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## **MADE X MTNS Announces First Awardees of the Building Outdoor Communities Planning and Capacity Building Grants**

*Funds six outdoor community and economic development projects that catalyze rural development across Western North Carolina.*

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA (September 8, 2023) –** The MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership is thrilled to announce the first round of grant recipients in its [Building Outdoor Communities Program](#). The six grantees in this initial round of funding include projects that demonstrate their high impact, connectivity, regional potential, and sustainability benefit to enhance outdoor community and economic development.

The first round of grantees and projects include:

- **Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team (GREAT):** Robbinsville Greenway Water Access Points - a conceptual design
- **Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce:** Toe River Valley Outdoor Recreation Guide
- **Rutherford County Economic Development Association:** Broad River Paddle Trail Branding
- **Transylvania Economic Alliance:** Outdoor Industry Recruitment Initiative
- **Yancey County Chamber of Commerce:** Explore Burnsville Wayfinding Master Plan
- **The Health Foundation, Inc. - Wilkes County:** Yadkin River Greenway Pedestrian Bridge - engineering & design

“These six grantees stood out for their exceptional projects that showcase high impact, regional potential, connectivity, and sustainability benefits,” said MADE X MTNS Partnership Director, Amy Allison.

“We are excited to support these initiatives, which will undoubtedly enhance outdoor community engagement, spur economic development, and contribute to the long-term vitality of our natural spaces,” she adds.

The goal of the Building Outdoor Communities Program is to support Western North Carolina’s community leaders to better leverage their natural assets and collaborate to advance their outdoor community and economic development goals, centered around healthy people and places. The program supports communities to align key stakeholders, create outdoor infrastructure and economic priorities, and develop implementation guidance to advance the work at the county and regional scale.

“As a participant in the Made By Mountains Building Outdoor Communities Program, Yancey County is excited to be a recipient of a Planning and Capacity Building Grant. These funds will allow the county to create a wayfinding sign master plan as a first step in a comprehensive

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tourism sign system,” says Burnsville – Yancey Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Christy Wood.

“A unifying visual theme will let visitors know that they have reached our destination, guide them to locations and activities, and tie our entire county together,” she adds.

Two rounds of planning and capacity building grants have been made possible through \$250,000 in funding from the [Appalachian Regional Commission](#). This funding is part of the three-year “Accelerating Outdoors Grant” awarded to the MADE X MTNS Partnership.

The application for the second round of the [Building Outdoor Communities Planning and Capacity Building Grant](#) funding opens to program participants in October, 2023.

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**About MADE X MTNS Partnership**

The MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership is working to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and catalyze rural development by building vibrant outdoor communities, growing outdoor businesses, and amplifying outdoor culture.

For more information, visit [madexmtns.com](http://madexmtns.com) or [@madexmtns](https://twitter.com/madexmtns)