

**Buncombe County FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants
Application Summary Sheet**

Project	Agricultural and Community Service Initiatives
Organization	WNC Communities

Amount Requested	\$25,000	Strategic Priority or Sustainability Goal	Local Economy/Food
New or Renewal Request	New	Commissioner Districts Served	All

Organization Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WNC Communities works with farmers to sustain the economy of agriculture, and with community leaders to sustain rural community vitality. This mission is accomplished through a Program of Work focused on community development, agriculture revenue and forest health.
Project Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WNC Communities works in a collaborative relationship to improve the agricultural economy, preserve the forests, and provide support and incentives to rural communities to encourage self-help programs that enrich community life. This is done with a full program of agricultural and community work, including the Hemlock Restoration Initiative (HRI), which works towards restoring ecological balance to WNC by establishing wilderness preservation areas for the endangered Carolina hemlocks and building up the population of predator beetles, specifically monitoring Buncombe County release sites. The goal of traditional and ongoing initiatives (some direct and others indirect) is to stimulate and contribute to the overall economic profile of the county.
People Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WNC HONORS: rural communities with ~25,000 households. JOURNEY: Over 27 youth in Buncombe have received \$27k in scholarships. WNC REGIONAL LIVESTOCK CENTER: In 2018 over 17,837 head were sold through the arena for ~\$13 M in revenue, with 25% of the cattle coming from farmers in Buncombe. BEEF CATTLE: During the current fiscal year the membership list represents 200 active members with 1/3 of those in Buncombe. DAIRY: This commission has 20 active members with a goal of organizing and increasing youth participation in the Jr. Beef Show. BREWERS GRAIN: currently providing an efficient & sustainable supply of low-cost feed of brewer's spent grain to 15+ area dairies & smaller beef cattle operations for feeding livestock. HRI: Forest Managers, users of County forests and homeowners.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a nonprofit service group, follows a consistent model of strong board leadership who work with numerous partners in State, County & Local governments toward common goals.

Budget			
Amount Funded FY2019	n/a	Increase Request	n/a
Project Budget	\$366,850	Total Organization Budget	\$366,850
Other Funding Sources: Program Fees, Grants, Endowment, NC Dept of Agriculture, Service Income			

Additional Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late submission Previous recipient of County Strategic Partnership Grants, \$32,500 in FY2018; not funded in FY2019

Agricultural and Community Service Initiatives

FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants

WNC Communities

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Application Form

Question Group

Please complete the form below and upload the required files for your application. Organizations submitting more than one project must complete one submission form for each project. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Priority is given to nonprofit organizations with projects that contribute to Buncombe County's strategic priorities or sustainability goals.

For FY2020, no Strategic Partnership Grant applications will be considered for the strategic priorities "Affordable Housing" or "Early Childhood Education." Funding for affordable housing projects is managed through Buncombe County's Affordable Housing Services Program. Funding for early childhood projects will be managed through the newly forming Early Childhood Education and Development Fund.

Project Name*

Name of Project.

Agricultural and Community Service Initiatives

Amount Requested*

\$25,000.00

Strategic Priority*

Which of the following priorities best reflects the primary goal of your project?

Buncombe County Commissioners are dedicated to strengthening the quality of life for everyone by setting new fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible goals that will guide decisions and improve our community for future generations. The Board has committed to strategic priorities as a guide to shape partnerships and investments of resources to insure a healthy, safe, well-educated, thriving and sustainable community.

Details about the Strategic Priorities are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Other Sustainability Goal

Strategic Priority - Other Sustainability Goal

If you selected "Other Sustainability Goal" from the list of Strategic Priorities, please list it here.

Details about the Sustainability Goals are available at [THIS LINK](#).

ENVIRONMENT:Conservation & Restoration of Natural Resources (HRI)COMMUNITY: Quality Education(Scholarship);Citizen Involvement(Honors)ECONOMY:Thriving Local Food Systems(Reg Livestock Center-MCA, Brewer's Grains, Beef Cattle & Dairy Programs)

Organization Description*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

WNC Communities works with farmers to sustain the economy of agriculture, and with community leaders to sustain rural community vitality. This mission is accomplished through a Program of Work focused on community development, agriculture revenue and forest health. The following are budgeted programs we manage to benefit Buncombe County and the region: WNC Honors Awards, Journey Scholarship, WNC Agricultural Hall of Fame, WNC Regional Livestock Center and WNC Brewer's Grain. The following are agriculture groups in which WNC Communities serves as administrator: WNC Beef Cattle Commission, WNC Dairy Commission and Mountain Cattle Alliance. Other programs with dedicated funding are WNC AgOptions (NCTTFC) and Hemlock Restoration Initiative (State, Federal & Buncombe County \$). The major highlights are delivering services to 20 counties with improvements in agricultural economy and with sustaining rural community vitality.

Project Description

What do you propose to do? What is your plan? What are your goals?

WNC Communities works in a collaborative relationship to improve the agricultural economy, preserve the forests, and provide support and incentives to rural communities to encourage self-help programs that enrich community life. We do this with a full program of agricultural and community work, including the Hemlock Restoration Initiative (HRI), which works towards restoring ecological balance to WNC by establishing wilderness preservation areas for the endangered Carolina hemlocks and building up the population of predator beetles, specifically monitoring Buncombe County release sites. The goal of our traditional and ongoing initiatives (some direct and others indirect) is to stimulate and contribute to the overall economic profile of the county. Our plan is to use this vital county funding to continue and strengthen our programs and to remain "opportunity ready" for future initiatives, which can only be done by remaining fiscally healthy.

Key Steps*

How will the project work? What are specific activities and milestones that your project entails?

JANUARY: Planning meetings to schedule activities for Beef Cattle Commission (BCC), Dairy Commission (DC), WNC Regional Livestock Market (RLC), Journey Scholarship Committee (JS), WNC Ag Hall of Fame (AHF), Hemlock Restoration Initiative (HRI)

FEBRUARY: JS apps distributed to schools & communities

MARCH: JS apps due and go out to committee; BCC education sessions/meetings; AHF nominations in, reviewed & determined

APRIL: JS determine youth receiving scholarships; DC planning for Jr. Dairy Show

MAY: Induct 2 pioneers into regional AHF; Requests out for \$ for Honors

JUNE: WNC Honors apps updated & distributed; DC requests for \$ for Jr. Dairy Show

JULY: BCC annual tour

AUGUST: BCC raise \$ for Jr. Beef Show

SEPTEMBER: Jr. Beef & Jr. Dairy shows at Mountain State Fair, WNC Honors apps due

OCTOBER: MCA education program, BCC steak supper

NOVEMBER: 70th WNC Honors Luncheon

DECEMBER: Publicity for WNC Honors

ONGOING: Execution of HRI; weekly markets RLC

Area Served*

Which areas of the County will be served by this project? Which Commissioner District(s) will be served?

A Buncombe County Commissioner district map is available at [THIS LINK](#).

WNC Communities serves all 3 Commissioner Districts of Buncombe County with a focus on rural communities, farms and hemlock forests. Service area includes 19 other counties in Western North Carolina.

People Served*

Who are the members of our community this project will serve? How many people will be served? Include demographics, including age, area median income, race, neighborhood and/or school.

WNC HONORS: rural communities with ~25,000 households i.e. Avery's Creek, Big Ivy, Buckeye Cove, Cane Creek, Fairview, Leicester, Ox Creek, Sandy Mush, Shiloh & Spring Mountain. JOURNEY: Over 27 youth in Buncombe have received \$27k in scholarships. Anticipate 1-2 receive scholarships in 2019. WNC REGIONAL LIVESTOCK CENTER: In 2018 over 17,837 head were sold through the arena for ~\$13 M in revenue, with 25% of the cattle coming from farmers in Buncombe. BEEF CATTLE: During the current fiscal year the membership list represents 200 active members with 1/3 of those in Buncombe. DAIRY: This commission has 20 active members with a goal of organizing and increasing youth participation in the Jr. Beef Show. BREWERS GRAIN: currently providing an efficient & sustainable supply of low-cost feed of brewer's spent grain to 15+ area dairies & smaller beef cattle operations for feeding livestock. HRI: Buncombe County Forest Managers, users of County forests and homeowners.

Partners*

Which other organizations are you working with to reach your goals? What other local organizations provide similar services or serve similar beneficiaries, and how do you work together?

Collaborative partners of our programs are NC Dept of Ag, County Governments and other agencies located throughout the region. Specific to each program:

WNC HONORS funding comes from private industry to provide 100% of cash awards to rural communities. REGIONAL LIVESTOCK CENTER supported by NC Tobacco Trust, Golden LEAF, NCDA&CS, NC Rural Center, ARC, International Paper, County Governments, Farm Bureaus, legislators and area producers, with NC Cooperative Extension offering educational opportunities. WNC BREWERS GRAIN program partners with New Belgium Brewing to provide spent-grain at a cost below market to farmers while NCSU provides research and NC Cooperative Extension agriculture agents provide appropriate criteria on mixing and feeding livestock. HRI's collaborative network share an interest in the preservation and restoration of threatened hemlocks, and receives state, federal and county funding to accomplish its goals and works with towns, cities, land trusts and colleges.

Personnel*

Who is responsible for the project? Briefly describe project leaders and the role each will play in the project. How do these leaders reflect the population or community that you serve?

Each program/agriculture group has a dedicated staff person assigned to facilitate committees, track progress toward implementation and document outcomes. The Interim Director is Jennifer Ferre with over

10 years in nonprofit management and agricultural program leadership. The Director of Community and Agricultural Programs, Terri Wells, is a Buncombe County native and has a significant background in community and agricultural development. Director of Hemlock Restoration Initiative, Margot Wallston has successfully managed HRI for 3 years and has a lengthy background in land conservation, restoration, plant ecology, and volunteer management. Officers include long term community leaders K Ray Bailey (President) and LT Ward (Vice President), both who reside in Buncombe County, volunteer and lead the programs of WNC Communities with financial and organization oversight.

Success*

How will you measure results? What will success look like? How will you document the impact of your project? Include whether there is a model that serves as basis for project design.

In our framework as a nonprofit service group, we follow a consistent model of strong board leadership who work with numerous partners in State, County & Local governments toward common goals. Historically, in addition to sustainability, this has led to significant pieces of infrastructure like the WNC Ag Center, WNC Farmer's Market, NC Mountain State Fair, The North Carolina Arboretum, Agricultural Research Stations and the WNC Regional Livestock Center. We measure success by the numbers of communities, youth, farms/farmers and healthy hemlock forests we support. Within HRI's grant programs are measurements which include site monitoring, tracking and reporting. Success is confirmed with improved health of hemlock. Opportunities like these would not be possible without the long-term support of our County Governments in the west.

Funding*

What is your plan for finding the balance of the project budget? What is your funding timeline and what are your other sources of support?

This request is a component of an annual budget which, along with funds from other counties, help to make up the full operational budget as identified in the attached budget. Other funding comes from the NC Dept of Agriculture, NC General Assembly, grant fees and related business income. The funding timeline includes receipt of county funds spread as committed over the 12 month budget period. Other funding made available by the NC General Assembly, NCDA&CS and foundations are received as stipulated in each agreement.

Sustainability*

How will this project be maintained? Please describe funding sources and how you plan to sustain the project in future years.

WNC Communities Board and Staff have worked diligently to create sustainable funding sources (including Buncombe County) to underwrite the organizational budget to ensure proven rural community development, agriculture and forestry programs can continue. Another strategy has been to develop reasonable program fees to generate income. It is also critical to maintain funders interested in supporting specific programs like NC Tobacco Trust Fund underwriting the WNC AgOptions program or the State funding the Hemlock Restoration Initiative. It is important to be a viable regional nonprofit service group, so that when state funds are available, they can be utilized for programs in the west. What impresses state legislators is the willingness of county governments to put some skin in the game. This support has been critical to the longevity of WNC Communities and our programs.

ATTACHMENTS**Project Budget***

Download the budget form at **THIS LINK**.

Complete the budget form for this project and the overall organization.

Save it to your computer, then upload it.

strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-WNC Communities.xlsx

Financial Statements

Upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements.

All financial statements must be audited, reviewed or compiled by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

WNC Communities Audit FYE 6.30.2018.pdf

IRS Form 990

Upload a copy of the 990 nonprofit tax reporting form that you most recently completed.

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

WNC Communities 990 FYE 6.30.2018.pdf

Board of Directors List

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors.

If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

WNCC Board of Directors Officers and Terms FYE 6.30.2019.pdf

Authorized Signatory

By typing in below the name of the authorized signatory and date of submittal, you acknowledge that your governing body has authorized this application, that it is true and current to your knowledge. As a condition of any grant awarded, this organization will provide all information in the manner described in the contract to be executed between the organization and Buncombe County or its designee, including program and financial

reporting.

Name & Date

LT Ward, 3-292019

Other attachments or supplemental information may be submitted to Rachael Nygaard at rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-WNC Communities.xlsx
- WNC Communities Audit FYE 6.30.2018.pdf
- WNC Communities 990 FYE 6.30.2018.pdf
- WNCC Board of Directors Officers and Terms FYE 6.30.2019.pdf