

NFsNC Priority Watersheds



DRAFT - Best available data as of February 2013. Map may have been developed from different sources, accuracies and modeling, and is subject to change without notice.

Desired Condition:

Watersheds are resilient and stable, supporting the quality and quantity of water necessary to protect ecological functions and support beneficial water uses.

Watershed Condition Framework Background

"Clean, healthy forests are vital to our efforts to protect America's fresh water supply."

"Our nation's economic health, and the health of our citizens, depends on abundant, clean and reliable sources of freshwater."

"The Watershed Condition Framework and map will help provide economic and environmental benefits to residents of rural communities."

-Secretary Vilsack, June 3, 2011, WCC Map Rollout

With the Watershed Condition Framework (WCF), for the **first time**, the Forest Service has a process for a nationally **consistent, comparable, and credible** approach

- to evaluating watershed condition
- to prioritizing watershed improvement projects**
- to measuring what has been accomplished
- to increasing Forest Service accountability in watershed restoration.

Table 1. The following is a list of proposed priority watersheds that the Forest Service is looking for feedback on. All of the watersheds listed below were identified as 'Functioning at Risk' in the Watershed Condition Framework.

District	6 th Level Watershed	Focus Area/Streams	Restoration Needs	
Appalachian	060101060305 Cold Springs Creek-Pigeon River	Cold Springs - Hurricane Creek	roads, public recreation, Functioning at Risk	
	060101051202 Spring Creek	Spring Creek	diversity of habitats and stand structure, aquatic habitat, Functioning at Risk	
	060101050801 Dillingham Creek	Dillingham - Big Ivy area	roads and trails that need work and that cross streams, horse and mtn. bike activity, dispersed use camping, Functioning at Risk	
	060101050803 Upper Ivy Creek	Upper Ivy Creek - Big Ivy area	roads and trails that need work and that cross streams, horse and mtn. bike activity, dispersed use camping, Functioning at Risk	
Cheoah	060102040107 Yellow Creek-Cheoah River	Cheoah River Watershed/Yellow Creek Lower	Functioning at Risk	
	060102020407 Upper Fontana Lake-Little Tennessee River, 060102020505 Lower Fontana Lake-Little Tennessee River	Fontana - Fontana Lake Little Tennessee River	Functioning at Risk	
	060102040105 Santeetlah Creek	Santeetlah Creek	brook trout, hellbenders, bats, northern flying squirrels, spruce restoration, Functioning at Risk	
	Grandfather	030501010502 Upper Wilson Creek 030501010504 Lower Wilson Creek	Upper Wilson Creek & Lower Wilson Creek	problem with NNIS; RX burning, brook floater and mussel restoration, Functioning at Risk
030501010501 Upper Johns River 030501010505 Middle Johns River 030501010506 Lower Johns River		Middle Johns River & Upper John's River	problem with NNIS; RX burning, brook floater and mussel restoration, Functioning at Risk	
030501010303 Lake James-Catawba River		Lake James/Catawba River	fire adapted communities, Functioning at Risk	
Nantahala		060102020406 Alarka Creek	Alarka Creek - Alarka Laurel	meets all the focus areas, Functioning at Risk
		060102030105 Caney Fork 060102030107 Wayehutta Creek-Tuckasegee River 060102030101 Wolf Creek-Tuckasegee River	All Roy Taylor: Wayehutta/Caney Fork/Moses Creek - all; in the northern Roy Taylor. Little Canada watersheds: Wolf Creek- Tuckasegee River/headwaters of Scott Creek. Cedar Cliff Lake Tuckasegee	Wolf Creek and Caney Fork are the top priority, Functioning at Risk
		060102030104 Cedar Cliff Lake-Tuckasegee River		
	060102020201 Upper Cullasaja River 060102020203 Lower Cullasaja River	Upper and Lower Cullasaja	NNIS removal and in Cliffside, Functioning at Risk	
Pisgah	060101050202 Davidson River	Davidson River	Functioning at Risk	
	060101050705 Bent Creek-French Broad River	Bent Creek-French Broad River	Functioning at Risk	
	060101050402 South Fork Mills River	South Fork Mills River	municipal watershed, Functioning at Risk	
	060101050104 Catheys Creek	Catheys Creek	municipal watershed, Functioning at Risk	
	060101050101 North Fork French Broad River	North Fork French Broad River	Functioning at Risk	
	Tusquitee	060200020903 Shuler Creek	Shulers Creek	shortleaf pine restoration, Functioning at Risk
060102020301 Buck Creek		Buck Creek	brook trout, serpentine, dispersed campsites, rock-hound area, removal of dam at Park Gap - suitable elk habitat, NNIS, Functioning at Risk	
060200020202 Fires Creek		Fires Creek	dispersed recreation, watershed work, non-native invasives - suitable elk habitat, Functioning at Risk	

Watershed Prioritization

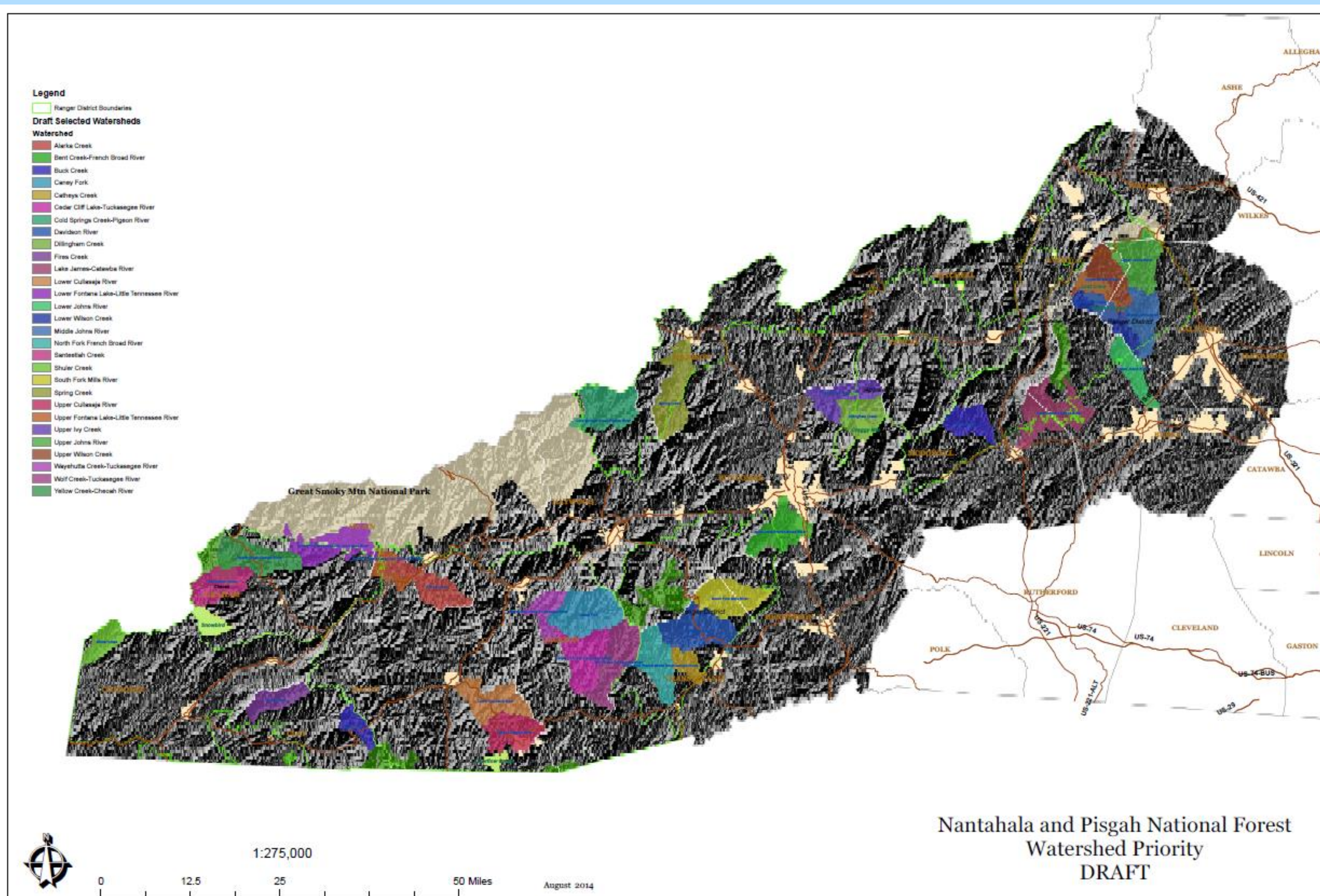
National Direction:

Land management plan decisions must identify watershed (s) that are a priority for maintenance or restoration (36 CFR 219.7(f)(1)).

Thus, Priority Watersheds are the designated watersheds where restoration activities will concentrate on maintaining or improving watershed condition.

Watersheds selected as "Priority" will be surveyed to identify sources of impairment from National Forest lands and appropriate treatments will be developed.

Table 1. is a list of proposed Priority Watersheds that the Forest Service is considering and looking for your feedback (see also Figure 1). All of the watersheds listed in the table were identified as 'Functioning at Risk' in the Watershed Condition Framework.



Additional Factors Proposed for Prioritizing Watersheds from the Watershed Working Group

Factors to guide watershed prioritization for restoration activities, and summary of available watershed prioritization tools

A product of the collaborative Watershed Working Group (WWG), developed September 30, 2014

WWG members

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WWG Restoration Strategy

The group feels it best to first focus restoration work on maintaining or improving high-quality watersheds instead improving severely degraded watersheds. The group also feels that it is important to consider the entire watershed when prioritizing restoration activities on USFS lands.

WWG Prioritized factors to drive watershed selection for restoration

First tier (highest priority)

- Overall aquatic diversity

Second tier

- Presence of Southern Appalachian brook trout
- Number of federally-listed aquatic species
- Presence of high-recreational use areas in or around streams

Third tier

- Maintenance of high-quality non-game aquatic species habitat

Fourth tier

- Potential for Southern Appalachian brook trout reintroduction
- Opportunity for expansion of non-game aquatic species
- Presence of municipal drinking water supply

Fifth tier (lowest priority)

- Opportunity to prevent federal listing of a species
- Presence of existing watershed partnership
- High diversity of ecozones in the watershed
- Presence of priority airsheds
- Opportunity to address aquatic organism passage
- Amount of wetlands-more wetlands=greater importance

WWG watershed prioritization meeting planned for November, 2014.

Figure 1. Location of proposed priority watersheds that the Forest Service is looking for feedback on for the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests.