

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Cy Stober, Water Resources Manager, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments 336-294-4950; [cstober@ptcog.org](mailto:cstober@ptcog.org)**

Planners in the Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin now have a new tool to evaluate the river's conservation and restoration priorities, thanks to a \$51,000 grant from the 2009 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. These funds supported a partnership among four Councils of Governments in the river basin to evaluate the basin's 232 watersheds to determine their need for improvement or protection. Planning software was used to analyze publicly-available data describing land use and land cover in the river basin and estimate water quality in each watershed, with highly accurate results. This approach suggests that a simple and affordable approach to water quality planning for elsewhere in the Triad and North Carolina.

In the Triad this method highlighted the need to protect the watersheds in and around the Uwharrie Mountains, which received the highest conservation values of all of the watersheds in the 7,000+ square mile river basin. The Mitchell River watershed in Mt. Airy, recently the recipient of millions of dollars in public and private investments to restore trout waters to the area, also ranked high. In contrast, Muddy Creek and Salem Creek in Winston-Salem and Rich Fork Creek in High Point are identified as high restoration priorities. Previous studies confirm this finding and indicate the primary source of pollution is from stormwater and failing sewer systems. If you are interested in learning more, please [visit our website](#).