

## Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

### Regional Director honors Appalachian conservationists

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature

A decrepit dam on the North Toe River has been removed thanks to their efforts. A railroad trestle that collapsed into the Toe River has been removed thanks to their efforts. Hundreds of school children get to experience rivers first hand thanks to their efforts. Numerous private landowners have improved wildlife habitat on their land thanks to their efforts.

In recent years, Toe River Valley Watch and the Blue Ridge Resource Conservation and Development Council have become conservation leaders in North Carolina's Yancey and Mitchell Counties, an extremely rural area that is home to some of the rarest plants and animals in the United States.

Their approach to conservation is founded upon the relationships – both friend and family – that are tight in these rural counties, and the strong connection residents, both recent arrivals and members of old families, have for their landscape.

They've had a dramatic amount of success, which hasn't gone unnoticed. For their efforts to conserve the streams of Yancey and Mitchell Counties, Toe River Valley Watch and the Blue Ridge Resource Conservation and Development Council were two of a handful of organizations from across the south recently recognized by the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service with a Southeast Regional Director's Conservation Award, presented at a ceremony in Atlanta.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peebles.