



Attorney General

**Josh Stein**

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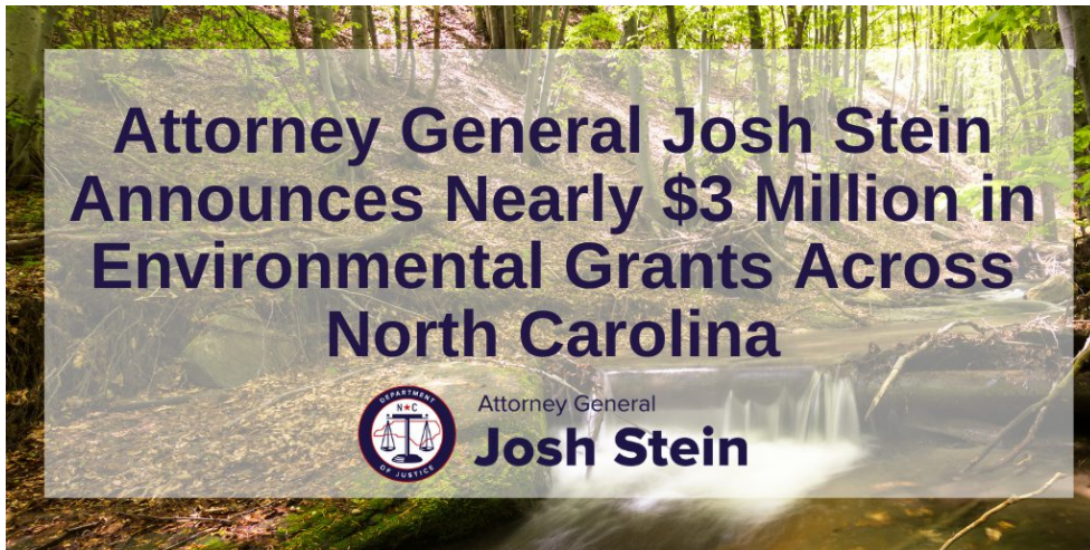
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## Attorney General Josh Stein Announces More Than \$1 Million in Environmental Grants in Eastern North Carolina



For Immediate Release:  
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(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein today announced \$1,099,449 in grants to protect and improve the environment in eastern North Carolina through the Environmental Enhancement Grant (EEG) program. Across the state, Attorney General Stein will award nearly \$3 million in grants to 22 grantees. That includes 10 construction projects; five planning, research and education projects; three land acquisition projects; and four small grants.

Awards include:

### **Bertie County**

Bertie County will receive \$125,000 to restore 147 acres on the Albemarle Sound in the Chowan River Basin and Salmon Creek Preserve to capture stormwater, reduce erosion, improve water quality, and improve wildlife habitats and native plant growth.

"As North Carolina's Attorney General, I take seriously my responsibility to protect the air we breathe and the water we drink," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I am pleased to support this important project for the Chowan River."

"We are very grateful to the Attorney General's Office for funding to initiate key environmental enhancement measures," said Chairman Ronald Wesson. "We, the Commissioners, are committed to protecting our natural resources and look forward to providing sustainable eco-tourism activities in Bertie County. This funding will allow us to take that very important first step – the restoration of natural areas bordering the Albemarle Sound and the Salmon Creek State Natural Area."

### **Carteret County**

The NC Coastal Federation will receive \$185,653 to restore Bogue Sound water access. The project includes restoring 850 linear feet of living shoreline and restoring .6 acres of salt marsh to prevent erosion, improve water quality, and create aquatic habitats.

"North Carolina's beautiful shoreline is one of our greatest assets," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I am pleased to support this project to maintain and preserve it."

"We are thrilled to be a recipient of this grant," said Dr. Lexia Weaver, Coastal Scientist for the North Carolina Coastal Federation. "We are eager to work with Carteret County to protect this shoreline from future erosion from storms, while at the same time preserving and restoring critical salt marsh and oyster habitat. The living shoreline will demonstrate a more effective, economical and longer term technique to protect shorelines from erosion when compared to bulkheads and seawalls."

#### **Carteret and Hyde Counties**

The North Carolina Division of Soil and Water Conservation will receive \$208,000 to restore stream and marsh silt and construct living shoreline in areas where there are outstanding resource waters, nutrient sensitive areas, significant natural areas, or properties where infrastructure is in jeopardy. The project also includes an educational component.

"Protecting our water resources is critically important – as is ensuring that we learn from our conservation efforts," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I am pleased to support this project that will make a significant difference to counties in eastern North Carolina."

#### **Duplin County**

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will receive \$250,000 to educate commercial agricultural producers about and implement conservation farming techniques, including field buffers, native plantings, prescribed burn, and restoration of longleaf pine savannas.

"The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will use these funds to do important work with commercial farmers," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "As a result, habitats will be preserved and conservation efforts in our state will be strengthened."

"The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission is honored to have received a 2020 Environmental Enhancement Grant to support the Corporate CURE (Cooperative Upland habitat Restoration and Enhancement) Program," said Benjy Strope, CURE/SEFA Management Biologist. "Funding will allow us to maintain and develop early successional habitat on lands owned by commercial agricultural producers. This management benefits water quality and numerous game and non-game species, particularly those of greatest conservation need."

#### **Pitt County**

The City of Greenville will receive \$88,775 to restore a 75 foot section of the Green Mill Run Streambank. Doing so will prevent further erosion and sedimentation and preserve the existing greenway.

"Greenways and riverfronts are just two examples of how a well-preserved environment can bring activity to a community," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I am pleased to help the City of Greenville protect these important assets."

"That Greenville will be receiving an Environmental Enhancement Grant for streambank restoration along the Green Mill Run comes as extremely good news, as the environmental quality of our streams in rivers is of high importance to our city, residents, and visitors," said Gary Fenton, City of Greenville Director of Parks and Recreation. "This eroding stretch of streambank is in proximity to our greenway, and just upstream from where the Green Mill Run flows into the Tar River, so the project will protect both the stream's and the river's water quality and the structural integrity of the greenway, a very popular and well-used public amenity here in Greenville."

#### **Statewide Projects**

**Waterkeepers North Carolina will receive \$188,000 to research microplastic pollution in 30 streams and rivers, identify types of microplastics, and estimate loading rates from stormwater.**

"It is critically important that we do everything we can to address pollution in our invaluable water sources," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I appreciate the work Waterkeepers North Carolina does to do just that, and I am pleased to provide them with this additional funding."

**UNC Charlotte will receive \$101,792 to research whether biosolid land application contributes to PFAS occurrence in surface water, groundwater, and soil statewide.**

"I am extremely concerned about the presence of forever chemicals like PFAS in our drinking water," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I am suing DuPont over its role in polluting our water with PFAS. I am pleased to be supporting this work that will help inform our state's efforts to clean up the mess these dangerous chemicals have created."

"PFAS contamination has caused widespread health concerns among our residents in NC," said Mei Sun, Assistant Professor and Lead Researcher at UNC Charlotte. "This project is to provide information to policymakers, water engineers, and community stakeholders to better understand if biosolids land application will contribute PFAS to our precious water resources, improve PFAS exposure assessment, and guide sustainable applications of biosolids in affected areas."

#### About the EEG Program

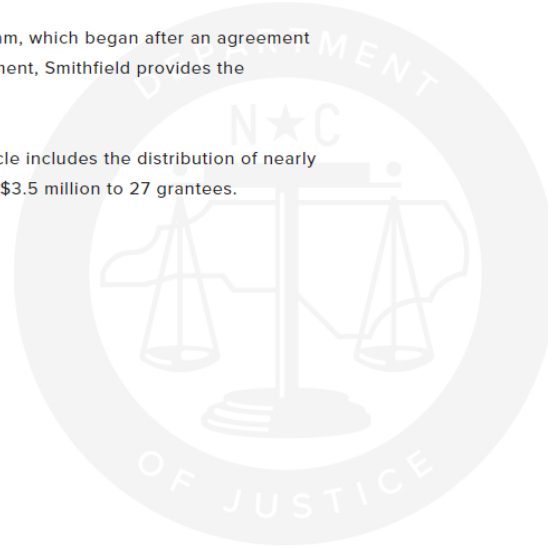
These funds are distributed through the Environmental Enhancement Grant (EEG) program, which began after an agreement between the Attorney General's Office and Smithfield Foods in 2000. Under that agreement, Smithfield provides the Department of Justice \$2 million each year for environmental projects across the state.

Due to ongoing litigation, this year's is the second grant cycle since 2016. This grant cycle includes the distribution of nearly \$3 million to 22 grantees. Earlier in 2020, Attorney General Stein distributed more than \$3.5 million to 27 grantees.

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