



COMMUNITIES BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

December 5, 2021

Imagine with me: it is a couple of days following the disaster that Tropical Storm Fred brought to Haywood County. A line of pickup trucks is streaming up the drive to WNC Regional Livestock Market at 474 Stock Drive, Canton, NC hoping to find relief from the devastating losses on their Haywood County farms. This site had been named a drop off and pick up point for items for disaster relief. This relief effort addressed the immediate and urgent needs and preceded a larger and more complex relief program that utilized greater funds from multiple donors.

Kind folks from the local area, wanting to help, had already begun to bring items for relief in an outpouring of their concern. Bagged animal feed, bales and rolls of hay, small farm tools and other supplies created a warehouse of resources.

The staff of WNC Regional Livestock Center quickly set up a control system (activity log) with proper checks and balances to make sure folks were properly taken care of, and relief was in progress. Missing among the supplies were fencing materials – fence posts, wire and gates. Almost every family had fence posts, barbed wire and fencing materials on their needs list as their fences had been washed away with the flood, letting their animals run loose. The situation was severe and dire.

What can we do? Fence posts, wire and materials needed to be purchased, but our farmers had no funds! As serendipity would have it, Todd Donatelli called WNC Communities to pledge funds for Haywood County farmers from Saint Andrews and Grace through Episcopal Relief and Development.

The promise of funds triggered the purchase action even before funds had been received. Negotiations with a local farm supply distributor led to a purchase of fencing materials at cost (no markup). With the promise of reimbursement from WNC Communities, personal credit cards were used and fencing materials were made available immediately.

Two credit card purchases included:

- 1500 fence posts
- 9 rolls of barbed wire
- 5 fence gates
- 4 additional batches of fencing materials.

The two reimbursements were \$3586.01 and \$4340.99 for a total of \$7927.00.

Of the 64 entries in the control book, some 50% (32) needed fencing materials. With a family consisting of approximately 3.5 persons per household, well over 100 folks benefitted from this purchase action.

The remaining funds -- **\$2073** -- were made directly to two individual farmers (applied to grants of greater value) in Haywood County. These funds were used to pay for labor and costs associated with the cleanup of badly flooded fields and pastures, none of which was covered under any insurance or federal/state/local programs.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES:

\$3586.01	Fencing materials purchase 1
\$4340.99	Fencing materials purchase 2
\$2073.00	2 direct payments to farmers for clean-up

\$10,000.00	TOTAL

Payments from our larger Immediate Disaster Needs effort totaled more than \$300,000 to area farmers -- most of whom were in Haywood County.

Your group served the greatest need at the most crucial time. Your funds brought needed cash to purchase materials while other items such as feed and hay were being donated.

Your funds joined numerous donors by making resources available to those who needed it most. Access was immediate and without a lot of formality and bureaucracy. The need of hundreds of folks was quickly met and was most appreciated.

WNC Communities expresses our sincere gratitude for your joining us as we responded to the disaster with relief.

Best Regards,



L T Ward
Vice President