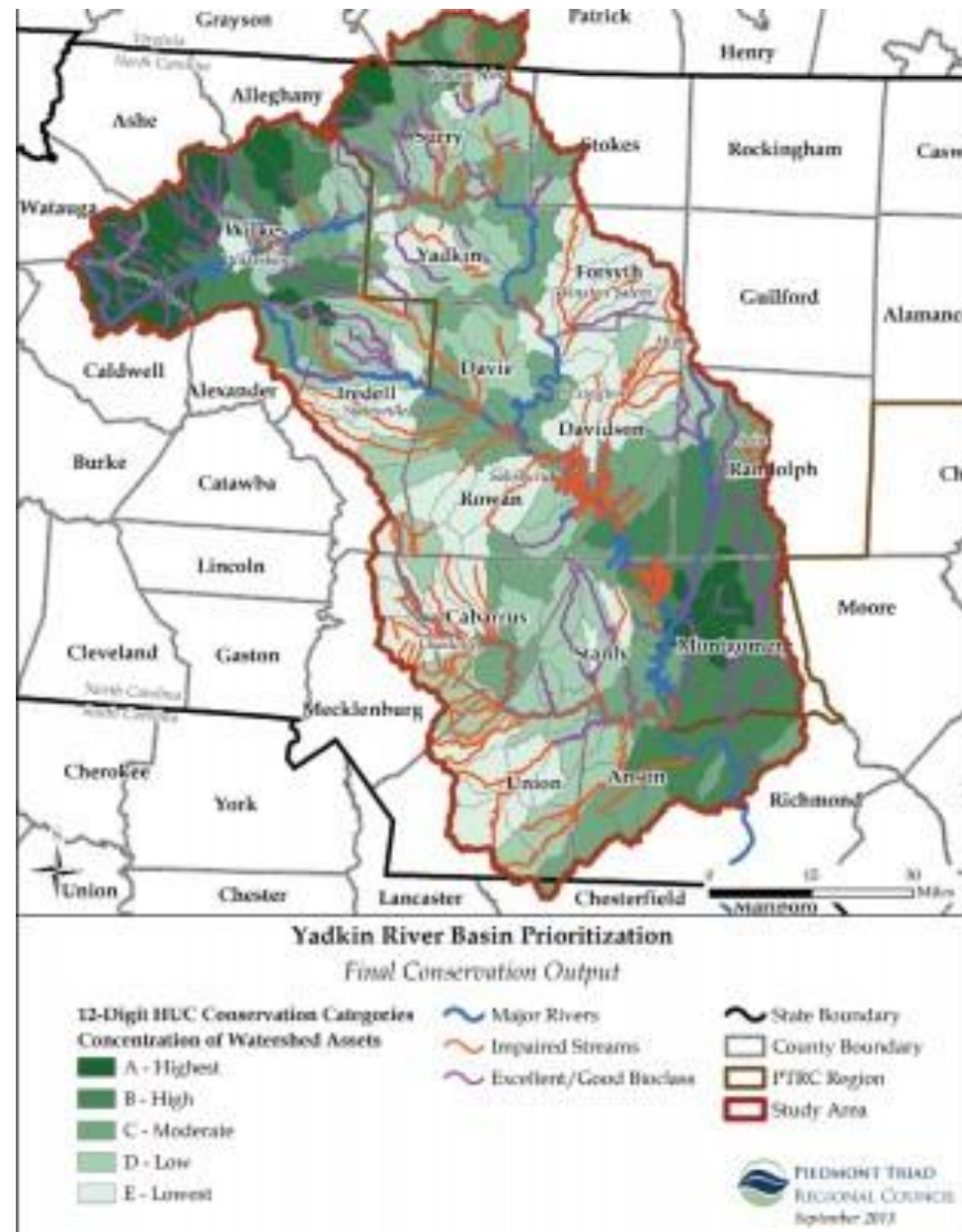
High Rock Lake Watershed Projected Landcover (2060)



High Rock Lake Watershed Watershed Prioritization



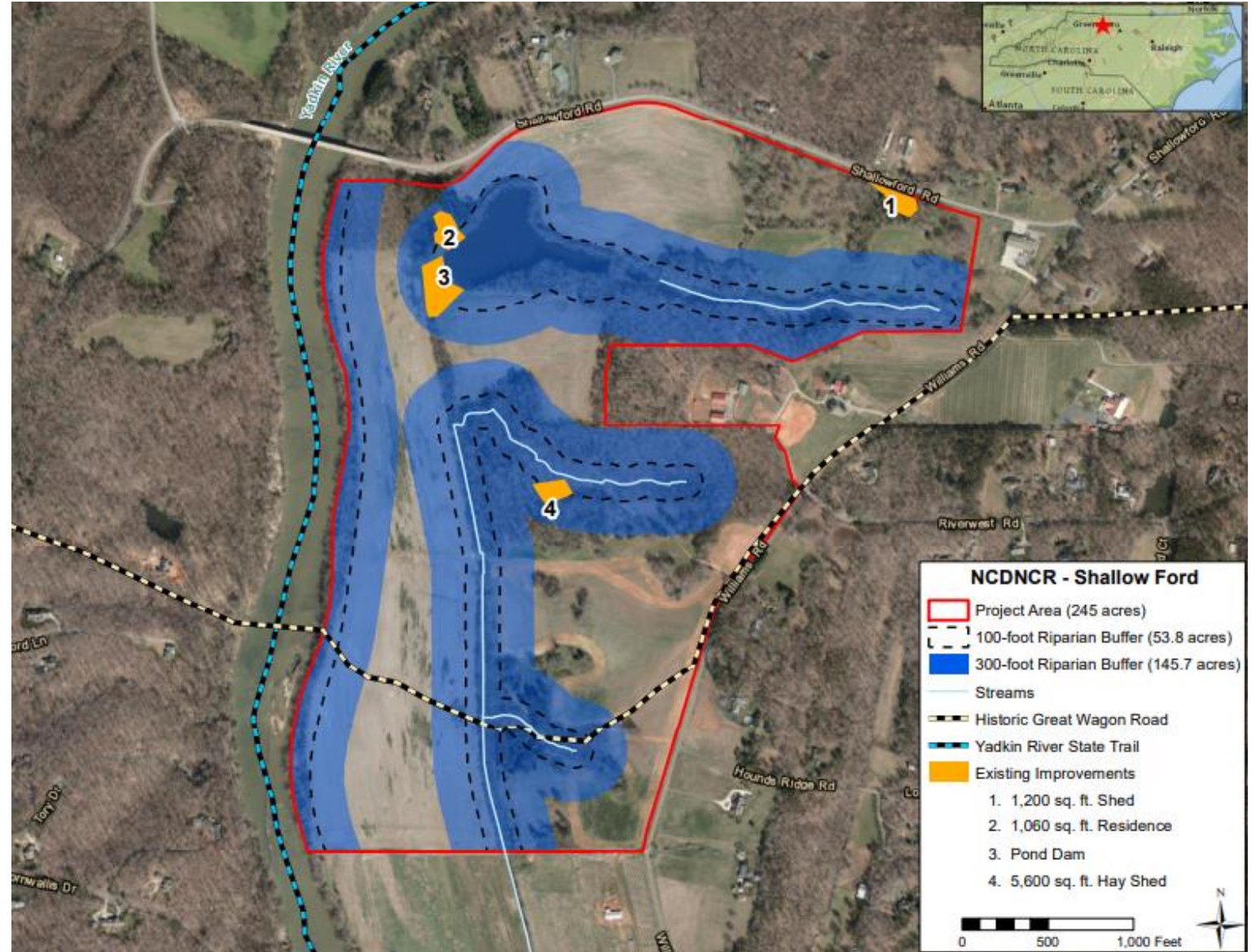
Land Conservation Priorities



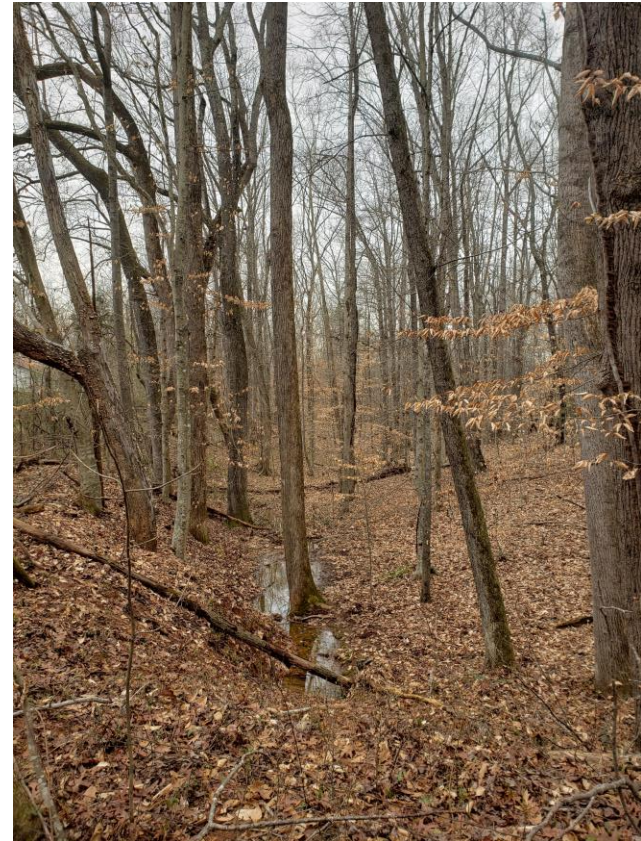
Shallow Ford Historic Site Acquisition-The Conservation Fund-December 2020



Shallow Ford Riparian Buffers/Existing Uses



Yadkin River at Shallow Ford – Westbend, Forsyth County



Opportunities to Work Together

- Clean Water Advocacy
 - Legislative
 - Regulatory
- Headwaters Protection
- Stream Restoration
- Education/Outreach





Staff Contact Info

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Questions??