

APPLICATION GUIDELINES
Catawba River Basin Conservation Easement Fund (CRBCEF)
sponsored by Crescent Resources, LLC.

Crescent Resources has initiated a program to encourage the establishment of conservation easements along streams within the Catawba River watershed for the purpose of enhancing water quality. The program provides funds to assist landowners in both North and South Carolina willing to establish riparian buffers on their property. Crescent is working with land trusts in both states to accomplish this goal and has established partnerships with the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University and the Urban Institute at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, to create and manage the Catawba River Basin Conservation Easement Fund.

The Fund will make available \$100,000 in awards annually October 1, 2001 - September 30, 2006. The purpose of this Fund is to reimburse costs directly associated with the creation of conservation easements on perennial tributaries and main channel free flow of the Catawba River basin. These costs may include professional fees for survey, appraisal, and legal services.

Eligibility Requirements

- Property owner must be an individual, family farm, limited liability corporation, or local government.
- Property must be within the Catawba River watershed and contain or lie adjacent to the Catawba River or any of its perennial tributaries. (Your local land trust or Cooperative Extension office can help you determine if your property meets this requirement)
- An executed letter of intent between the property owner(s) and a qualifying land trust. (See list for potential land trust partners)
- Execution of the conservation easement document between the Applicant and the Land Trust must occur after submission of the grant application, but not later than twelve months after the Grant has been awarded. (Execution may occur prior to announcement or receipt of award)
- The grant award must be used for the purpose of defraying costs associated with establishing a conservation easement that demonstrates a benefit to water quality within the Catawba River Basin.
- Funds will be disbursed only after easements have been recorded. Applicants may not apply for reimbursement of expenses incurred prior to submission of the Application.

Award Criteria and Guidelines

Applications will be evaluated in two grant cycles per year, with each cycle ending March 31st and September 30th of each year. In each cycle the award monies available will be \$50,000 plus any unawarded funds rolled over from prior cycles. Awards will be made after March 31, 2002. In the case of grant cycles with more applicants than there are funds available in the grant pool, award decisions will be based on merit. The Grant Selection Committee will use the following factors to select which applications will be awarded funds:

- Factors influencing the effectiveness or importance to water quality of the proposed easement. These will be requested as part of the applicants' grant application submission and will be taken into account by the Selection Committee but will not necessarily be the determining factors in the final decisions:
 - physical characteristics, such as the size of the easement, land uses permitted and prohibited within the easement, and the presence of wetlands and Natural Heritage Inventory or Gap Analysis Program sites
 - location characteristics, such as adjacent land uses, upland zoning and proximity to a public water supply intake or state-listed impaired stream
 - recreational or scenic factors, especially for easements along free-flowing stretches of the Catawba River
- Geographic distribution. The grants program is basin-wide, and a reasonable geographic distribution of awards between NC and SC will be a factor taken into account by the Selection Committee, but not a determining factor.

Applicants denied an award in one cycle may roll over their application to the next cycle. The Selection Committee will have discretion to determine whether the award amount will be for a portion of the proposed cost or for the full amount. Award monies will not be disbursed until receipts for all claims are received and approved by the Selection Committee and the conservation easement has been established. Instructions for submitting receipts will be included in the award package mailed to award recipients.

Application Process

Applications are available from your local land trust or online as listed below. Completed applications should be submitted directly to one of the following locations:

in North Carolina:

Catawba Riverbasin Conservation Easement Fund

UNC Charlotte Urban Institute
Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Tel. 704-687-2179

www.uncc.edu/urbinst/clcn/

in South Carolina:

Catawba Riverbasin Conservation Easement Fund
c/o Strom Thurmond Institute, Clemson University

Perimeter Road
Clemson, SC 29634-0125

Tel. 864-656-4700

www.strom.clemson.edu

An acknowledgement letter will be sent within two weeks of our receipt of the application indicating in which award cycle the application will be considered and when award decisions will be made. If you and/or your land trust have questions, please contact the Carolinas Land Conservation Network in North Carolina or the Strom Thurmond Institute in South Carolina at the telephone numbers listed above.