

# NC OUTDOOR HERITAGE ADVISORY COUNCIL



*Inspiring Adventure.  
Investing in the future.*

## THE ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Wendell "Dell" Murphy-  
Chairman

Arthur Dick  
Brian Raynor  
M.S. Brown III  
George Ragsdale  
Harry Shaw  
James "Jim" Harrell III  
Michael "Mikey" Nye Fulk  
Austin Barnhill  
Kevin Howell  
Owen Andrews  
Mitch St. Clair  
Charles "Ches" McDowell



## Who we are...

The North Carolina Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council is working to enable the next generation of passionate participants in North Carolina's outdoor heritage activities. The Council provides leadership, guidance, and funding through programs and initiatives throughout the state, providing kids and teens with opportunities to encounter and experience the outdoors. We are helping kids step away from the electronic devices and discover those activities in the Carolina wilderness that have been enjoyed for generations, but are now seeing a decline in interest. That includes outdoor heritage activities like hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, archery, canoeing, bird watching, kayaking, swimming, and more. The Council's long-term vision is to preserve the health, heritage, and natural resources of our great state by inspiring a new generation of outdoor adventurers. The best way to do that is by igniting a passion for the outdoors through the language that all kids speak fluently: fun.

# 2019: A Year of Growth

Team: In 2019 the Council hired an Executive Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the Council. With the funds appropriated in the FY 2019 Budget, the Executive Director established two additional Council positions.

- The first is our Marketing and Communications Manager who oversees the marketing and brand engagement, Council communication with all the key stakeholders and all other public relation needs.
- The second is our Fundraising and Grants Manager, who oversees our fundraising efforts, partnerships with retailers, facilitates our NC Schools Go Outside (GO) Grants Program and applies for grants for additional funding for our programs.

Initiatives: In 2019 the Council began the process of establishing new programs to further our mission and statutory responsibilities. This year we have launched our first two programs. First, is our North Carolina Schools Go Outside (GO) Grants. Second, is our North Carolina Outdoor Heritage Patch Program. Staff has also been developing other programs and initiatives that we plan to launch in 2020.



# NC Schools Go Outside (GO) Grants

In 2019, the Council established our first program, the NC Schools Go Outside (GO) Grants.

GO Grants help address the main barrier to getting kids outside during the school day – funding. Field trips and outdoor experiences offer students opportunities to explore and learn in hands-on environments. With limited dollars available from the local school systems, such engaging and active styles of learning are becoming things of the past.

GO Grants are awarded for amounts between \$250 to \$2,500. The grants pay for or offset the cost of field trips or on-campus learning centers. Qualifying for grants require instructors demonstrate how the experience will address topics currently being taught in class and that the experience meets the goals of the Outdoor Heritage Trust Fund plan. The application process is a simple application form that staff developed as to not be burdensome on the teachers or schools.



Grants have been used to help students visit many of the North Carolina State Parks, the North Carolina Zoo, the U.S. Whitewater Center, and attend overnight camps. Many of these trips have provided students opportunities to experience various activities for the first time, such as fishing, hiking and camping.

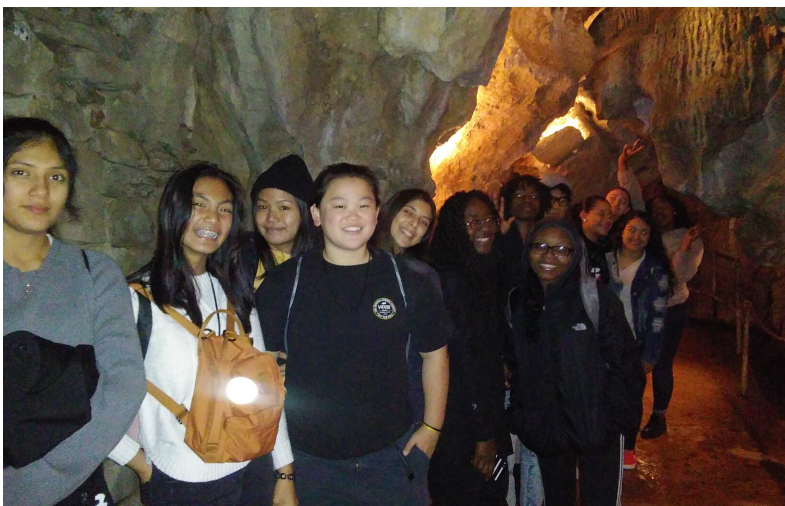
GO Grants have also been used to help fund the construction of on-campus learning centers. These on-campus learning centers help get students outside during the school day and provide real world experience for lessons being taught in the classroom.

# GO Grant Figures



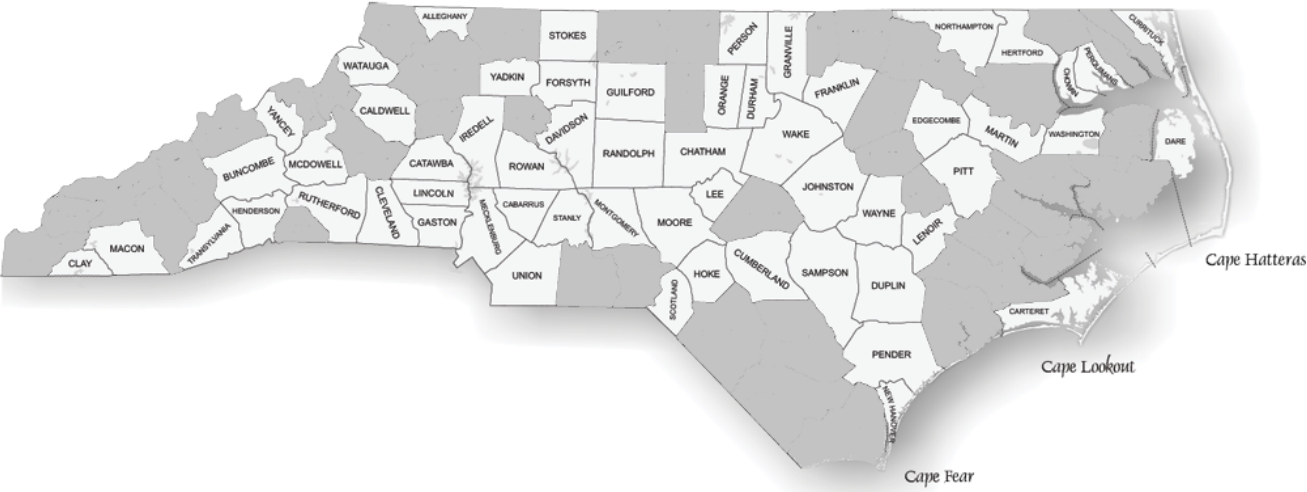
The Council has awarded **136** grants since the program's inception in April. These total an amount of **\$189,520** in **57** counties.

**14,335** students across all grade levels kindergarten through 12th grade, have participated in a trip or benefited from a learning center thanks to the GO Grants.

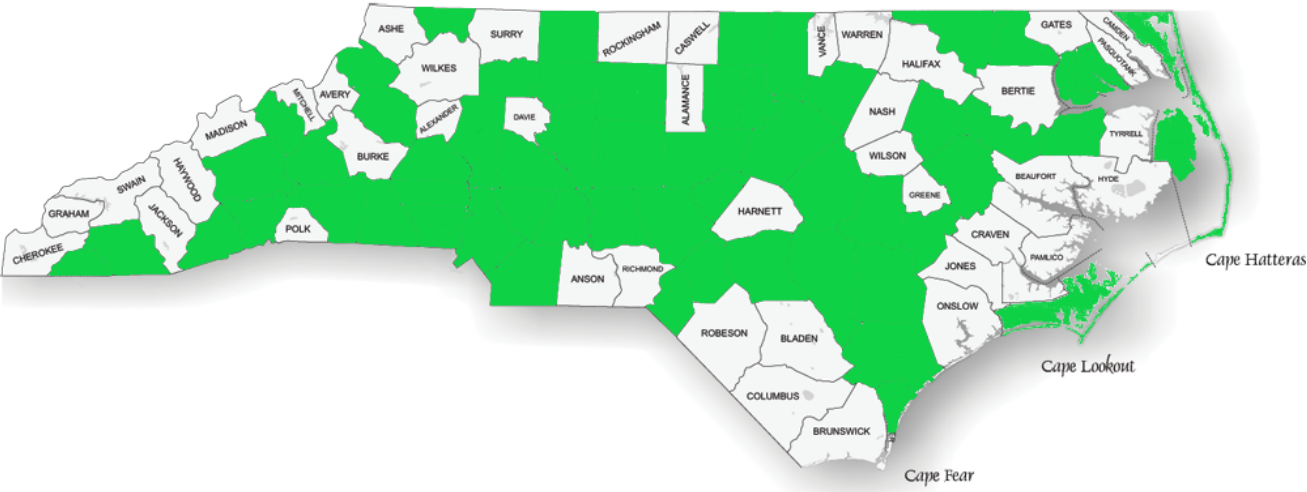


# GO Grants' Reach

GO Grants have been awarded in the 57 counties below.



In 2020 we will be working to reach all 100 counties by targeting the 43 counties below.



# GO Grants' Impact

We know the large impact the funding is having on schools as we hear from teachers and principals just what these trips mean to them.

***"I have to say...yesterday's field trip was the best field trip I have taken in the 20 years I have been teaching! Thank you, thank you, thank you! We are so thankful for the Go Outside Grant! Our students had an amazing time! The team building and outdoors and challenges we faced helped all of us grow as people and a team yesterday in so many ways. I am in no way exaggerating when I say this was the BEST experience ever."***

**- Julie Young, 6th Grade Teacher at Tuttle Elementary, Catawba County**

***"I can not even begin to tell you what an AMAZING time we had yesterday! Again, we can not thank you enough. What a blessing this trip was for our students. A day they'll never forget."***

**- Corrie Freeman, 4th Grade Teacher at Hardin Park School, Watauga County**

***"The trip was an AMAZING experience! Most of our students come from families who, due to their financial difficulties, are not able to do a lot of extracurricular activities. The Go Grant allowed our Kindergarten students to enjoy a wonderful hands-on day at the farm, one they (and myself) will never forget. Words cannot express how grateful I am that my students were able to experience seeing farm animals, learn about farms and just be able to go outside and play. On behalf of the entire Kindergarten team, students and staff."***

**- Amanda Mitchell, Kindergarten Teacher at Loyd Auman Elementary, Cumberland County**

***"We had a GREAT trip. We visited Roanoke Festival Park and the Somerset Plantation on Friday. The guides provided for us a first rate program even though they were out there in the rain with us. As I might have mentioned in one of my earlier contacts with you, many of our students had never visited our coast."***

**- Greg Ottoway, Principal at Lawsonville Elementary, Stokes County**

# GO Grants in the Media

We have had some great press coverage on our GO Grants program. In the appendix of this report we have included 2 articles from various papers across the state.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Olivia Baumann

Marketing & Communications Manager

Phone: 984.222.9963

E-mail: [olivia.baumann@nc.gov](mailto:olivia.baumann@nc.gov)



## NC OUTDOOR HERITAGE ADVISORY COUNCIL

1751 Varsity Drive

Raleigh, NC 27516

[www.ncoutdoorheritage.org](http://www.ncoutdoorheritage.org)

919.707.4037

## W.A. Patillo Middle School is Awarded the NC Schools Go Outside (GO) Grant

RALEIGH, NC—The NC Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council (OHAC) is pleased to award a NC Schools Go Outside (GO) Grant to W.A. Patillo Middle School for \$1,500.

The grant will help offset costs for Ms. Amanda Mongillo take her Girls 4 STEAM club to AstroCamp in Clover, Virginia. The club will be attending camp in the spring.

Ms. Mongillo said, "with the GO Grant, my Girls 4 STEAM group is a step closer to attending AstroCamp in March! This grant makes it possible to get girls integrated into STEM early, see how STEM plays outdoors, and gives them the opportunity to explore outside of their community and work with professionals. The GO Grant has made it possible to get my girls outside and engaged! Thank you!"

Senator Toby Fitch was able to call Ms. Mongillo and give her the good news. "It was an honor to let Patillo know they were awarded the GO Grant. It is important for our students to be able to have hands-on learning that adds to their educational experiences. They certainly deserve this grant and I look forward to hearing all about their trip when they return", he exclaimed.

Representative Shelly Willingham said this of the grant, "Congratulations to W.A. Patillo Middle School on receiving the NC Schools GO Grant. I am happy to hear that students will have the opportunity to take advantage of rewarding learning opportunities. I believe this opportunity will be the path to more advantageous research initiatives that lead to future career decisions. This is the kind of accomplishment that makes me proud and makes Edgecombe County a great place to live and work."

OHAC Executive Director Justin Burr said, "We understand that funding is often the largest barrier to getting students outdoors, so we are pleased to be able to help offset some of those costs for these students. And what a unique opportunity these girls have to be able to attend AstroCamp!"

The NC Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council established the NC Schools Go Outside (GO) Grants earlier this year. GO Grants are \$250 to \$2,500 grants that will be provided to access field study locations and assist with other expenditures that result from taking students outdoors.

Qualifying for a GO Grant requires instructors demonstrate how the experience will address topics currently being taught in class and furthers the Outdoor Heritage Advisory Council's mission.

For more information, contact Olivia Baumann at 984.222.9963 or [olivia.baumann@nc.gov](mailto:olivia.baumann@nc.gov).

###









# NC Outdoor Heritage Patch Program

This summer the Council launched the NC Outdoor Heritage Patch Program. The goal of the program is to encourage youth to experience the outdoor heritage activities. When someone completes one of the featured tasks, they qualify to receive one of the limited-edition patches. While the Council focuses on getting youth outdoors, the patch program is for adventurers of all ages. For each completed task, youth 16 and under receive the patch for free. Adults and youth over the age of 16 can receive a patch for each successful task, by making a \$5 donation to the Outdoor Heritage Trust Fund.

The patches are designed and made by A-B Emblem a company out of Weaverville, NC. For 2019, we started with 12 patches.

## The 2019 featured tasks

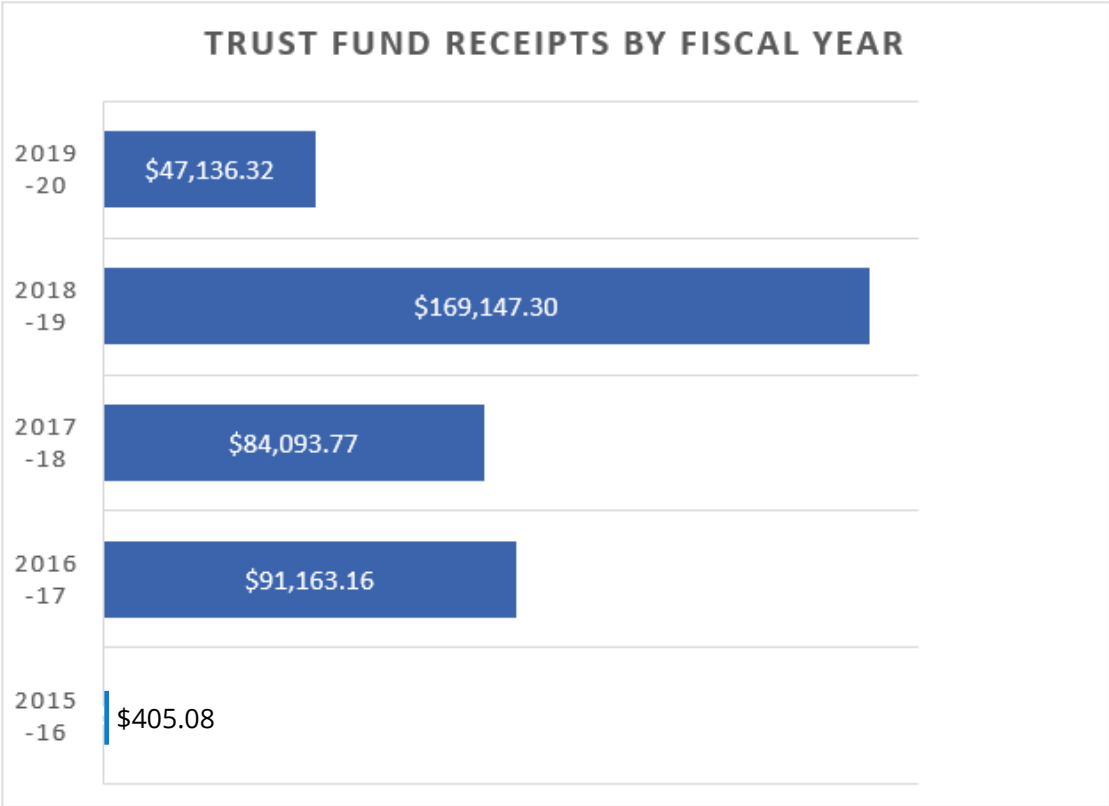
- Hiking
- Bird watching
- Hunting:
  - Bear
  - Deer
  - Duck
  - Turkey
- Fishing
  - Brook Trout
  - Catfish
  - Dolphin
  - Largemouth Bass
  - Red Drum
  - Striped Bass



Each year the program will expand to introduce new tasks. The idea is that people will try to collect all the patches each year to create a nice collection. There may be a child that likes to fish but he/she hasn't been hiking or bird watching but now that they have their fish patches they will try a new activity. We will see kids start expand their outdoor activities that they participate in. And we have already seen kids try new activities to try to collect additional patches. It brings an additional level of fun and an extra incentive to these outdoor activities. The program allows families to earn the patches together and invite their friends and neighbors to join in.

# NC Outdoor Heritage Trust Fund for Youth Outdoor Heritage Promotion

The North Carolina Outdoor Heritage Trust Fund for Youth Outdoor Heritage Promotion was established in 2015 by the General Assembly. When someone purchases a hunting, fishing, trapping or vessel license they have the opportunity to donate \$1 or \$2 to this trust fund. In 2018 the General Assembly approved the addition of "any other amount" to be included with the donation options with the licenses, however, this has yet to be implemented by Wildlife Resources Commission. Only having the option for one or two dollars is likely having a negative impact on our donation amounts. We also accept both private and corporate tax-deductible gifts.



The trust fund balance has increased significantly since Fiscal Year 2019. At the start of FY 2019, the trust fund balance stood at \$175,533.95. As the chart above shows, since the start of FY 2019 and the hiring of Council staff, the trust fund has more than doubled in size. As of November 1, 2019 the trust fund balance stood at \$362,976.97, not including the recent \$500,000 appropriation from the General Assembly to be spent funding GO Grants.

# Marketing and Branding Update

A big role for our team this year was brand awareness and engagement. Having been established in recent years, not many people were aware the Council existed or what the Council does. Our Communication and Marketing Manager crafted a campaign to spread awareness.

We had billboard ads across the state targeting both kids and their parents, with the message, "Put down the phone, go on an adventure." We launched a print advertising campaign with both traditional and digital ads in various magazines including Our State and Carolina Sportsman. We also ran some social media ads.

In addition to our advertising we have sponsored several events and had a vendor booth at many events. Some of our events include the NC Chamber's Education & Workforce Conference, NC State Fair and Outdoor Economy Conference. We have many new events we will be a part of in 2020 that will be beneficial in growing our brand.



# Looking to 2020

We are excited to see what the new year will bring! 2019 saw new programs, new initiatives, a whole new team and a lot of growth. In 2020 we will continue to build momentum and grow\*\*\*\*\*.

- We are looking forward to expanding our GO Grant program. Thanks to the \$500,000 allocated to us by the General Assembly, we will be able to reach even more schools and students through our grants.
- We are expanding our patch program. We will have all new designs for the existing 12 tasks and we will also be adding a few new tasks.
- We have built so many awesome relationships in 2019 and we look forward to growing those partnerships in the new year. But we are also excited for building brand new partnerships.
- We will be launching new programming in 2020 that will further our mission of getting all kids outdoors.

