

RiverLink restoration project nominated for award

The American Council of Engineering Companies of North Carolina (ACEC/NC) has announced that two of RiverLink's recent stream restoration projects have been nominated for an award at the ACEC/NC Engineering Excellence Awards Dinner on November 11.

Using funds from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, RiverLink hired Asheville's Michael Baker Engineering, Inc. to reconfigure the flow pattern of Rhododendron Creek in West Asheville Park and Buttermilk Creek in Malvern Hills Park. Baker's engineers reshaped the streambanks to a more natural state, stabilized the banks with native riparian plantings, and reduced sediment loading through treatment of stormwater runoff utilizing bio-retention cells and vegetated swales. In addition, RiverLink provided over 100 volunteers and 500 hours of volunteer labor to the projects. Volunteer workdays were held to install best management practices, plant livestakes, and remove invasive species.

"The Clean Water Management Trust Fund has been great to work with through this process," said Nancy Hodges, RiverLink's Watershed Resources Manager. "They funded the restoration of two highly degraded streams in two very popular parks, which has brought some recognition to stream restoration in the area."

"Baker has enjoyed working with RiverLink, the City, and all of the great volunteer groups to bring this project to fruition and we hope that these projects are an inspiration and stepping-stone to forward the vision of building healthy communities based on environmental stewardship," said Jake McLean, an engineer with Michael Baker Engineering, Inc. who worked on the project.

RiverLink has worked on many other stream restoration projects in the area, including a 1.3 mile section of the Swannanoa River. With the help of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, they have many more projects on the horizon. The ACEC/NC represents the business interests of more than 200 engineering firms throughout the state. The award ceremony will take place at 5:30 p.m. on November 11 at Prestonwood Country Club in Cary, NC. Mick Mixon, the voice of the Carolina Panthers, will be acting as Master of Ceremonies.