



NORTH CAROLINA

PRESS RELEASE

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Clean Water Management Trust Fund Gives Birds a Boost

As lawmakers craft this year's budget, analysis reveals importance of Clean Water Management Trust Fund to birds.

For more than two decades, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund has played a critical role in protecting North Carolina's most sensitive bird habitat, from seabird nesting and foraging grounds on the coast to the Grandfather Mountain backcountry.

"Birds across North Carolina are feeling pressure from all sides – from the state's booming population and the development that follows to the impacts of extreme weather," says Andrew Hutson, Executive Director of Audubon North Carolina. "The Clean Water Management Trust Fund has served as a vital bulwark for birds and all our wildlife by allowing the state to protect important habitat even as North Carolina grows. We urge lawmakers to reinvest in this important funding source for conservation, ensuring we continue to protect our birding, hunting and fishing heritage for future generations."

Created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1996, the fund has put more than \$1 billion toward safeguarding the state's water and land resources and establishing new state parks, game lands and recreational areas. **According to a new analysis by Audubon North Carolina, nearly two-thirds of the land that has been acquired and protected by the Clean Water Management Trust Fund is in places deemed critical to birds, landscapes known formally as Important Bird Areas, or IBAs.**

North Carolina is home to 96 IBAs, a designation that is granted by Audubon and global partner BirdLife International to habitats that are vital to the survival of birds. Audubon North Carolina's complete analysis of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund's impact on birds includes a map that overlays IBAs with fund projects and a breakdown of spending within IBAs.

The fund has put \$291 million toward conserving land in IBAs, nearly one-third of all money spent through the grant program. That's good news for birds facing habitat loss from development pressures and our changing climate, including nearly 170 threatened species in North Carolina, and for the state's \$1 billion bird-watching industry. Many of the places protected by the fund are also hotspots for birders and hunters and are cornerstones of our state's tourism economy.

Despite the Clean Water Management Trust Fund's track record as a critical conservation tool, the fund has taken a hit in past years, dropping by as much as 90 percent from historical levels in the wake of the recession. North Carolina lawmakers have more recently acknowledged its importance by steadily increasing funding to as high as \$27 million in 2017. Audubon North Carolina applauds those efforts and



NORTH CAROLINA

encourages state lawmakers to grow funding at a level on par with state population increases and demand for the program from local communities, recreation groups and conservation organizations.

As lawmakers craft this year's budget, Audubon North Carolina is urging state leaders to set the fund on a growth trajectory to ensure that North Carolina's natural heritage and birding hotspots like Pilot Mountain and the Caswell Game Lands continue to be protected.

Audubon is a member of the NC Forever and Land for Tomorrow Coalitions, which represent a broad set of partners advocating for conservation support in North Carolina.

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation. Audubon's state programs, nature centers, chapters and partners have an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire and unite diverse communities in conservation action. Since 1905, Audubon's vision has been a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Audubon is a nonprofit conservation organization. Learn more at www.audubon.org and @audubonsociety. Audubon North Carolina, a state program of the National Audubon Society, has offices in Durham, Boone, Corolla, and Wilmington. Learn more at www.nc.audubon.org and on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/audubonnc) at @audubonnc.

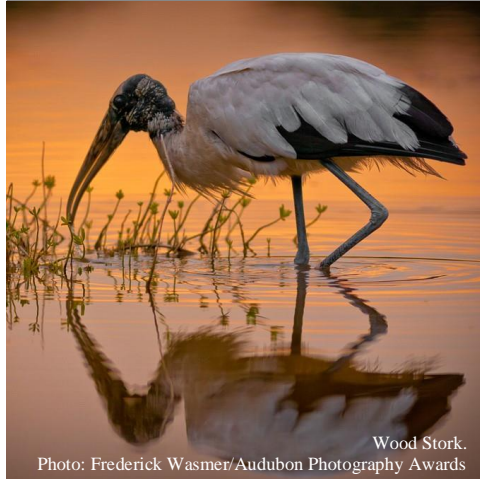
A Boost for Birds

For more than two decades, North Carolina's Clean Water Management Trust Fund has protected critical bird habitat across the state.



Wild Turkey.
Photo: Ryan O'Keven / Audubon Photography Awards

\$840,000 in Clean Water and matching funds at the Caswell Game Lands IBA.



Wood Stork.
Photo: Frederick Wasmer/Audubon Photography Awards

\$2.3 million at the Lumber River IBA, one of few Wood Stork nesting sites in the state.



Golden-winged Warbler.
Photo: Arne Stinissen/Audubon Photography Awards

\$5.4 million at the Roan IBA, a critical site for endangered Golden-Winged Warblers.

Critical conservation funding source needs renewed support

For more than two decades, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund has played a critical role in protecting North Carolina's most sensitive bird habitat, from seabird nesting and foraging grounds on the coast to the Grandfather Mountain backcountry. Nearly two-thirds of the land acquired and protected through the fund has been habitat deemed vital to the survival of birds, places formally known as Important Bird Areas, or IBAs.

These regions, identified and designated by the National Audubon Society, span the state and include some of North Carolina's most treasured natural places, including well-known destinations like Mount Mitchell and Pilot Mountain, as well as hunting hotspots such as the Caswell Game Lands. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund helps ensure these landscapes remain pristine, protecting North Carolina's natural heritage for future generations.

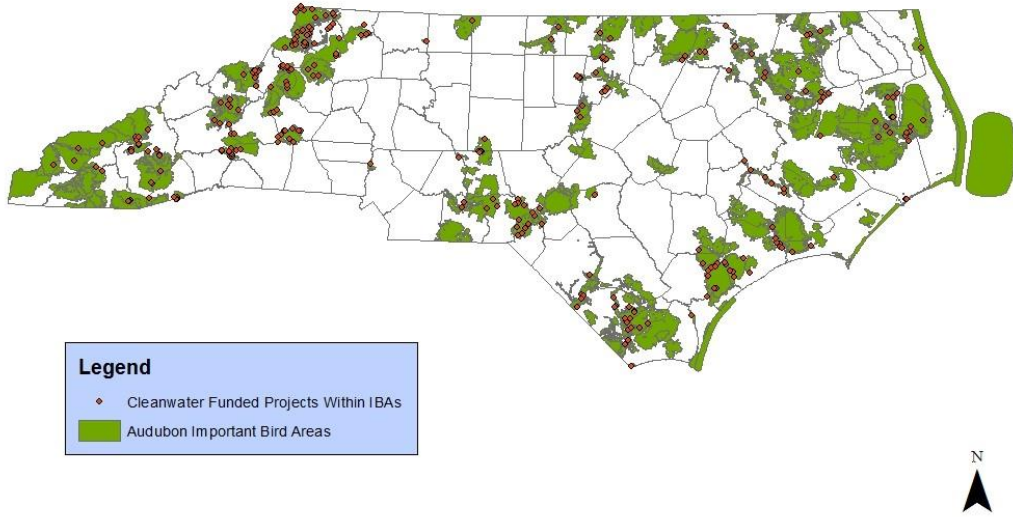
Created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1996, the fund has put more than \$1 billion toward safeguarding the state's water and land resources and establishing new state parks, game lands and recreational areas. For years, the fund was supported at an annual level of \$100 million, but the program was cut by 90 percent in the wake of the recession.

Lawmakers have more recently renewed their commitment to the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and the habitat it protects for songbirds, shorebirds and game species. As lawmakers craft this year's budget, Audubon North Carolina is urging state leaders to set the fund on a growth trajectory on par with state population increases and demand for the program from local communities, recreation groups and conservation organizations.

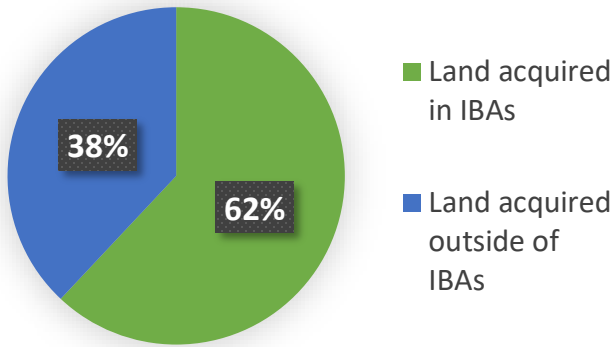
North Carolina has 96 Important Bird Areas, places designated by Audubon as vital bird habitat. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund has played a critical role in protecting land within these areas.

- 62% of the 500,000 acres acquired and protected by the fund is in IBAs.
- More than \$1 billion from the fund has been spent since 1996. 29% has supported projects in IBAs.
- The fund has been cut dramatically from a historical high of \$100 million. Funding has been on the upswing in recent years, but was still just \$18.3 million in 2018.

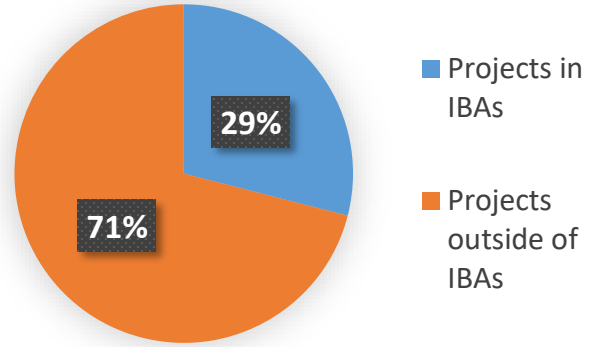
Cleanwater Funding and Audubon Priority Areas



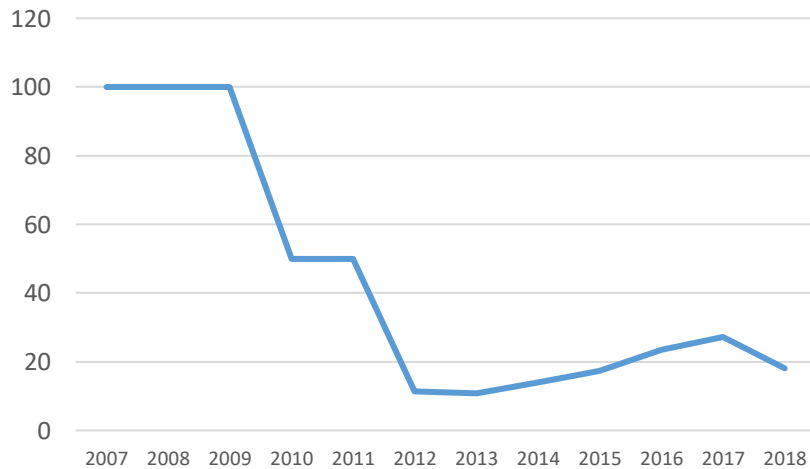
Clean Water Management Trust Fund Land Acquisitions



Clean Water Management Trust Fund Dollars Allocated



Clean Water Management Trust Funding (In millions)



Clean Water Management Trust Fund investments in IBAs by county:

County	Clean Water Funds in IBAs
Alleghany	\$717,000
Anson	\$163,700
Ashe	\$17,055,415
Avery	\$9,164,923
Beaufort	\$1,152,000
Bertie	\$6,966,555
Brunswick	\$10,901,718
Buncombe	\$9,629,000
Burke	\$13,554,085
Caldwell	\$23,711,185
Carteret	\$4,062,700
Caswell	\$313,000
Chatham	\$1,524,646
Cleveland	\$75,160
Columbus	\$10,466,287
Craven	\$2,067,538
Cumberland	\$750,000
Currituck	\$116,500
Dare	\$3,928,000
Duplin	\$289,555
Durham	\$1,895,000
Gates	\$80,000
Graham	\$1,854,831
Granville	\$1,673,365
Halifax	\$9,140,414
Haywood	\$8,559,407
Henderson	\$2,121,673
Hertford	\$10,928,861
Hoke	\$493,722
Hyde	\$15,067,954
Jackson	\$5,841,585
Jones	\$60,000
Macon	\$1,021,000
Martin	\$300,000
McDowell	\$1,022,000
Mitchell	\$1,721,848
Montgomery	\$590,600
Moore	\$420,250
Nash	\$9,136,313
New Hanover	\$255,000
Onslow	\$13,812,432
Orange	\$690,000

County	Clean Water Funds in IBAs
Pasquotank	\$1,715,000
Pender	\$14,991,000
Person	\$210,000
Pitt	\$448,000
Randolph	\$465,000
Richmond	\$987,294
Robeson	\$1,675,000
Rutherford	\$11,840,383
Scotland	\$2,951,691
Stanly	\$708,000
Statewide/Regional	\$10,174,134
Stokes	\$318,000
Surry	\$500,000
Swain	\$8,516,000
Transylvania	\$6,202,014
Tyrrell	\$9,189,015
Warren	\$212,207
Washington	\$3,202,056
Watauga	\$8,489,464
Wilkes	\$1,286,000
Yancey	\$4,104,000
Grand Total	\$291,479,480

Clean Water Management Trust Fund investments in IBAs and NC legislative districts:

Important Bird Area	Clean Water Funding	Senate District	House District
Alligator River Lowlands	\$7,743,000	1	6
Amphibolite Mountains	\$7,776,617	45	93
Bird Island-Twin Lakes	\$2,750,000	8	17
Black Mountains-Great Craggy Mountains	\$13,611,000	47, 49	115, 118
Bullhead Mountain-Mahogany Rock	\$192,000	45	94
Cape Hatteras National Seashore	\$4,177,000	1	6
Caswell Game Lands	\$313,000	22	65
Catawba River-Mountain Island Lake Watershed	\$6,186,634	44	108
Chimney Rock-Hickory Nut Gorge	\$4,949,856	47, 48	112, 117
Chowan River Bottomlands	\$3,080,000	1	5
Croatan Forest	\$3,874,700	2, 6	13, 14
Currituck Marshes-Pine Island	\$116,500	1	1
Eagles Island	\$255,000	8	18
Eno River Bottomlands	\$831,000	23	50
Falls Lake	\$1,754,000	22	30, 50
Grandfather Mountain	\$5,761,977	45	85, 93
Great Smoky Mountains National Park	\$1,856,000	50	119
Highlands Plateau	\$898,000	50	120
Hobucken Marshes-Gum Swamp	\$1,045,000	1	3
Holly Shelter-Angola Bay	\$13,471,555	8, 10	4, 16
Jordan Lake	\$248,486	23	54
Joyce Kilmer-Slick Rock Wilderness	\$1,250,000	50	120
Lower Neuse River Bottomlands	\$2,515,538	2, 5, 7	3, 8, 9, 10, 12
Lumber River Bottomlands	\$2,316,000	13	46
New River Corridor	\$1,787,080	45	93, 94
Northern Escarpment	\$17,497,000	30, 45	87, 93, 94
Palmetto-Peartree and Buckridge	\$10,489,615	3	1
Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge	\$138,700	25	55
Pilot Mountain	\$500,000	30	90
Plott and Great Balsam Mountains	\$9,753,692	50	118, 119
Pungo-Pocosin Lakes	\$806,620	1, 3	1, 6
Roan Mountain	\$5,386,546	45	85
Roanoke River Bottomlands	\$17,538,611	3, 4	5, 6, 23, 27
Sandhills East	\$750,000	19	45
Sandhills West	\$2,513,399	21, 25, 29	48, 52, 66
South Mountains	\$9,859,085	46, 47	85, 111, 112
Stone Mountain-Doughton Park	\$600,000	30, 45	94
Waccamaw River Bottomlands	\$18,227,005	8, 13	17, 46
Wilson Creek-Linville Gorge	\$7,116,185	45, 46	86, 87
Yellow Creek-Cheoah Mountains	\$604,831	50	120
Other Forest Block IBAs	\$100,938,248	Various districts	Various districts
Grand Total	\$291,479,480		