

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Toe River Valley Festival

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

The streams of the Toe River Valley, in North Carolina's Yancey and Mitchell Counties, are home to the endangered Appalachian elktoe mussel. The headwaters of these rivers can be found on the shoulders of Roan Mountain to the north, and Mount Mitchell to the south, each home to an array of rare plants and animals.

From the standpoint of biodiversity, this is one of the most important areas in the Southern Appalachians, and as of yet, still one of the most rural. The question remains, how will future generations answer the call of stewardship, so these rivers continue to improve, the fields and forests are conserved, and a deep-seated rural way of life remains vibrant.

To that end, Toe River Valley Watch and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service are hosting the 2010 Toe River Valley Festival, an event for 5th grade students in Yancey and Mitchell Counties. Over the course of four days, students from the two counties will visit a stream in their community, have an opportunity to explore the stream and the life found there, learn about sustainable agriculture, discuss watershed health, and use art to explore the natural world.

This is the second time the organizations have put on the festival, and the first time it has been done in Mitchell County. Hopefully through seeds sowed at events like this, the long-term stewardship of this beautiful area will be ensured.

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