



FEBRUARY 2025 GRANT RESOURCES NEWSLETTER



GRANTS



NC Forest Service Cancels 1-U&CF Financial Assistance Request for Applications. The Office of Management and Budget's recent order that placed a temporary pause on federal grants, loans and financial assistance programs, has raised sufficient uncertainty at the NC Forest Service, to cancel all three of the 2025-1 Financial Assistance Program Request for Applications (RFAs). These urban and community forestry RFAs are funded by federal grants, the NC Forest Service, is the state granting agency. The next **RFA is scheduled to open July 1, 2025.** If interested complete the 6-question 25-1U&CF Financial Assistance RFA Questionnaire - the link is:

https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=3IF2etC5mkSFw-zCbNftGXC3Tdmw9JMhDsIYFZpj6VUREVBQjRGV_oNSSDNBM_ktFQkQ1NoM5TkhYVvYQlQCNoPWcu&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery&route=shorturl.



Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap: The Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Initiative provides free technical assistance to communities with failing septic systems or without existing wastewater infrastructure. Through the technical assistance initiative, EPA also helps communities apply for funding through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program (including tribal and territory programs funded through CWSRF appropriations) made available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to address wastewater needs.

In August 2022, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), in collaboration with states, Tribes, technical assistance providers, and others, partnered on the Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Community Pilot Initiative. EPA and USDA-RD jointly leveraged technical assistance resources to help communities identify, and pursue, federal funding opportunities to address their wastewater needs. The initiative was piloted in 11 places across the southern

regions of the country that have demonstrated significant need.

Key activities:

- Conduct a Community Wastewater Assessment.
- Develop a Community Wastewater Solutions Plan.
- Help Communities Identify and Pursue Funding Opportunities.
- Build Long-Term Capacity.

EPA is expanding the Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap Initiative to assist 150 communities. This initiative, along with historic funding availability through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and other federal funding programs for water infrastructure, will make an impactful difference in the lives of countless people. Communities will be selected on a rolling basis; there is no deadline to apply. For questions email:

SepticHelp@epa.gov. Additional information is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/closing-americas-wastewater-access-gap>.



NC DEQ launches Energy Saver North Carolina on Jan. 5, 2025. The State's Program has \$208M for rebates to install energy cost-saving methods (e.g. heat pumps, electric panels, and insulation) and to present opportunities to create new businesses to support >2,300 jobs in the State's local economies. Energy Saver NC includes 2 U.S. Department of Energy rebate programs — the

Homeowners Managing Efficiency Savings (HOMES) and the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR). NC is the 1st state in the nation simultaneously to fully launch both rebate programs and the 12th in the U.S. to implement the rebate program.

Initially, Energy Saver NC will focus on single-family, owner-occupied housing, particularly those in high energy-burdened, disadvantaged regions and in areas with storm impacts. Single-family homeowners making <80 percent of their area median income (AMI) may be eligible for rebates. And rebates at lower amounts will be available for moderate-income homeowners earning between 80 percent and 50 percent of their AMI. North Carolina's low- and moderate-income families will benefit with cost-savings on utility bills, making homes healthier and improving air quality, and reducing emissions.

The Energy Saver NC Program's whole-home energy savings rebates can be up to \$16,000 for eligible single-family homes. High-efficiency electric appliance rebates can be up to \$14,000 per dwelling unit, which can include the following:

- \$8,000 for a whole-home heat pump for space heating and cooling.
- \$4,000 for an electrical panel.
- \$2,500 for electrical wiring.
- \$1,750 for a heat pump water heater.
- \$1,600 for insulation, air sealing and ventilation.
- \$840 for heat pump clothes dryer and/or electric stove, cooktop, range or oven.

Homeowners can determine eligibility and begin the application process at <https://www.energy.savernc.org/>. For more information visit, https://www.deq.nc.gov/energy-climate/state-energy-office/inflation-reduction-act/energy-efficiency-rebates?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#ResidentFAQs-17151.



NC DEQ - Division of Mitigation Services (DMS) now oversees development of the NC Flood Resiliency Blueprint. The

Blueprint is a first-of-its-kind program in North Carolina and represents the largest statewide flood mitigation investment in state history. An online decision support tool and associated planning will drive state, regional and community decision-making and guide the legislature in

making funding decisions. When completed, the Blueprint will lead to an actionable set of projects and funding strategies that state and other government entities can implement to reduce flooding, mitigate the impacts of flooding, and increase a community's ability to maintain and quickly resume pre-storm activities following flooding. The Flood Resiliency Blueprint is funded through a \$20 million allocation to the Department of Environmental Quality Division of Mitigation Services from the North Carolina General Assembly. An additional \$96 million is allocated to the Division of Mitigation Services to fund priority projects identified in the development of the Flood Resiliency Blueprint for the following river basins: Neuse, Cape Fear, Tar-Pamlico, White Oak, and Lumber. For additional information visit: <https://www.deq.nc.gov/energy-climate/flood-resiliency-blueprint>.

Register for the NC Main Street 2025 Conference, *Creating Livable, Lovable Communities.*

The 2025 NC Main Street Conference will be held on March 11-13 in Mooresville, NC.



North Carolina municipalities, with an identifiable traditional downtown business district and a certified population <50,000 are eligible to apply to the NC Main Street & Planning Center for services under the Downtown Associate Community program. Topics will showcase cultural identity and will focus on Economic Vitality; Design; Promotion; and Organization. Selected communities will receive 3 years of downtown revitalization technical assistance services from the Center and may have the opportunity to move up to the Main Street designation - after successfully completing the program. See the Jan. 2023 list of grants, loans, and technical assistance for potential funding sources and resources at: <https://www.ncmainstreetandplanning.com/>. Federal funding opportunities/resources included for downtown revitalization are from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG).

Members of the NC Rural Planning Program team will present the application process, Best Practices, proven strategies, and community examples (for downtown revitalization, outdoor recreations, tourism, the creation of a network of stakeholders and public/private partnerships, and resources). Contact: Sharon Tripp, Registration Coordinator, info@ncmainstreetconference.com or Naomi Riley, Main Street Education Coordinator, naomi.riley@commerce.nc.gov.



Register for NC Rural Center's Rural Summit 2025 – *Securing Our Rural Future.*

The 2025 Summit will be held on March 25-26, 2025, from 2:00 to 8:00 PM at the Raleigh Marriott Crabtree Valley (4500 Marriott Drive, Raleigh, NC, 27612). Policy issues will focus on education and workforce training, infrastructure, healthcare, and small business. Contact: Savannah Davidsson at events@ncruralcenter.org.

Register at <https://ncrural.evareg.com/2025-rural-summit>.



NC-DPR Announces PARTF Funding. The NC Division of Parks & Recreation's 2024-2025 Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) funding opportunity opened in November; **Application deadline is May 1, 2025.** It is a \$ for \$ matching grant that is available for local park and recreation projects, which includes the acquisition of land or the development of recreational facilities – to benefit the public. Search <https://www.ncparks.gov/about-us/grants/parks-and-recreation-trust-fund/partf-applicants> for more grant information.

ARPA UPDATE



The UNC-SOG hosts virtual ARPA Office Hours for local governments to discuss issues related to the American Rescue Plan Act Fiscal Recovery Fund program and local government finance via NC Finance Connect. The next scheduled UNC-SOG Office Hours include:

- February 21, 2025: 12:00-1:00 PM
- March 6, 2025: 8:30-9:30 AM
- March 13, 2025: 12:00-1:00 PM
- March 19, 2025: 8:30-9:30 AM
- March 24, 2025: 8:30-9:30 AM

The Zoom Log in for all Office Hour Sessions is

<https://zoom.us/j/95481909044?pwd=UIE2VHNhN2luSoJEYTJqcTZTMFRWdzog>

Meeting ID: 954 8190 9044

Passcode: 779726

Apply to UNC-SOG to Host a Lead for NC Fellow: Lead for North Carolina (LFNC) is a fellowship program that aims to create the next generation of local government leaders in North Carolina. LFNC places recent college graduates in high-impact positions in local governments across the state to work on transformative community projects. Fellows receive up to 3 weeks of training prior to placement and ongoing training and support from UNC-SOG. Currently, 70% of local NC government leaders are eligible to retire, which is a reason why this program was designed to plan for NC's future local government leaders' cohorts. View the following video for more information, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSwoC55RsAg>.

The application takes less than 10 minutes, and acceptance as a potential program host site will be secured once the applicant has made a commitment. To apply, visit <https://lfnc.sog.unc.edu/apply/>. **The application deadline is March 8th.**

The program will host **optional virtual informational sessions** for interested governments on **Thurs., Feb. 20th at 2:00 PM and on Tues., March 4th at 12:00 PM**. For more information, reach out to Dylan Russell at 828.964.3144 or russell@sog.unc.edu or Liam Hysjulien at liam@sog.unc.edu.

UPDATE



FEMA GO Quarterly User Focus Group Webinar: Please join the next FEMA GO Quarterly User Focus Group Webinar scheduled for March 25, 2:30 - 4:00PM ET. The webinar will take place using Adobe Connect; to join the webinar, click this link:

<https://fema.cosocloud.com>

[/femagofocusgwebinar/](#). Featured will be highlights about recent and upcoming enhancements, demonstrations of new features and the corresponding training materials. Also included will be an interactive discussion about design ideas, and opportunities to ask FEMA GO system experts to answer questions about FEMA GO.

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Eastern Carolina Council Mission - *to improve the region's quality of life by providing human, planning, and economic development services to local governments and area residents by leveraging resources and collaborating regionally.*



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