



- The Ivy River Watershed is located in Madison and Buncombe Counties in Western North Carolina. It serves as a municipal water supply to the town of Weaverville and backup supply to the town of Mars Hill North Carolina. It covers 112 square miles and is a tributary to the French Broad River.

The watershed, especially the Little Ivy portion, has a history of water quality impairment issues. For over 15 years various programs have been used by the Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District to reduce pollutants in the watershed. Water quality monitoring initiatives have been underway since 1992, specifically in the areas of fecal and sediment. Monitoring results continue to show the need for further water quality improvement.

The Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council and the Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) helped establish the "Ivy Rivers Partners" concept in 2014. The towns of Weaverville and Mars Hill along with the Madison and Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation Districts signed a cooperative agreement becoming Ivy River Partners. They are now organized and jointly working on various initiatives in the watershed.

Ivy River Partners has officially been building its network of partnerships to collaborate on clean-up efforts in the Ivy for a little under two years. The partners have had the fortunate support of several funding sources, especially the Pigeon River Fund, Z Smith Reynolds, and EPA 319, who believe in what's being done and the future of water quality in the watershed.

This latest renewed level of interest started with the completion of the Ivy River Source Water Protection Plan, which has been approved by NCDNER. This plan was completed by Mountain Valleys RC&D and the Madison County SWCD. This Plan has thirty suggested long range strategies for protecting and improving the water resources in the Ivy River Watershed.

The overall efforts have centered around the following courses of action: CREATING A WATERSHED GROUP; CAPACITY BUILDING; COMMUNITY OUTREACH; EDUCATION; BMP INSTALLATION; and VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT.

Following these courses of action, recent activities that have been accomplished include:

- Established the "IVY RIVER PARTNERS"
- Reached nearly 1500 K-12 students through free, hands-on, water quality education experiences
- Removed 30 bags of litter, 4 truckloads of household waste and over 50 tires with school volunteers and "Adopt a Stream" landowners
- Worked with NCDOT to get "Water Supply Area" road signs in strategic locations in the watershed
- Raised over \$700,000 of grant funding for on the ground projects and historically has had over \$2 million spent on Ag BMPs
- Have collected 23 years worth of data from stream monitoring
- Developed website, newsletters, and press releases

There is still work to be done. Lasting change will come from participation and cooperation from the people who live and play in the watershed and from educating our future stewards on the importance of taking care of our water resources.