

Developing Niche Markets in WNC

NADO Annual Training Conference
Las Vegas, NV
October 15, 2012

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Assist Rural Businesses Hire & Train Workers



- **\$1.974 million ARRA grant awarded to Land-of-Sky Regional Council through competitive process by USDA Forest Service's Southern Research Station**
- **Goal – generate jobs for un/underemployed Forest Producers through diversifying products, marketing, and regional cooperation**

Project Structure

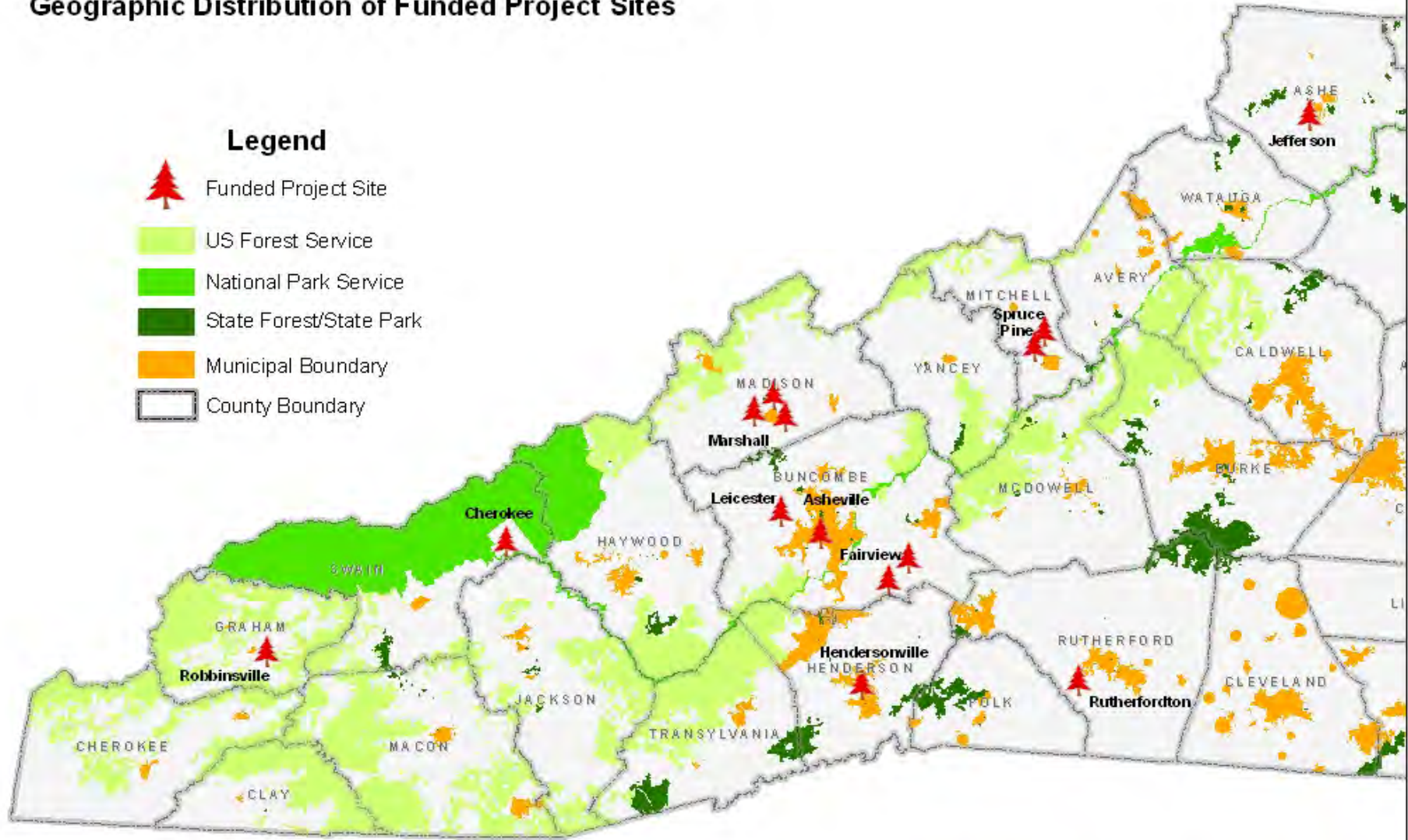
- **15 Businesses and Non-profits in 9 counties in WNC selected through competitive process**
- **4 Cooperating Organizations providing Technical Assistance, workshops, marketing, regional branding**
- **Regional Technical Advisors providing specialized assistance in fields such as legal, accounting, web design, and budgeting**

WNC Forest Products Marketing Project

Geographic Distribution of Funded Project Sites

Legend

-  Funded Project Site
-  US Forest Service
-  National Park Service
-  State Forest/State Park
-  Municipal Boundary
-  County Boundary



December 13, 2010

Partners

USDA Forest Service's Southern Research Station

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

NCSU Department of Horticultural Science

NC Forest Service – Division of Forest Resources

Southern Forests Network



Project Accomplishments



- **Market Analysis and Consumer Survey for Forest Foods**
- **50:50 Marketing Cost-Share Program**
- **NCSU Extension information sheets for Forest Foods**
- **One-on-One Technical Assistance, marketing, branding**
- **Innovative eBook for forest product marketing and education**
- **Workshop series - *Does Your Forest Talk Money?***
- **WNC Forest Owner's Resource Directory: wncforestowners.org**
- **Curbside Consulting Workshops**
- ***WNC Forestry Success Stories* – video documenting workshops and on-site demonstrations**

Project Results

- Led to creation/retention of 164 jobs directly
- 68+ estimated additional jobs in community
- \$4.2 million estimated community financial impact
- 90% job retention rate
- Partnerships leveraged new projects:
 - WNC AgriVentures (\$1.63 million)
 - WNC Farms & Forest (\$200,000)
 - Urban Forestry collaboration
 - Local Foods & Farming collaboration

DOUBLETREE FARM COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROJECT



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FURNITURE SPECIALTIES
SKILLED CRAFTSMEN

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our green line
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BLUE RIDGE WILD TIMBERS



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CLEAR CREEK WOOD PRODUCTS



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RECOVERING TRADITIONAL CHEROKEE DELICACIES



GREEN RIVER FOREST PRODUCTS





Green River Forest Products/E. Anderson

HIGHLAND CRAFTSMEN



Photo by E. Anderson

NC MOUNTAIN MUSHROOM COOPERATIVE





MOUNTAIN VALLEYS RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL SUSTAINABLE LOGGER TRAINING PROGRAM



MVRCD

SMOKY MOUNTAIN NATIVE PLANTS ASSOCIATION



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HICKORY NUT GAP & BIG SANDY MUSH COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM



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E. Anderson

The Take-Away...

- Sometimes its all about the basics
- Know when to step aside
- Businesses are unique...and remarkably similar
- It isn't just business, it is personal
- Not everyone wants to grow (*or should grow*)
- Folks like grants!...but not the *asterisk
- Well worth the effort

**Take the Time!
It is appreciated.**

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