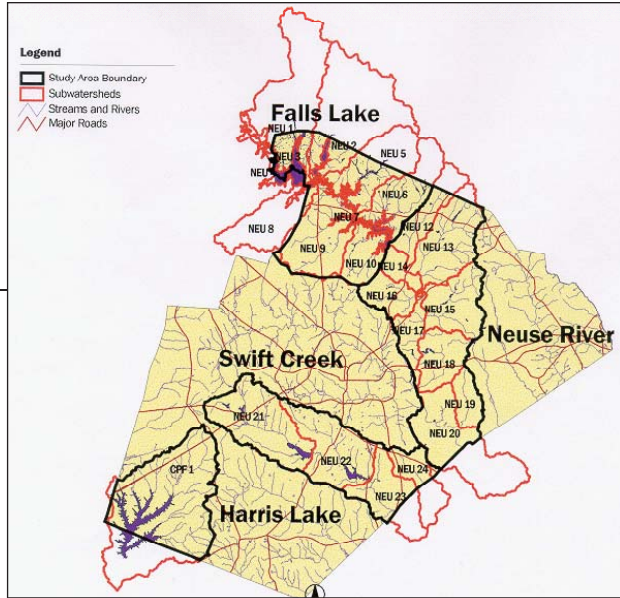




project profile : conservation planning



Wake County Open Space Plan

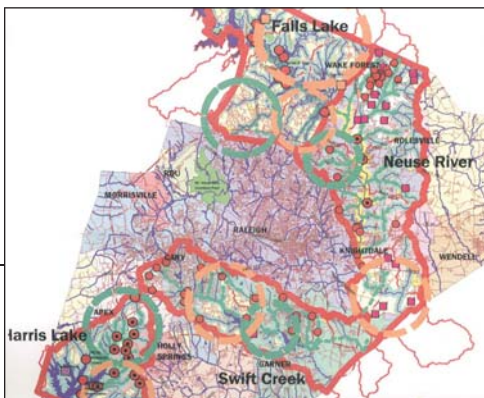
Wake County, North Carolina

Recognizing that decisions made today will have a profound impact on the amount of open land maintained for the use and enjoyment of future generations; and thus the future quality of life for county residents, Wake County's Board of Commissioners appointed an Open Space Advisory Committee and allocated funds for the preservation of lands as open space. To tackle the project, the Board adopted a riparian corridor approach for preserving open space and retained the team of Greenways, Inc. and Biohabitats to study the Falls Lake Dam, Neuse River below Falls Lake Dam, Swift Creek, and Harris Lake riparian corridors.

The framework provides a scientifically defensible method in which to select riparian lands suitable for natural heritage conservation and restoration. Biohabitats' responsibilities include the development of conservation/restoration matrices and a corresponding ranking system for each of four analysis levels. Emphasis was placed on: preservation of existing natural and cultural resources, and restoration of degraded resources. Level I matrices were based on identifying and ranking subwatersheds that exhibit high conservation and/or restoration potential. Level II matrices were based on identifying and ranking patches and corridors within one selected subwatershed. Level III matrices were based on identifying and ranking parcels, within patches and corridors that exhibit high conservation and/or restoration potential. And Level IV matrices were developed to field verify the conservation and restoration potential of parcels.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

SERVICES	Inventory & Assessment Planning Public Outreach
CLIENT	Wake County Planning Department
PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE	Piedmont
BIOREGION	Southeast
WATERSHED	Falls Lake/Neuse River/Swift Creek/ Harris Lake



Recognizing that decisions made today will have a profound impact on the amount of protected land available for future generations, the Open Space plan for Wake County provides a scientifically defensible framework for designating lands based on conservation planning principles.