



HELENE UPDATE

Board of Commissioners | February 18, 2025



Topics for Today

PRESENTATIONS:

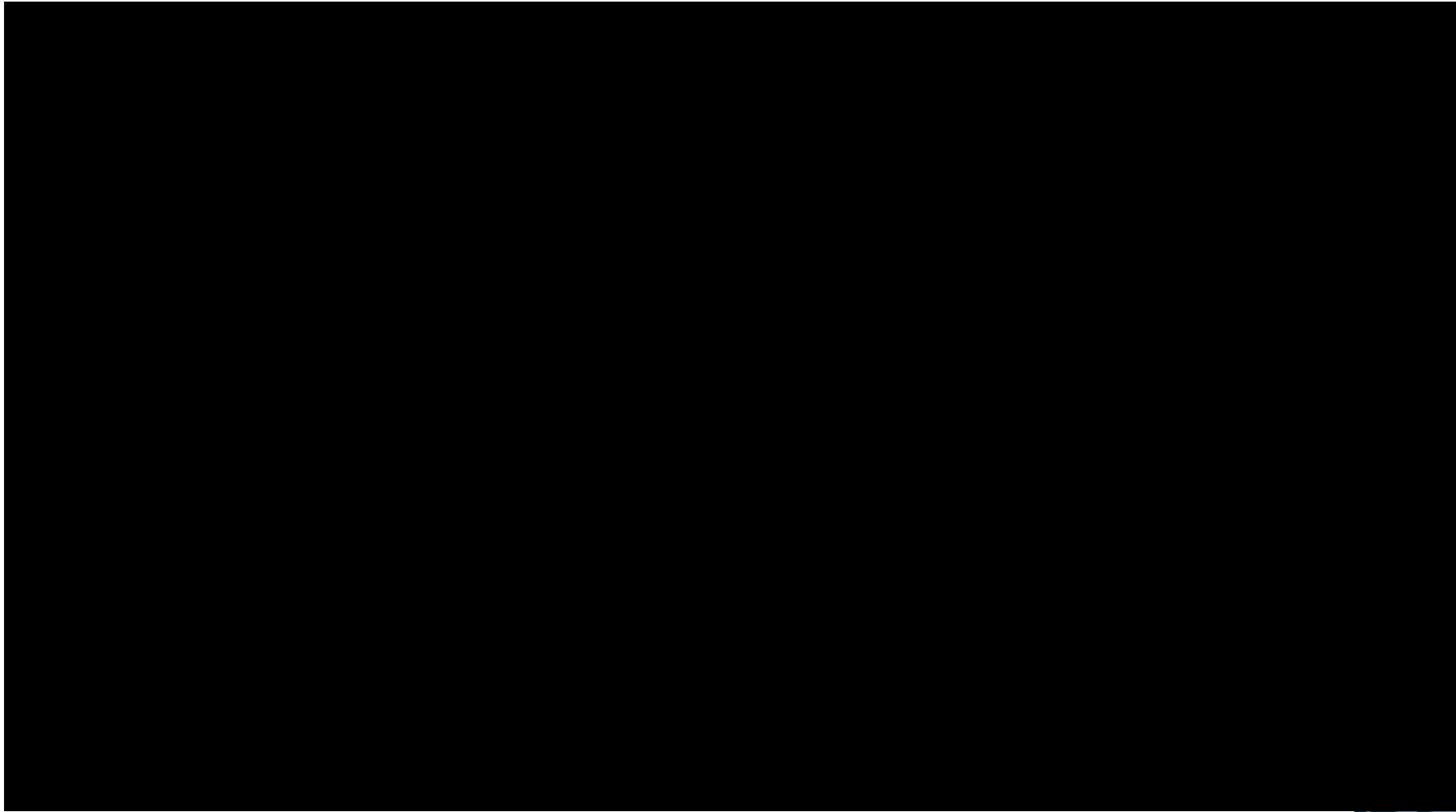
- **Debris Management** – Dane Pedersen
- **Housing** – Matthew Cable
- **Navigation & Case Management** – David Sweat
- **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program** – Nathan Pennington
- **Emergency Watershed Protection** – Jennifer Harrison

APPENDIX:

- **Resources for Recovery**
- **Data Updates by Recovery Support Function**



Debris Management



Debris Removal Timeline

October
2024:

Right of way
removal
launched

November
2024:

Private
property
removal
program intake
launched

January
2025:

Title property
removal
process
launched

February
2025:

Waterways and
private
property clean
up launched

February –
June 2025:

Ongoing removal
from right of way,
waterways, and
private property



Debris – Private Property

2,789

197

292

565

1,367

1,203

229

251

Total Applications

Outreach Required

Verification Underway

Ready for Inspection

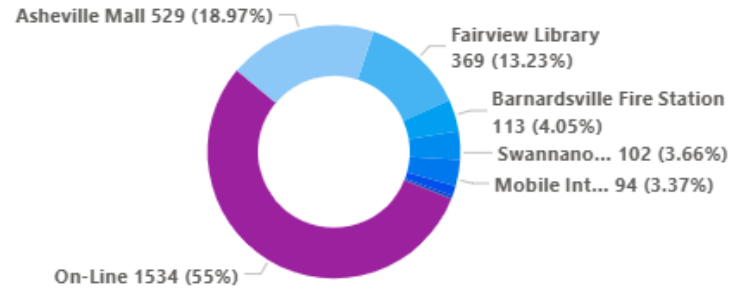
Inspection Completed

Delivered to FEMA

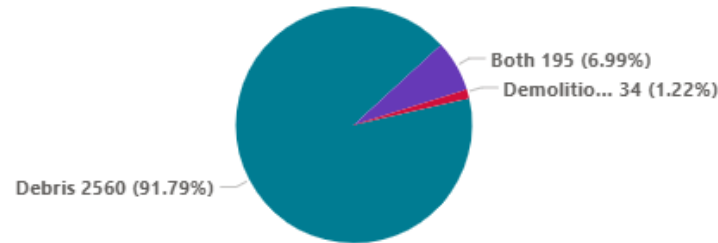
Self-Reported Demolition

Withdrawn

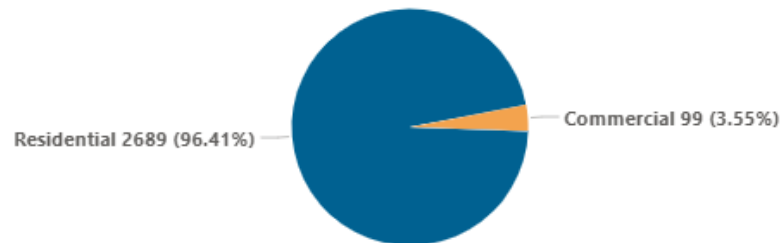
Application Intake Location



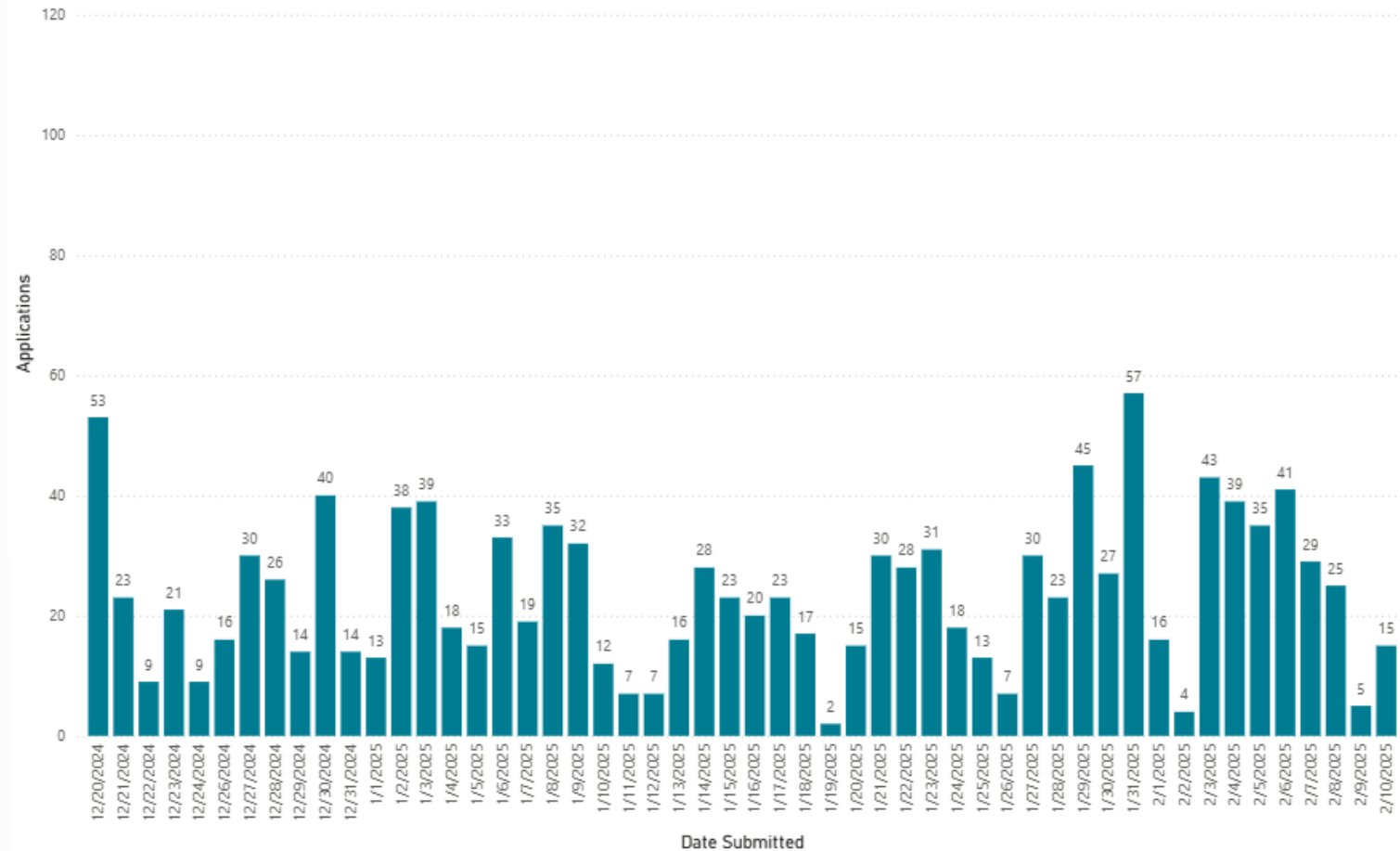
Service Type Requested



Property Type

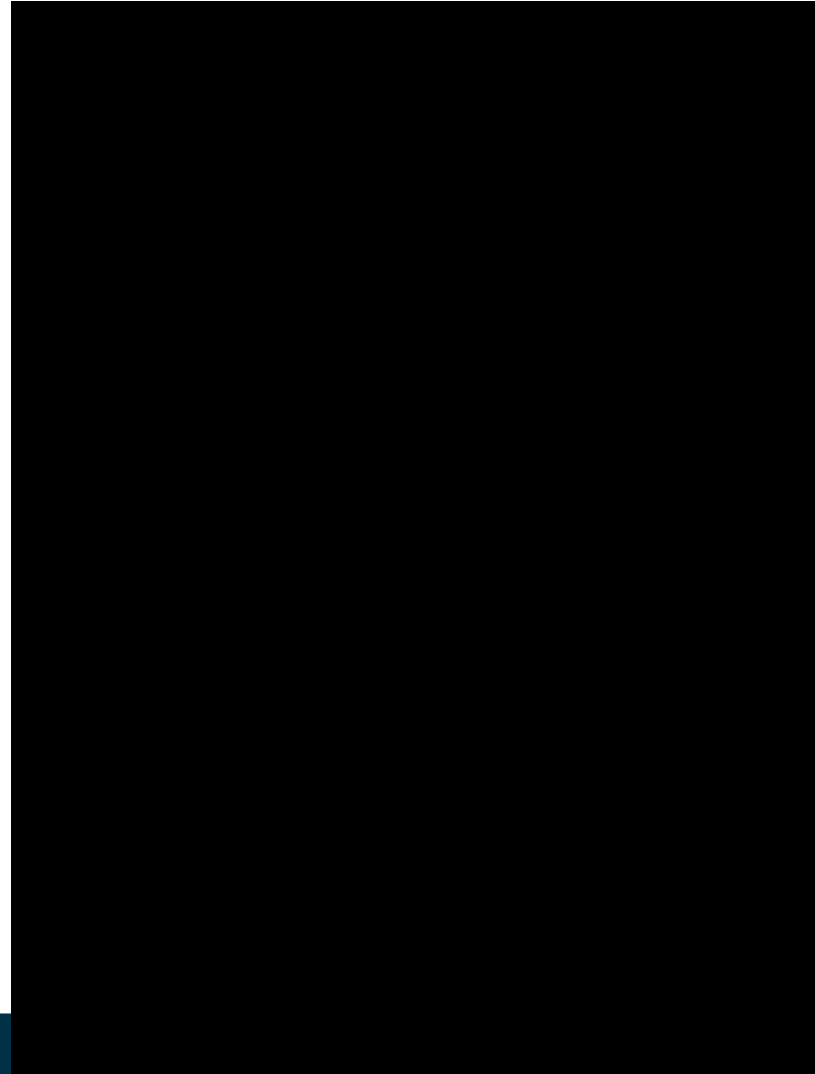


Applications Submitted by Date



Waterway Debris Removal

- **Waterways**
 - Clean up began February 1
 - Multiple crew working in the Swannanoa River in unincorporated areas of the county
 - As of 2/9/2025: 44,832 cubic yards collected



Removal of Title Property

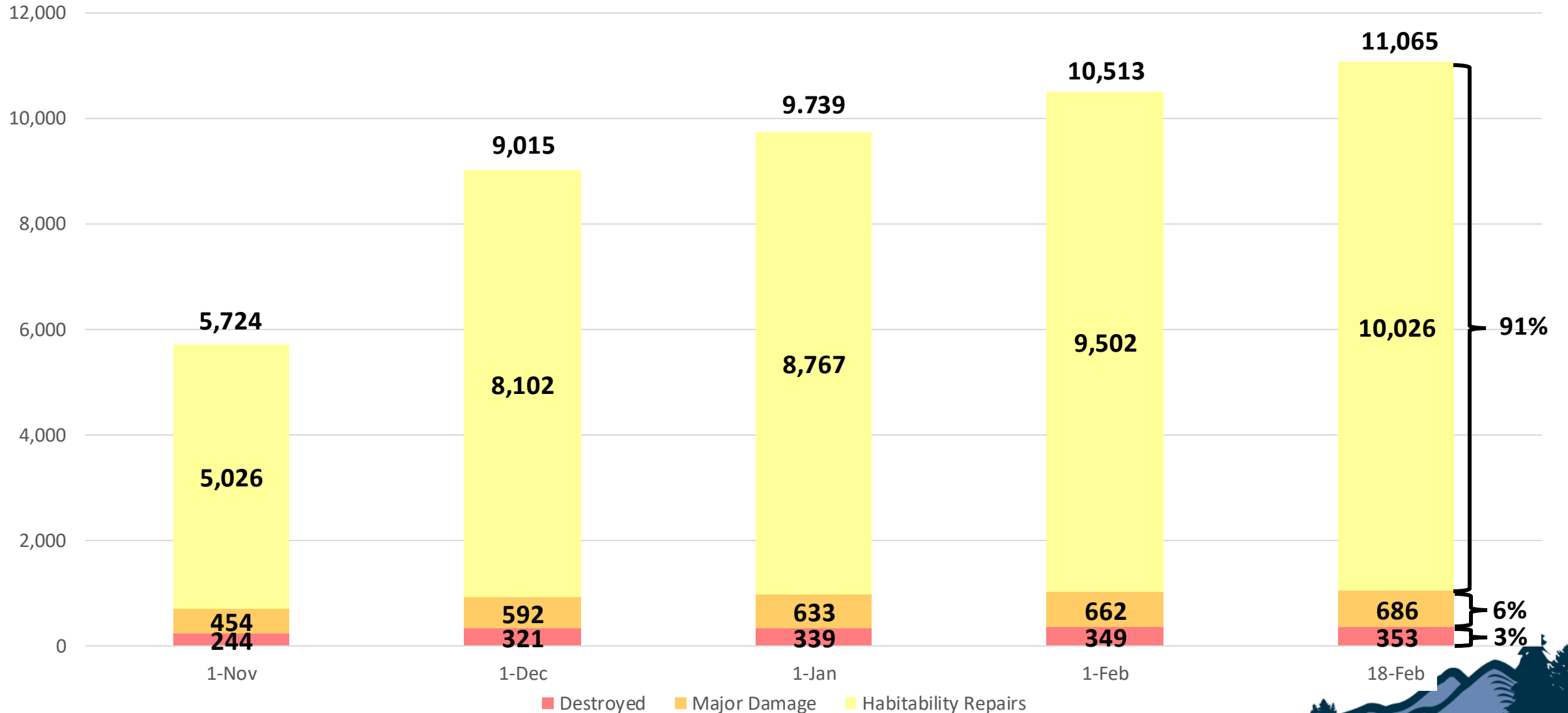
- **Title Property**
 - Removal progress underway, starting with vehicles in the right of way
 - 3 vehicles and 1 semi-trucks have been towed
 - Next steps:
 - Coordination with private property and waterways cleanup
 - Other forms of title property (shipping containers, mobile homes, etc.)



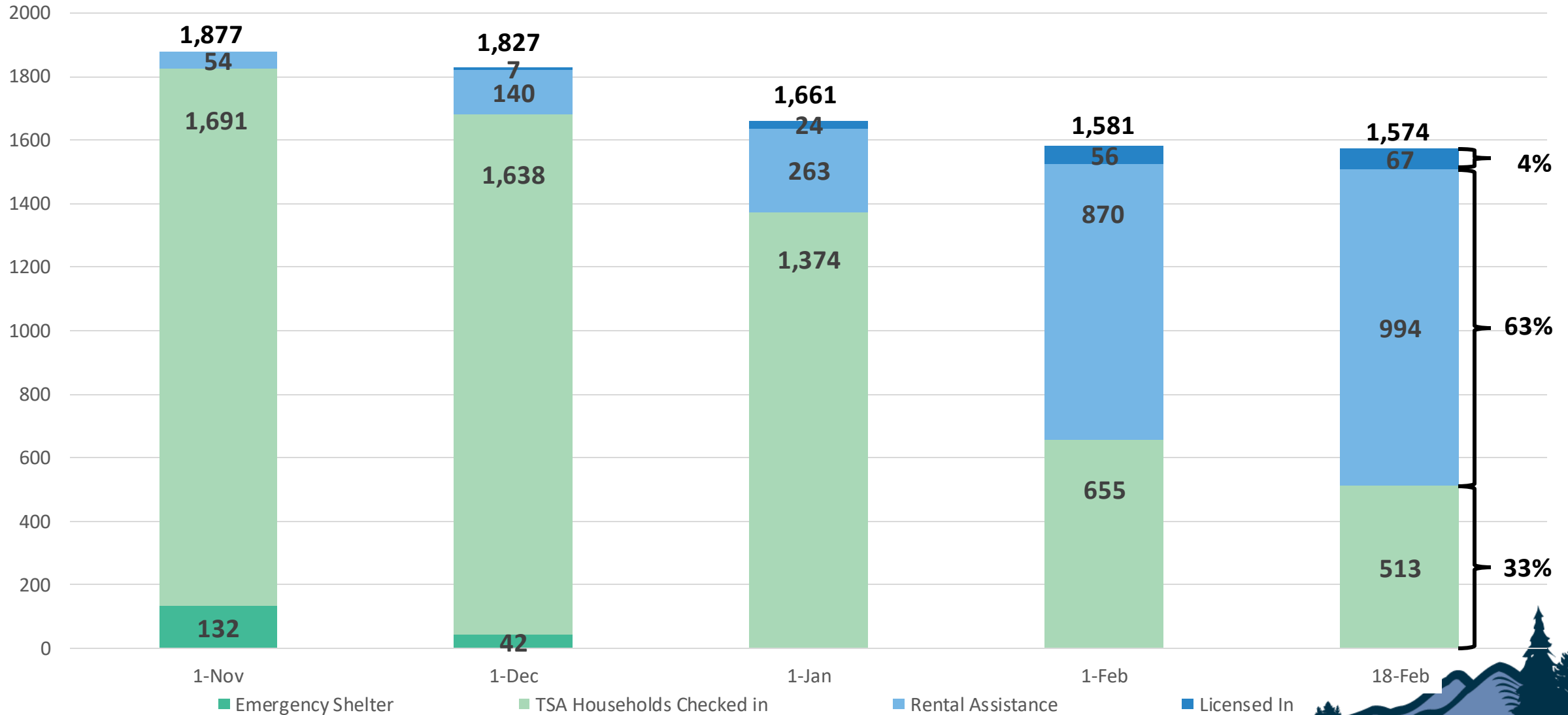
Questions?



Housing: FEMA Reported Damaged Units



Housing: Sheltering & Temporary Housing



Housing: FEMA TSA Eligibility

Resident Households in FEMA TSA: 513* (-249 since February 4)

Resident Households in TSA in Buncombe County: 403

Resident Households in TSA outside of Buncombe County: 110

*Includes households currently slated to check out by March 7. Another eligibility determination is anticipated to occur February 28.



Questions?



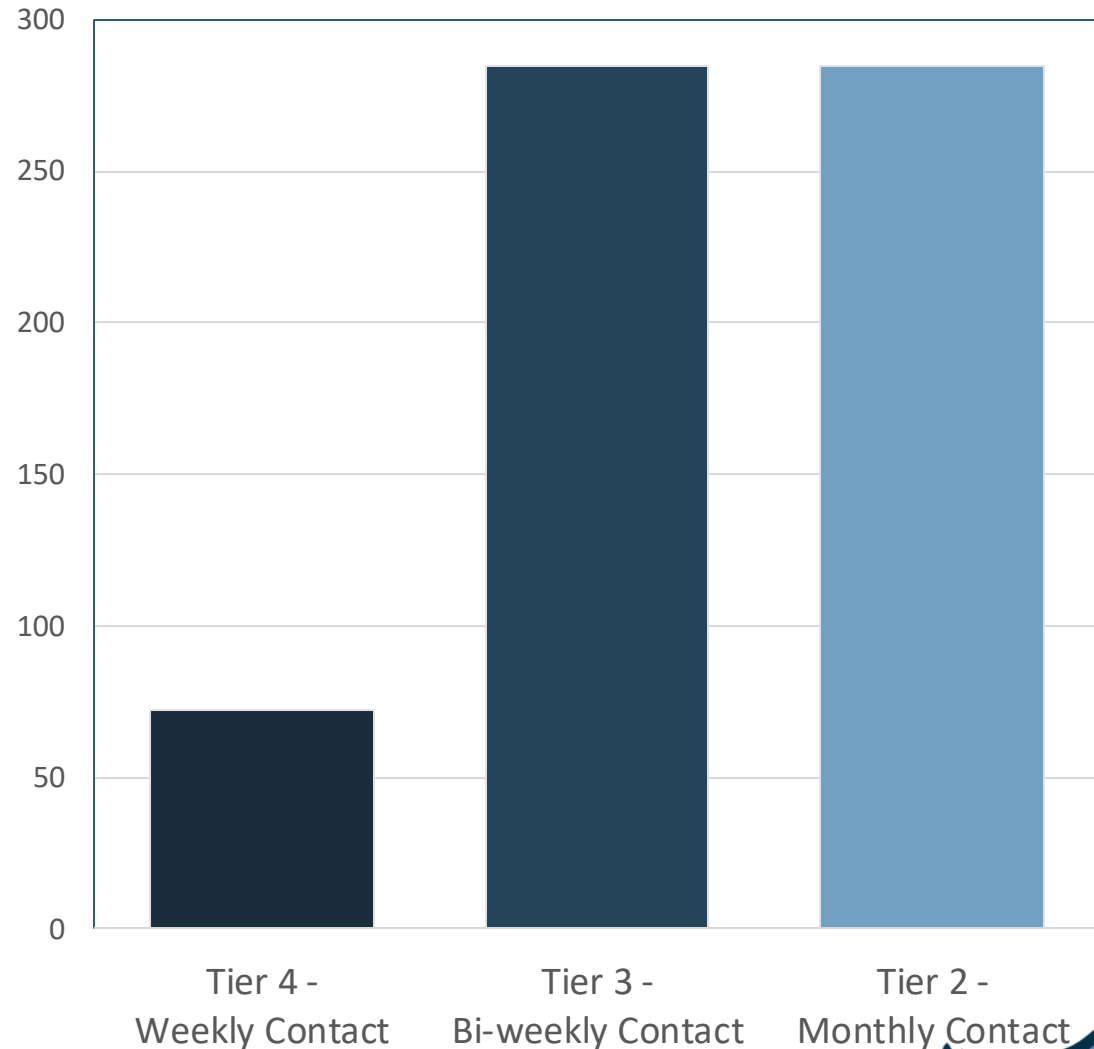
Navigation & Case Management

- **Community Navigation** - launched 10/27/24 & ending 2/18/25
 - Resource & referral linking people with disaster resources
 - Buncombe County-funded, Tetra Tech provided
 - Has served 3,671 households, including 2,440 interactions with households in Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) at 23 hotels
- **Disaster Case Management (DCM)** – launched 12/19/24
 - Support to households with creating and following personalized recovery plans
 - FEMA-funded, state delivered
 - All persons who lived or worked in impacted county qualify for DCM
 - 730 cases have been opened with 7 State disaster case managers currently active in Buncombe County



NC Disaster Case Management

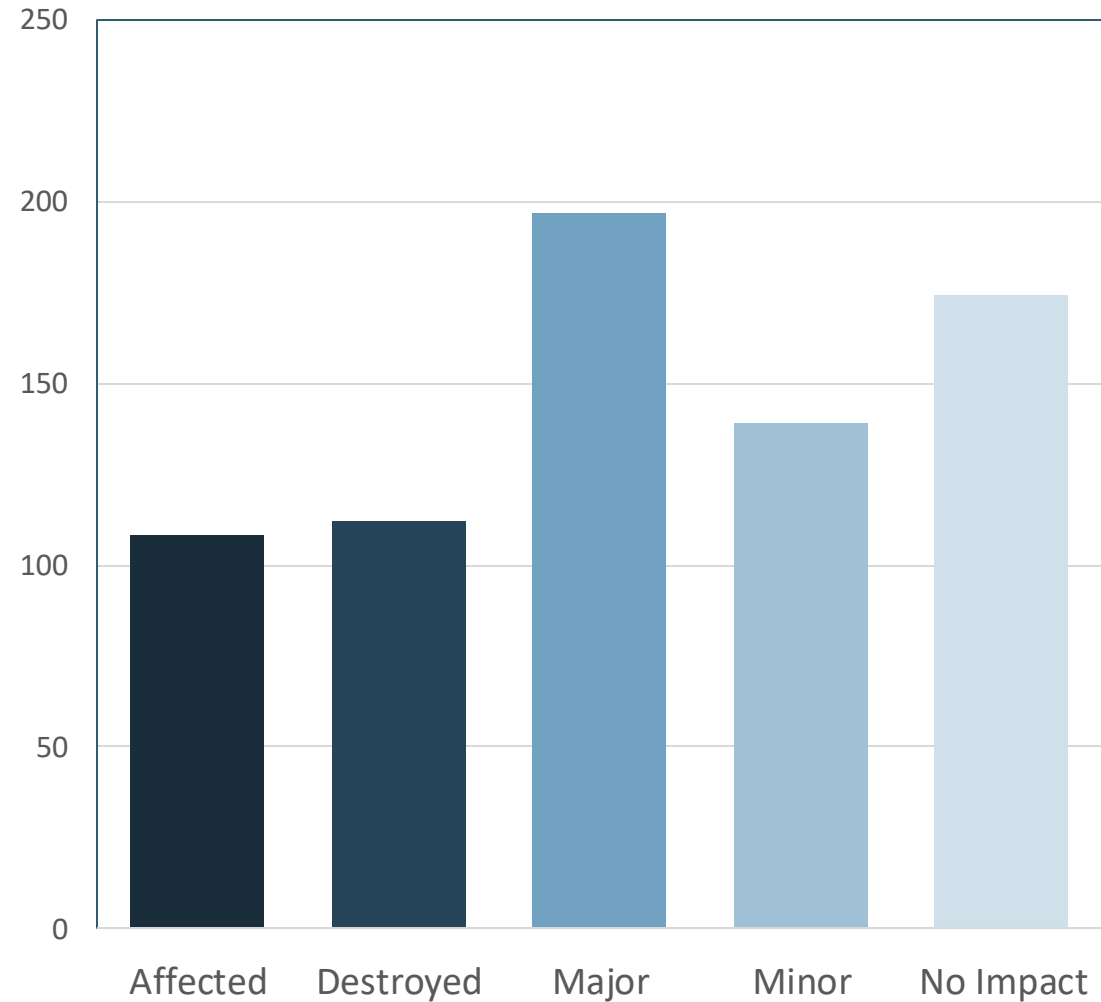
- **Call center intakes**
- **Cases assigned to tiers based on level of contact needed**
- **730 Applications**
 - (As of 2/16/2025)
- **Language Breakout**
 - **English – 716**
 - **Russian – 2**
 - **Spanish – 10**



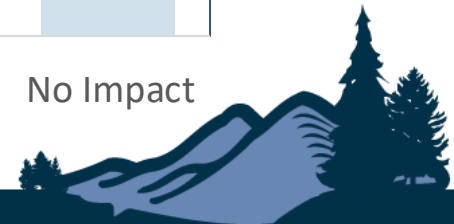
Disaster Case Management Intakes

Storm impact for the 730 households to date:

- Homeowners – 325
- Rental – 237
- Subsidized Housing – 24
- Other - 143



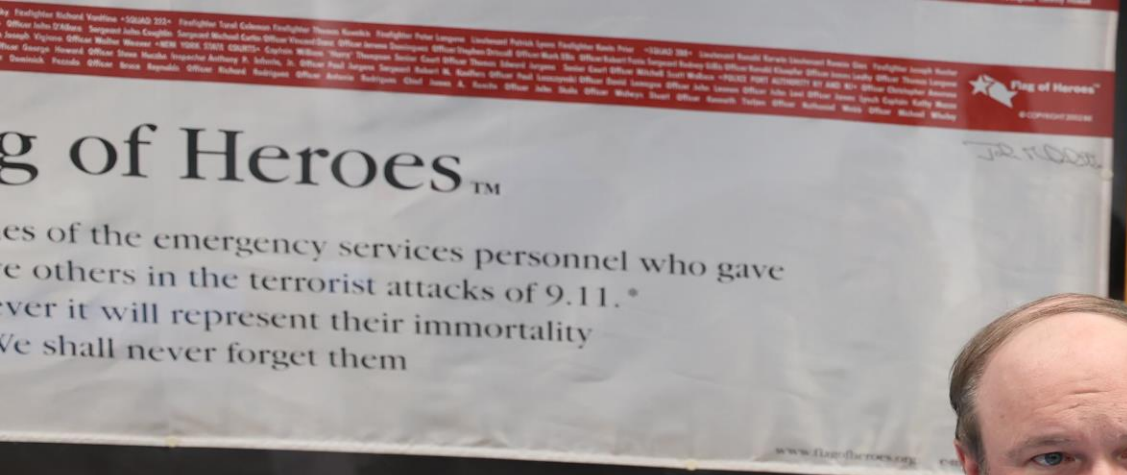
*Other includes: Homeless, Hotel/motel, RV, Tent, Vehicle



Disaster Case Management Staffing

- Buncombe County is actively promoting Disaster Case Management (DCM) to residents
- Current DCM staffing insufficient to meet demand
- North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) working to increase service levels
- Buncombe County has a proposal from Tetra Tech to add local capacity to DCM for the next few months while the state's program gets up and running
- In discussion with NCEM about this option; will decide by end of week





BOUL PM	WILSON	DAVIS PM	MUNDY	DAVIS
TRAWHAM AM		DAVIS	DAVALL	DAVIS
for sikes 23 PM	24	25	26	27
TRAWHAM	WILSON	Davis	Davall	DAVIS
FEBRUARY 2025				



DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT AVAILABLE

To get started, call 844-746-2326 or fill out the NC-DCM intake survey at www.ncdps.gov/helene/dcm.



BUNCOMBE COUNTY

2/18/2025

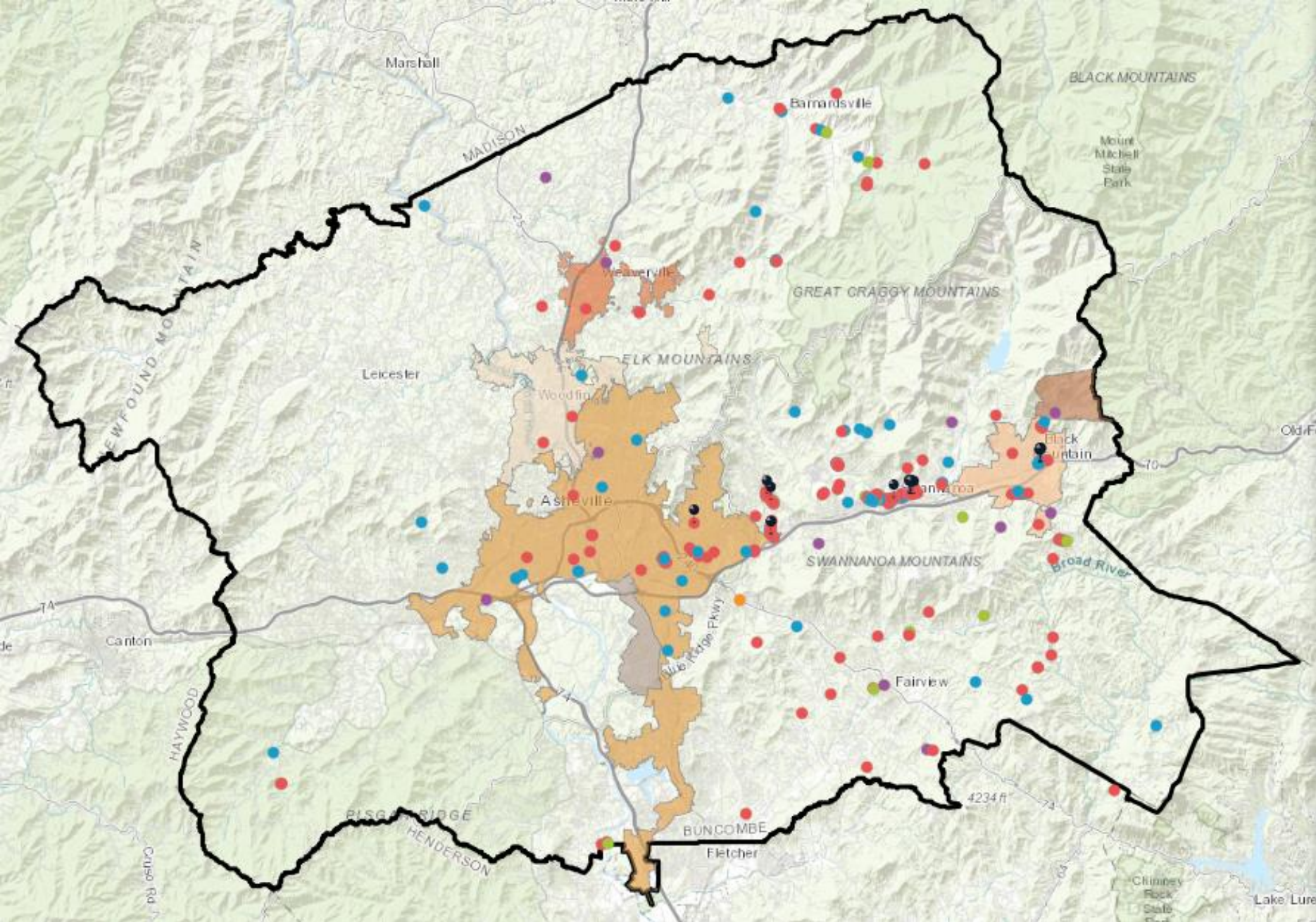
Questions?



Hazard Mitigation Grant Applications

	Buncombe County	City of Asheville	Town of Black Mountain	Town of Weaverville	Total
Acquistion	101	70	24	7	202
Elevation	31	19	9	4	63
Reconstruction	1	2	0	0	3
Landslide	5	3	3	2	13
Other	11	2	1	0	14
Total	149	96	37	13	295





Acquisition Apps From State



HMGP Applications

- Acquisition
- Elevation
- Other
- Slope Stabilization
- Mitigation Reconstruction

Buncombe County Incorporated Areas - Incorporated Areas

- CITY OF ASHEVILLE
- TOWN OF BILTMORE FOREST
- TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN
- TOWN OF MONTREAT
- TOWN OF WEAVERVILLE
- TOWN OF WOODFIN



HMGP Decision Matrix Key Concepts

- Factors considered in decision matrix are:
 - Location of property relative to the Special Flood Hazard Area
 - Age of structure and code standard the structure was built to
 - Extent of damage sustained by the property by Tropical Storm Helene
 - Loss of real property sustained by the property
 - Documented history of flooding
 - Proximity to other public property and/or infrastructure
 - Potential to facilitate/complement public projects within existing County adopted plans



Questions?



Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)

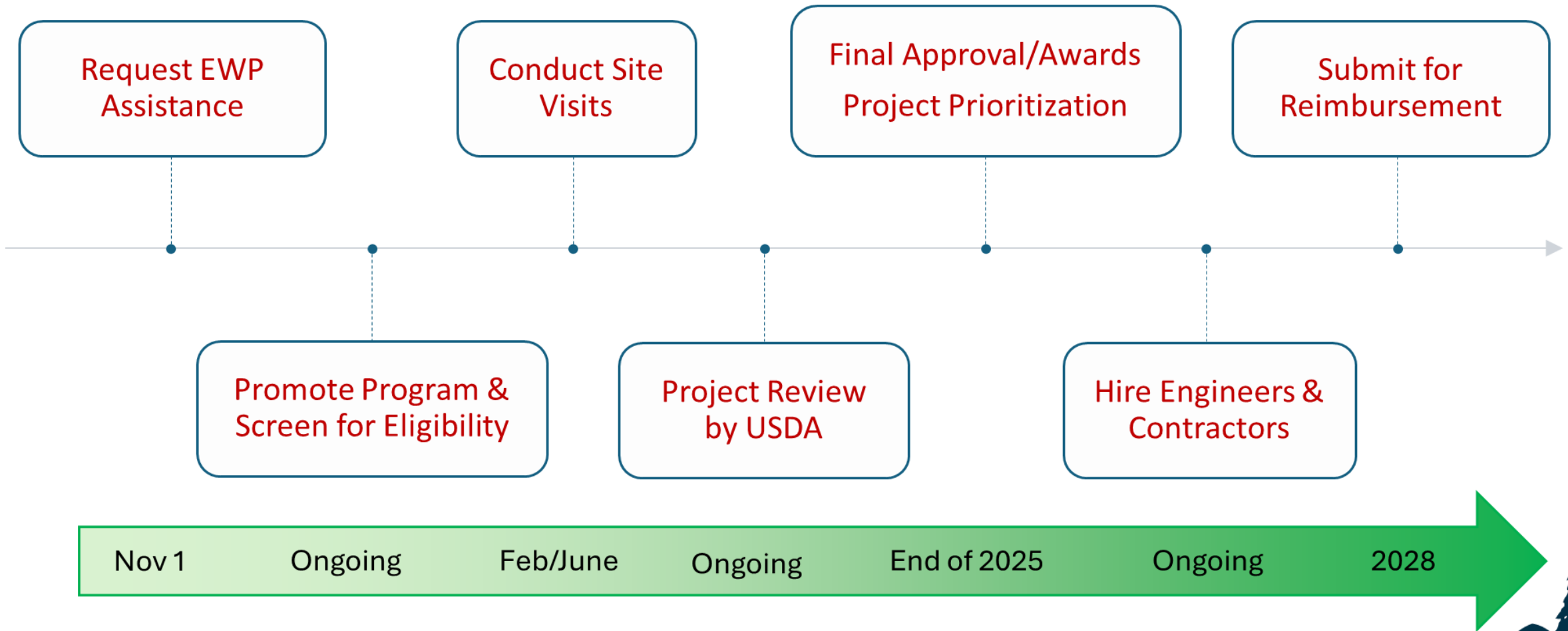
Buncombe County residents with damage or severe streambank erosion from Helene causing a threat to infrastructure could be eligible for the USDA EWP Program

EWP Assists with:

- Debris-clogged waterways and floodplain
- Unstable streambanks



EWP Timeline



EWP Site Visits

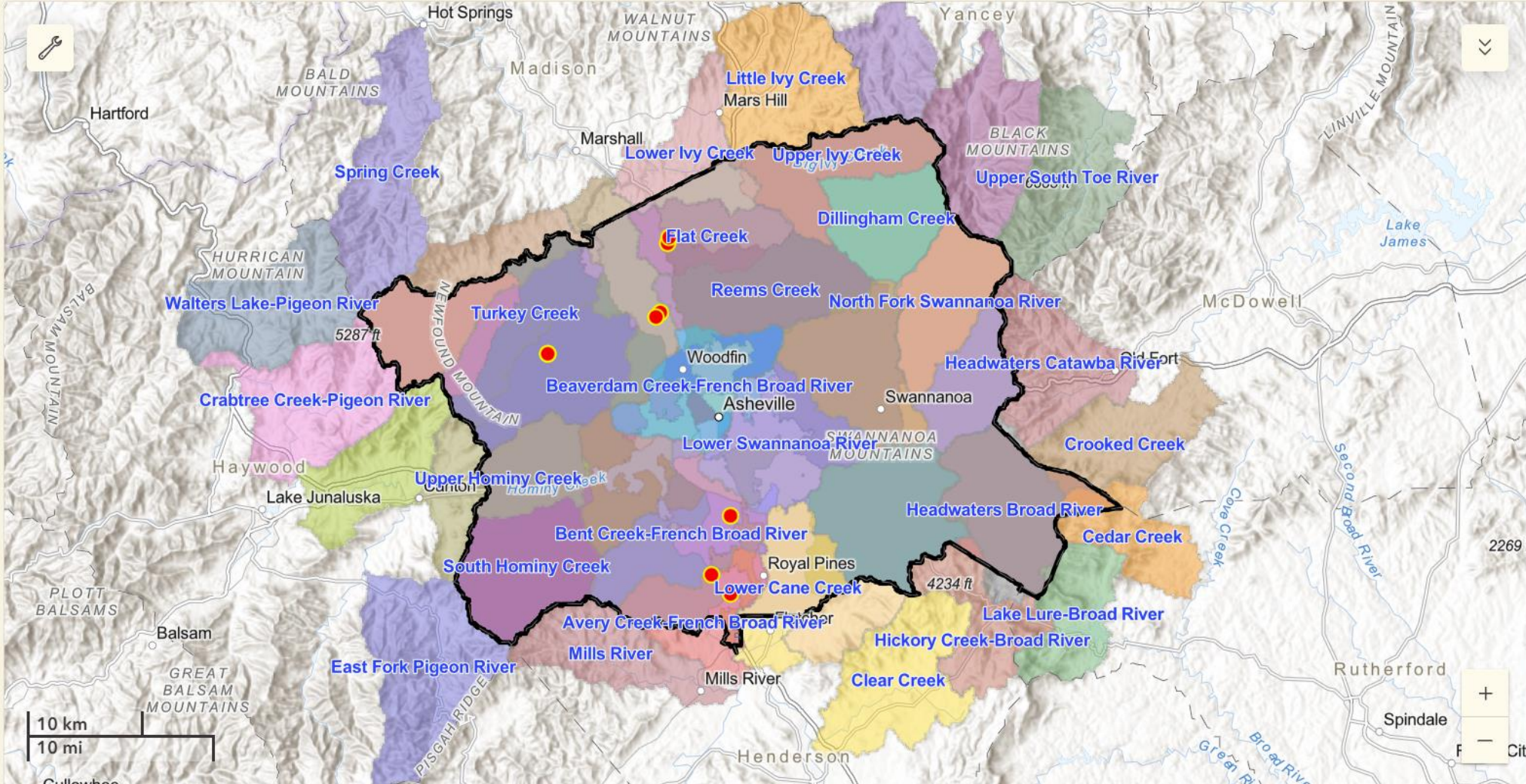
- **Site Visit Start date:**
 - Monday, February 17th
- **Site Visit Crews:**
 - Buncombe Soil and Water Staff
 - Buncombe Extension staff
 - Soil and Water District Staff from across State
 - USDA NRCS staff



Helene FDR Assessment Dashboard

Filter HUC 12 Watershed
None

Filter By Township
None



Total # of Surveys

9

1 of 9



Esri, CGIAR, USGS | Buncombe County, NC, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS

Powered by Esri



EWP Site Visit Process & Program Updates

Staff Preparing for site visits

- Creating Survey123 application
- Developing site maps
- Finalizing Right of Entry/Hold Harmless waivers
- Securing staffing assistance

Program Updates

- Federal guidance – EWP is not a solution for landslides
- # of self-reports received = **465***
- # of sites potentially eligible (landslides removed) = **367***

*As of 2/13/25



Potential Sites

Watershed	# of Potential Sites
Swannanoa - Lower, Middle & Upper	124
Cane Creek - Lower & Upper	56
Beaverdam Creek	40
Broad River - Headwaters	33
Reems Creek	33
Hominy Creek	26
Dillingham Creek	18
Sandy Mush & Turkey Creek	16
Ivy Creek	8
Flat Creek & Lees Creek	6
Newfound Creek	5
Avery Creek & Bent Creek	2

367
Total Potential
EWP Eligible
Sites



Questions?



End of Presentation



APPENDIX – RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY

Assistance for community members impacted by Tropical Storm Helene



RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY

ONE
BUNCOMBE
HELENE
RECOVERY
SERIES



ONE BUNCOMBE

buncombeready.org | (828) 250-6100

DO YOU NEED HELP TO RECOVER FROM HELENE?

Buncombe County and partners are hosting a series of recovery resource events where you can drop-in and ask questions, apply, and learn more about what support is available.



Barnardsville Fire Station, Barnardsville

100 Dillingham Rd. | Thurs., Feb. 13, 5-7P

Owen High School, Black Mountain

99 State Rd. 2468 | Thurs., Feb. 20, 5-7P

Reynolds High School, Asheville

1 Rocket Dr. | Tues., Feb. 25, 5-7P

Leicester Community Center, Leicester

2979 New Leicester Hwy. | Thurs., Feb. 27, 5-7P

Partners include:

- American Red Cross
- Buncombe County Libraries
- Buncombe County Parks
- Buncombe County Permits
- Buncombe County Planning
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program
- FCC Environmental
- FEMA
- NC Disaster Case Management
- NC Emergency Management (Hazard Mitigation)
- NC Medicaid
- WIC



BUNCOMBE COUNTY



2/18/2025

Recovery Resource Guide

Covers

- Transitional Sheltering Assistance Eligibility
- Housing
- Food & Goods
- Health
- Financial & Legal Help

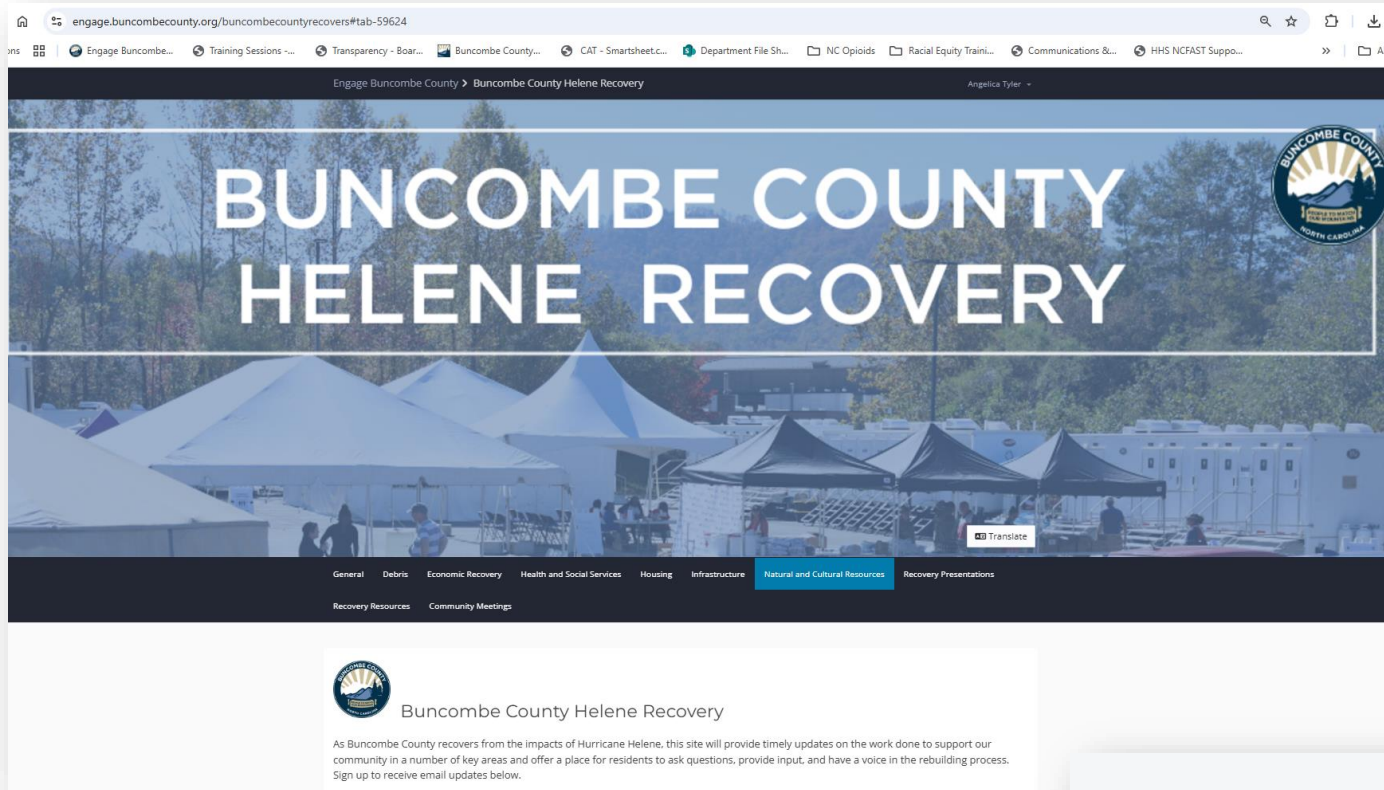
Can also call (828) 250-6100 for One Buncombe Call Center

Online at www.buncombeready.org



Helene Recovery Website

engage.buncombecounty.org/buncomberecovers



Helene recovery-focused site
Engage.buncombecounty.org

- Interactive content & engagement
- Timelines
- Progress Updates
- Calendar of Events
- Live-stream meeting options

Sign up to receive updates on Buncombe County Helene Recovery:

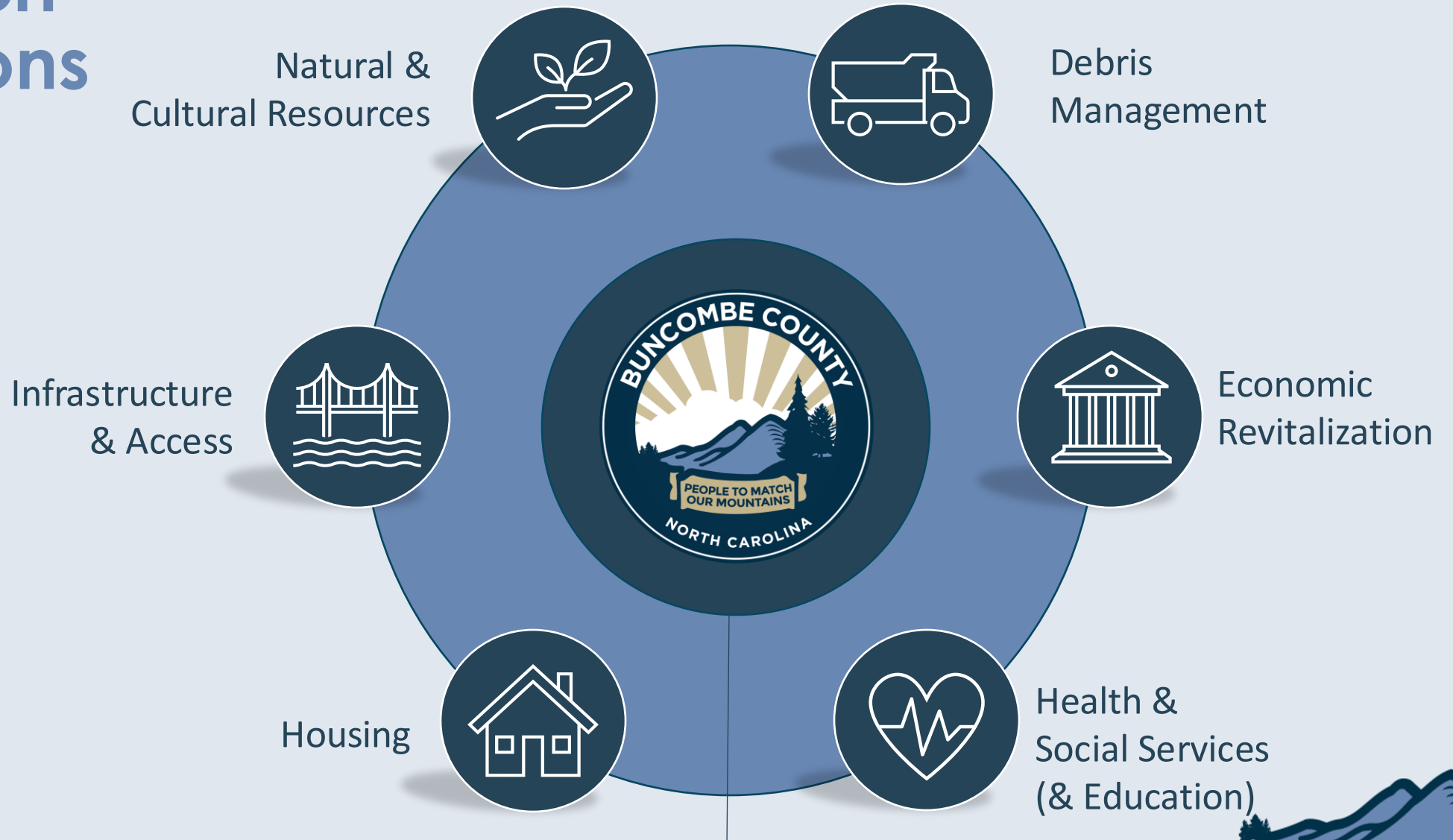


APPENDIX – DATA UPDATES

Reference Data by Recovery Support Function



Recovery Support Functions



Foundational



DEBRIS MANAGEMENT



Focused on storm debris, including solutions for debris removal on public and private property and waterways, managing specialized debris types, evaluating hazardous materials considerations, coordinating disposal, and exploring sustainable re-use of debris.



DEBRIS MANAGEMENT

- Cubic yards of debris collected: 643,007 (29% decrease* since last update)
- Tons of mud, silt and soil collected: 21,681 (69% decrease* since update)
- PPDR applications received: 2,949 (15%+ increase over last update)
- PPDR applications ready for site inspection: 588 (70% increase over last update)
- PPDR applications delivered to FEMA: 1,203 (12% increase over last update)
- PPDR inspections complete: 1,425 (22% increase over last update)
- % of applications received on-line: 55%
- % of applications received in-person: 45%
- % of applications requesting debris removal only: 92%
- % of applications requesting debris and demolition: 7%
- % of applications requesting demolition only: 1%

*Decrease reflects removal of debris within City of Asheville from data collection/reporting



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION



Focused on stimulating economic recovery, supporting local businesses, responding to workforce needs, and ensuring the long-term economic stability and prosperity of the area with a focus on revitalization of critical economic sectors



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

- Asheville-Buncombe "Rebuilding Together" Business Grant www.mountainbizworks.org/helene/fund/
 - 843 applications received totaling more than \$18M (no change compared to prior update)
 - Buncombe County Only
 - 137 small businesses awarded grants, totaling \$1,567,480 (no change compared to prior update)



ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Unemployment Estimates: Revised October 2024 and November 2024

	Reported Oct 2024	Revised Oct 2024	Reported Nov 2024*	Reported Jan 2025
Buncombe County	8.8%	10.4%	7.2%	Not yet reported
Asheville Metro**	7.4%	8.5%	6.1%	Not yet reported

***Asheville Metro includes Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison counties

Helene Impact on County Unemployment Rankings November 2024

County	Labor Force*	Unemployment **	Rate	Rank
Yancey	8,480	522	6.2	96
Avery	7,897	504	6.4	97
Madison	10,328	677	6.6	98
Buncombe	147,359	10,621	7.2	99
Mitchell	6,643	591	8.9	100

*Number of people working in Buncombe County

** Number of people unemployed



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES



Focused on ensuring the health and well-being of residents with attention to the social determinants of health, including consideration of medical, behavioral, educational, and environmental health concerns and social service recovery needs



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

- Applications submitted for individual assistance thru Buncombe Co.: 5,826 (no change compared to last update)
- Applications approved for individual assistance: 360 (41%+ increase over prior update)
- Funds approved for individual assistance: \$1,321,771.41 (25%+ increase over prior update)
- Total loads of laundry at Community Care Sites: 53,566 (13%+ increase over prior update)
- Total number of showers at Community Care Sites: 45,391 (2%+ increase over prior update)
- Number of vaccines provided at Community Care Sites: 1,022 (vaccine administration ended 12/16)
- Mass care meals provided (avg. / day): 1,200 (20% decrease since last update)
- Current individuals in emergency shelters: Shelter closed as of 13/31
- NC DHHS Disaster Energy Assistance: \$580,337 (out of \$1,509,509 total allocated)
- NC DHHS Disaster Adult Service Assistance: \$6,744 (out of \$157,618 total allocated)
- NC DHHS Disaster Child Welfare Assistance: \$61,325 (out of \$469,011 total allocated)
- NC DHHS Disaster Rental Assistance: \$0 (out of \$199,296 total allocated)



EDUCATION

- The number of homeless (unhoused) students identified under the McKinney-Vento Act in **Asheville City Schools** is currently at 247; the number is 1329 for **Buncombe County School**
 - For **ACS**, **74** of these cases are due to Helene
 - For **BCS**, **944** cases are due to Helene
- 100% of **Buncombe County Schools** sites have resumed normal water usage after receiving lead test results
- All **Asheville City Schools** continue to use bottled water and are awaiting lead testing results



HOUSING



Focused on supporting people in moving toward housing permanence through home repair, removing barriers to temporary housing units, connecting survivors to short- and long-term rental, and coordinating rental and mortgage assistance for survivor households with economic impacts



HOUSING

- Residential units destroyed: 353 (3% increase over prior update)
- Residential units with major damage: 686 (1% decrease from prior update)
- Residential units with habitability repairs: 10,026 (7% increase over prior update)
- Total residential units damaged: 11,065 (7% increase over prior update)
- Households currently in TSA: 513 (33% decrease from prior update)
- Households approved for FEMA direct housing: 86 (7% decrease from prior update)
- FEMA temporary housing units complete: 67 (22% increase over prior update)
- FEMA temporary housing units in-progress: 21 (25% decrease from prior update)
- Households approved for rental assistance: 994 (29% increase over prior update)



INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS



Focused on restoring and enhancing essential public infrastructure and accessibility to private property, including comprehensive damage assessments, coordination of repairs/restoration, and mitigation of future hazards such as floods and landslides



INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS

- 295 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) applications have been submitted to NCEM (33% increase over last update)
 - 202 for acquisition & 63 for elevation/reconstruction & 13 for slope stabilization
- Helene related building permit apps filed across 1,290 unique locations (6% increase over last update)
- Helene related building inspections conducted at 964 unique locations (12% increase over last update)
- 300+ private addresses assessed for bridge damage by Fire Marshall with National Guard conducting additional assessments
- 1,000+ landslides occurred in the County with 400+ damaging roads and structures
- 1,400 assessments conducted of properties in flood plain with letters of significant damage being sent
 - County standing up free surveyor program for household appealing significant damage determination



NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES



Focused on the restoration and sustainable management of natural and cultural resources, including capabilities to maintain, conserve, renew, and rehabilitate resources such as parks, farmland, watersheds and streambanks in alignment with environmental and historical preservation laws



NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Emergency watershed protection potential applicants identified: 367 (1% increase compared to last update)
- 7 County parks open to the public (no change compared to prior update)
- 12 County libraries open to the public (no change compared to prior update)





FOUNDATIONAL

Focused on coordinating the resources needed for an effective recovery for and linking recovery with organizational operations –such as grants & funding, data sharing, county property damage, staffing considerations, communications, funding, facilities, fleet, human capital and technology



FOUNDATIONAL

- \$ 13.98 M expended for Helene; \$11.6 M committed
- 1 Category A* project submitted in FEMA grants portal
 - Submitted: \$68,240,087.00 (no change compared to prior update)
 - Received: \$34,120,044.00 (no change compared to prior update)
 - **expedited funding*
- 27 active staff reassignments being managed by HR
- 105 internal county staffing vacancies (not including BCSO) – 6% increase over prior update
- Insurance claim for County-owned assets:
 - Claims submitted: \$1.07 M (no new information compared to prior update)
 - Claim received: \$128,643 (no new information compared to prior update)
- Recovery-related grant funding:
 - Requested: \$5.6 M
 - Awarded: \$2.8 M

