



2023 Year in Review

Success stories and accomplishments
N.C. Forest Service, Nonpoint Source & Water Quality programs

Education, training and outreach

Notable events that included a significant contribution of information on BMPs, water quality or forested watersheds:

- 105 logging operators enrolled in the N.C. Forestry Associate's ProLogger Base Program.
- 17 classes and/or labs for 41 N.C. State University students.
- 31 new N.C. Forest Service rangers.
- Approximately 475 local government officials and private and public sector natural resource professionals



N.C. Forest Service's water quality ranger training class.



ProLogger base course class in Montgomery County, NC.



Presenting at the Erosion & Sediment Control Local Program Workshop.



ProLogger base course class in Marion, NC.

Fire rehabilitation support

The N.C. Forest Service protects forests by suppressing wildfires across the state. Identifying, categorizing and repairing fire suppression disturbances are important steps toward water quality protection. Support of fireline and site rehabilitation planning for the Last Resort and Poplar Drive incidents were provided in 2023. Staff provided mapping support, written recommendations and engaged in communications with private, state and federal partners.



Last Resort – Active pumping stations at Phelps Lake (left) and stabilized pumping station area after the fire was extinguished.



Poplar Drive - Identifying sites for water bars using the “eye level” method during the incident in an area without active fire (left). Estimating area of bare soil within a safety zone to plan for post-incident soil stabilization (right).

Bridgemats

The N.C. Forest Service provided portable, temporary bridgemats to loggers as a service to demonstrate how well they can protect water quality on stream and ditch crossings. During this past year, NCFS owned bridgemats were used to protect nine waterways on seven logging operations, and the bridgemats provided access to 200 acres.

An application for the U.S. Forest Service’s Temporary Bridge Funding Opportunity was developed, submitted and awarded this past year. Staff worked to develop documents to support program administration in 2024.

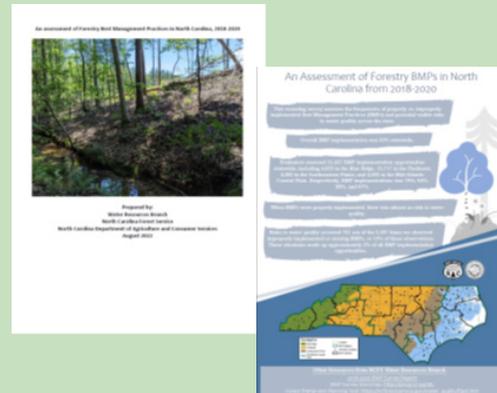
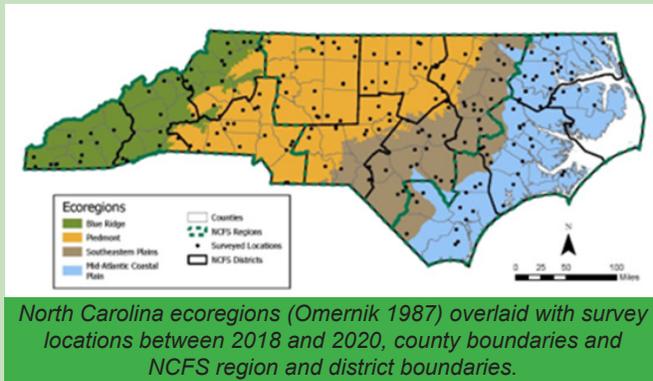


A set of bridgemats, abundant slash on approach ways and curb logs during a logging operation in June 2023.

BMP implementation assessments on logging sites

Three year assessment of forestry best management practices (BMPs) in North Carolina

- Published the fourth cycle final report of the BMP implementation survey.
- Findings revealed an 83% statewide average implementation performance rate.
- Results help improve recommendations, target BMP categories that could benefit from additional outreach efforts and assess the functionality of BMP specifications.



Began the fifth cycle of forestry BMP implementation assessment

- Updated evaluation form to represent the BMP recommendation within the 2021 edition of the North Carolina BMP Manual.
- Protocols for using ESRI™ Arc Pro, Survey123, and Field Maps were established to assist with gathering, analyzing and reporting BMP implementation observations.
- Twenty-five logging sites were assessed.
- The aim is to assess 226 sites.



Linville River restoration

Four new educational signs and a stone path fishing trail were installed by the N.C. Forest Service's BRIDGE Program. The signs provide visitors with information about the restoration project and highlight the importance of restoring and protecting natural habitats for the benefit of the environment and local community. The fishing trail encourages concentrated foot traffic, allowing vegetation to stabilize the streambanks.



BRIDGE crew installing stones for the fishing trail.



Educational sign along the bank of the stream restoration.

N.C. Forest Service staff will continue to monitor the seedling success and plan for supplemental planting along the streambanks of the project site in 2024.

Water quality and erosion and sediment control site inspections

From July 2022 through June 2023, the following results were observed by the N.C. Forest Service while conducting inspections of forestry related, land-disturbing activities to determine compliance with the standards of the Forest Practice Guidelines Related to Water Quality ("FPGs": 02 NCAC 60C .0100 to .0209), as part of the N.C. Sedimentation Pollution Control Act.

2022-23 State Fiscal Year			
Type of Operation	Compliant	Non-compliant	Total
Timber Harvest: Active	1,629	6	1,635
Timber Harvest: Completed	703	3	706
Reforestation and Site Prep	202	0	202
Other*	162	0	162
Sub-Total	2,696	9	2,705
Reinspections - All types	n/a	n/a	2,874
Total - All Inspections	n/a	n/a	5,579

* Other activities include silvicultural management practices such as precommercial thinning, crop-tree release, herbicide or fertilizer application, prescribed burning or forest road construction not associated with a timber harvest.

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