

FY2023 Buncombe County Tipping Point Grant Report

Organization Name:	Swannanoa Community Council
Project Name:	Fox Creek Environmental Restoration and Educaiton Project

Activities Accomplished	Annual Goal	Amount Completed
Number of baseline reports complete and posted online	2	2
Number of wetland delineation maps filed with the Army Corps of Engineers and posted online	1	1
Number of volunteers trained in Invasive Species removal, Vegetation Plot and Breeding Bird Survey and Restorations Actions	6	15

Expenses (please list all grant related expenses)	Amount Spent
Initial site review / mtg w/ Allen-Belle-Glen	\$ 120.00
Data collection & review; GIS project setup and data review; field map preparation; GPS data upload	\$ 120.00
Wetland delineation w/ Bob Gale	\$ 120.00
GIS mapping for wetlands and preliminary report	\$ 120.00
Wetland report	\$ 480.00
Comprehensive Inventory & Planning Report; initial setup; comprehensive species listing update	\$ 240.00
Mileage: office to site (1 of 6); initial meeting	\$ 43.75
Mileage: office to site (2 of 6); wetland delineation	\$ 43.75
Spring Field Inventory: birds/vegetation	\$ 240.00
Plant IDs and iNaturalist updates	\$ 240.00
Stream assessment (aquatic insect/stream health determination; water quality samples & delivery	\$ 600.00
Stream nutrient/fecal coliform etc sampling flat rate (EQI lab analysis)	\$ 289.50
GIS map updates for final report	\$ 60.00
Report and management recmmendations final	\$ 480.00
Mileage: Office to site (3 of 6) spring field inventory	\$ 43.75
Mileage: Office to site (4 of 6) stream assessment	\$ 43.75
Tool storage onsite in park	\$ 1,058.23
Tools	\$ 1,391.75
	\$ 5,734

Tipping Point Grant \$5000, Swannanoa Community Council Contribution \$734

Narrative summary of grant related activities

In the summer and fall of 2022, the Fox Creek Park volunteer work group organized through the Swannanoa Community Council and the Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa continued to meet for regular workdays, focusing primarily on kudzu crown removal and clearing access trails. As planned in our grant proposal, we contracted with Kevin Caldwell, Conservation Biologist of Mountains-To-Sea Ecological to create and register a Wetlands Delineation Survey and conduct an ecological assessment as the foundation for a long-term site management plan that will guide us through the coming years of restoration. To prepare these reports Mr. Caldwell conducted an initial site review, met with some of the Fox Creek Park project organizers and made several site visits with the assistance of Mr. Robert Gale, Ecologist and Public Lands Director for Mountain True. The Wetland Delineation Survey was completed in the fall and winter of 2022 and has been filed with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) to ensure that any future development in the designated wetlands in the park follows USACOE regulations. The Wetlands Delineation Survey is published on the Fox Creek Park website. <https://foxcreekpark.org/mts-report-wetland>

In the spring and early summer of 2023, Mr. Caldwell completed the ecological assessment and site management plan. He conducted a spring field inventory of birds and vegetation (adding to an ongoing species inventory being created by park volunteers on iNaturalist) a biological assessment of the stream water quality and survey of the presence of aquatic insects and a physical assessment of the stream for nutrients and the presence of bacteria.

Mr. Caldwell submitted the final ecological assessment and site management plan to us in June and it is currently posted on the Fox Creek Park website: <https://foxcreekpark.org/tpng-report-index>

Mr. Caldwell observed and approved the invasive species removal methods being used by park the project leaders who are training the volunteers and determined that additional training was not needed. The project leaders trained over fifteen new volunteers during the project period. Because there was money in the original budget for training, we submitted a budget modification in May of 2023 to redirect the training funds to purchase some additional tools and a storage box that we have installed in the park so that the tools used on the park workdays can be stored in the park. This budget amendment was approved by Ms. Angelyn Johnson (see attached emails) and is reflected in the final budget report.

We are currently reviewing the Ecological Assessment and prioritizing its recommendations for restoration opportunities in the park. The Swannanoa Community Council (SCC) has officially formed a Friends of Fox Creek Park standing committee that will make decisions about the next steps for Fox Creek Park and will report on the progress to the SCC. The new tools and tool storage will also allow us to provide proper equipment for larger numbers of volunteers during our monthly workdays. We are sincerely grateful for the tipping point grant which helped us move the Fox Creek Park Environmental Restoration and Education Project forward in significant ways.