

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Stimulus money goes to help Appalachian wildlife

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

Money from the federal government's stimulus package is coming to help wildlife in the Southern Appalachians. \$425,000 in grants from the Fish & Wildlife Service will go to local non-profits to improve fish and wildlife habitat on private lands in western North Carolina

The Little Tennessee Watershed Association will receive \$75,000 to restore aquatic organism passage along tributaries of the Little Tennessee River in Macon and Swain Counties. This follows an examination of stream-road crossings to find those impassable to fish and other aquatic life due to collapsed culverts, culverts perched above the stream, or poorly designed or maintained bridges. These blockages prevent fish and other stream life from moving into quality habitat upstream.

Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy will receive \$200,000 to help restore and manage a number of southern Appalachian bogs and adjacent streams partners in Henderson and Transylvania Counties. Appalachian bogs are one of the rarest natural communities in the nation, with less than 500 acres known to exist in North Carolina. They're home to numerous federally protected species including the bog turtle, North America's smallest turtle.

The Blue Ridge Resource Conservation and Development Council will receive \$150,000 to improve streams in the Mitchell and Yancey County portion of the Upper Nolichucky River watershed. This area is home to the endangered Appalachian elktoe mussel and numerous rare fish. The money will help fund dam removal, restore stream-side forests, stabilize stream banks, and eradicate invasive exotic species.

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