



Habitat Restoration Volunteer Toolkit

The North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) enhances wildlife habitats by organizing trash clean-ups and native plantings in communities throughout North Carolina. Trash cleanups empower volunteers and local residents to remove trash from their communities and natural areas and replace it with native trees and plants.

You can help to achieve the goal of removing at least 100,000 pounds of trash from the environment, planting 2,000 native trees and planting 3,500 native pollinator plants annually by participating in clean-up and planting events and reporting the results. One tree will be planted for every 25 pounds of trash collected and reported using the tracking form on our website.

How to Organize a trash clean-up event:

- Decide on key elements of the event
 - Date of event
 - Areas for clean-up
 - How volunteers can participate
 - Designate key partners
 - Select lead volunteer for post-event reporting
- Event organizers create a sign-up/registration form for participants
- Promote the event
 - Word of mouth
 - Social media
 - Flyers/Newspaper
 - Local radio
- Gather materials for the clean-up event
 - Discuss with NCWF what materials may be available
 - Recommended materials can be found in the table below
- Host your clean-up day!
- Dispose of trash in designated bins and take to waste facility
- Report your results to NCWF via [form on the website](#)
 - 1 kitchen size trash bag roughly equals 15 lbs.
- Follow up with participants to organize your next clean-up event

How to Organize a planting event:

- Decide on key elements of the event
 - Date of event
 - Location for tree/plant planting
 - Make sure to ask for permission on location and mark utilities (public and/or private) where necessary
 - How volunteers can participate



- Designate key partners
 - Cooperation and collaboration with public parks and cities
 - Decide on maintenance schedule and who will lead
- Select lead volunteer for post-event reporting
- Event organizers create a sign-up/registration form for participants
- Promote the event
 - Word of mouth
 - Social media
 - Flyers/Newspaper
 - Local radio
- Order trees and plants 2-4 weeks in advance and gather materials
 - Decide on the number of plants based on location
 - Discuss with NCWF if there are planned sites already and if trees may be available
- Designate a water source & plan watering schedule during establishment period (at least initial 4 weeks)
- Host your planting day!
 - We have provided a list of recommended supplies for your event below
- Report your results to NCWF [via form on the website](#)
- Follow up with participants to organize your next planting event

How to Organize a trash clean-up and planting event:

- Decide on key elements of the event
 - Date of event
 - Location for tree/plant planting and trash clean-up (can be same area or different location)
 - Make sure to ask for permission on location and mark utilities (public and/or private) where necessary
 - How volunteers can participate (volunteer coordinators organize tasks)
 - Designate key partners
 - Cooperation and collaboration with public parks and cities
 - Decide on maintenance schedule and who will lead
 - Select lead volunteer for post-event reporting
- Event organizers create a sign-up/registration form for participants
- Promote the event
 - Word of mouth
 - Social media
 - Flyers/Newspaper
 - Local radio
- Order trees and plants 2-4 weeks in advance and gather materials
 - Decide on the number of plants/trees based on location
 - Discuss with NCWF if there are planned sites already and if trees may be available



- Designate a water source & plan watering schedule during establishment period (at least initial 4 weeks)
- Host your clean-up/planting day!
 - We have provided a list of recommended supplies for your event below
- Place collected trash in designated bins and take to waste facility
- Report your results to NCWF via [form on the website](#)
 - Standard 13-gallon, kitchen trash bags hold roughly 15 lbs.
- Follow up with participants to organize your next clean-up/planting event

Trash Clean-Up Event:

- Tools Needed:
 - Trash pickers
 - Reusable bags, buckets or trash bags
 - Gloves
 - Handheld scales for accurate trash weight (1 trash bag = ~15 lbs of trash)
- General Recommendations:
 - Wear closed toe shoes
 - Wear sunscreen
 - Bring water
 - Wear a safety vest around busy roads and intersections
 - Collect trash with a buddy or in a group
 - Wash/sanitize hands thoroughly after clean-up
- Dispose of trash in provided trash bins, city waste facilities or in a designated bin with the permission of the owner

Tree Planting Event:

- Tools Needed:
 - Shovels
 - Trowels
 - Gloves
 - Mulch
- General Recommendations:
 - On the day of event, demonstrate how to properly install a tree/plant
 - Wear closed toe shoes
 - Wear sunscreen
 - Bring water
 - Wear a safety vest around busy roads and intersections
 - For larger trees, lift with your knees, using your leg muscles rather than your back to prevent injury or ask another participant to help
- Always ask permission before planting anything on someone else's property



Habitat Restoration Frequently Asked Questions

What is an NCWF habitat restoration event?

North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) is tackling critical conservation issues head-on with this habitat restoration initiative. Trash cleanups and plantings aim to mobilize thousands of volunteers to remove trash from neighborhoods, waterways, and public lands and then plant native trees and pollinator plants in its place. For every 25 pounds of trash collected, one native tree or 10 pollinator plants will be planted with the goal of removing thousands of pounds of plastics and trash and planting hundreds to thousands of trees.

Who plans a cleanup or planting event?

NCWF and local chapters all across the state are planning trash clean-up and planting events. NCWF and chapters may also partner with other organizations to plan a clean-up event, planting event or a combination of both.

What types of trees are planted?

NCWF plants native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants depending on the appropriate season. All selected plants are native to NC. The type of plants planted and the size depend on the planting location.

What size plants are planted?

If planting herbaceous plants, the plant sizes are typically 1-3" plugs or a pollinator seed mix. Shrub sizes typically are 1-3 gallons. Tree sizes may range from 7 gallons to 15 gallons depending on the location. 7 gallon trees are planted most often.

How is trash collected and recorded?

Chapters and partners collect trash and either use a hand-weigher to weigh trash bags or estimate the weight of the trash collected. This trash is then reported via the [habitat restoration tracking form](#) on the NCWF website.

Where are trees/plants planted?

The trash collected goes towards the overall tree-planting goal. Even though trash is collected in one area, trees or other plants may be planted in other locations across the state. Planting locations have included (but are not limited to) schools, parks, state parks, and riparian areas.

Who maintains the plants after the planting?

The maintenance of the plants will fall on either the city or the property owner/groundskeepers. While NCWF chapters may volunteer to do some maintenance, it is best to see plants maintained by a permanent party.