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Trail project wins \$8 million grant

A state environmental agency has awarded more than \$8 million to create a network of trails in the Charlotte region and protect nationally-recognized Wilson Creek in Caldwell County.

The Clean Water Management Trust Fund said Wednesday it has granted \$3 million to the Carolina Thread Trail, an ambitious project to link greenways, trails and open space across 15 counties in the region.

The grant to the Catawba Lands Conservancy, which administers the initiative, will be used to buy land in Mecklenburg and Gaston counties.

More than 800 acres along Wilson Creek, a National Wild and Scenic River in Caldwell County, will be protected with \$5.5 million in trust-fund grants to Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina. The creek has been threatened by development.

One \$4.8 million grant will buy 649 acres that is the largest privately-owned but unprotected tract within the creek's watershed. A second \$693,000 grant will buy an easement protecting 170 acres along the creek.

<http://www2.statesville.com/content/2008/aug/15/trail-project-grant/>