

Meet Preston Jacobsen

"Because the Pigeon River is a headwaters watershed, we need to work to make sure the water leaving Haywood County is as cold and clean as possible."

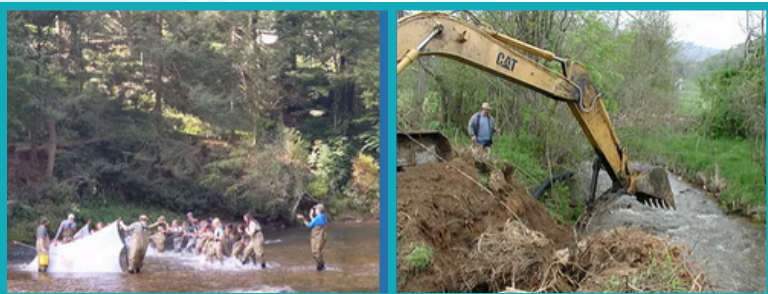
As executive director of Haywood Waterways Association (founded 1998), Preston Jacobsen works to educate county residents, restore impaired waters, and monitor water quality throughout the Pigeon River Watershed, a headwaters watershed.



Like many rivers and streams in western North Carolina, the Pigeon River has been affected by increased development, resulting in more impermeable surfaces that impede rainwater absorption. Waynesville in particular has seen a 13% increase in annual rainfall over the past 100 years, compounding challenges in stormwater management.

As a steward of a headwaters watershed, Preston works to ensure the waters leaving Haywood County are as pristine as possible. Haywood Waterways supports this goal by helping residents restore streambanks, riparian buffers, and floodplains across the county.

Under Preston's leadership, Haywood Waterways is partnering with the NC Climate Office, the Town of Waynesville, and other stakeholders to improve the city's systems by integrating climate and rainfall data into Waynesville's stormwater management plan. As part of the wettest area in the Eastern US, Haywood County is a prime example of a changing climate, and as development and rain fall increase, so does our need to create a more resilient community.



Did you know?

Haywood County is unique among U.S. counties as one of only two whose boundaries are defined by and aligned with its watershed. Because Haywood county lines follow mountain ridge lines, all water sources originate from and remain within its borders.

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