

Note: Catawba County Assistant Planning Director Mary George is serving as Vice-President of the Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition.



INSTITUTE FOR
CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

North Carolina's Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition Honored As Example of Inspired Environmental Collaboration

Local organization selected from among 44 peer-nominated collaborative efforts

Takoma Park, MD, September 13, 2012 – After a nationwide search, the Institute for Conservation Leadership (ICL) has chosen to honor the **Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition** for their exemplary collaboration to accomplish outstanding environmental protection. The Coalition is being recognized for collaborative work that is creative, visionary, and highly effective and that their respective coalition members could not have achieved by acting alone.

Representatives from the Coalition will be recognized and receive their award on Thursday, September 13th at ICL's annual Fall Fest Benefit being held in Washington, D.C.

Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition was chosen for this recognition after 44 collaborative efforts from across the United States were nominated through a public, online process initiated by ICL in June.

ICL called for examples of collaborative work that accomplishes the goals of land and resource conservation, public health protection, environmental justice, and sustainable energy. The honorees were selected by an independent committee of environmental, conservation and foundation leaders.

“The selection committee did an outstanding job of choosing to recognize this distinctive and exciting example of collaborative conservation,” said Vivian Buckingham, ICL Board member and Fall Fest chairperson. “The **Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition** took an inclusive and active approach over 10 years, and helped create a process that resulted in 70 parties, including Duke Energy, signing a Comprehensive Relicensing Agreement.”

The Coalition was formed in response to the need of Duke Energy to renew its Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licenses for several hydropower dams on the Catawba-Wateree Rivers

in North and South Carolina. Such processes often cause significant division, discord, and even litigation as stakeholders offer competing visions of watershed use.

Instead, by bringing together a representative group of stakeholders from across industry, community, and government, many of whom started as traditional adversaries, the Coalition improved environmental protection, public health, environmental justice, land and water conservation, and sustainable energy.

The selection committee found that the **Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition** supported robust education, honest dialogue, and thoughtful negotiation, which allowed the Coalition to build trust and consensus in a complex and potentially confusing regulatory environment. The selection committee chose the Coalition because they felt the Coalition excelled at creating a platform for learning together, crafting shared solutions, and pulling diverse interests into a long-term visionary approach for the watersheds and the region's many communities – a true win-win solution.

In choosing the **Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition** as the 2012 honoree, the selection committee followed these criteria for nomination developed by ICL:

- The collaboration includes two or more entities – nonprofit organizations, government agencies, or for-profit entities
- The collaboration used creative approaches to take advantage of an important opportunity to advance broad goals
- The collaboration engaged unlikely partners, non-traditional allies, or a new cross-sector issue
- The collaboration can tell how and why its leadership, purpose, participation, and methods produced success
- The collaboration can point to specific results and positive changes that have happened because of working together.

“The Catawba-Wateree Relicensing Coalition represents a highly focused collaboration for the benefit of the environment, economies and communities in the Catawba and Wateree watersheds,” said Scott Schang, ICL Board chairman. “This type of collaboration exemplifies the many creative collaborations that the Institute supports and strengthens across North America. The Institute’s Board of Directors is pleased to highlight this coalition’s work so leaders working on a variety of green issues will be inspired to do the hard work of collaboration in their own communities.”

For more about the Coalition, see <http://www.cwrc.info>. For a list of Coalition members, see <http://www.cwrc.info/aboutpartners.html>.

About The Institute for Conservation Leadership (ICL)

Over the last 22 years, the Institute for Conservation Leadership has strengthened leaders, organizations, and coalitions or networks that protect and conserve the Earth. The Institute has offers an evolving set of programming and services that meet the needs of North American local, state, regional, and national organizations working on environmental, conservation and environmental justice issues. The Institute began as a project within National Wildlife Federation in 1988 and became an independent organization in 1990.

The Institute offers three principle types of support: public programs, custom designed services, and written tools and resources. It tailors this support to strengthen conservation groups' learning and increase their effectiveness. In the last year alone, the Institute has worked with over 720 organizations and 1,400 individual leaders. Among its seven staff and a nationwide network of consultants, the Institute's highly-experienced and expert resource people understand issues of leadership, organizations, collaboration, and conservation. Visit us online at www.icl.org.

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