



Todd Community Preservation Organization, Inc.

P.O. Box 15 | Todd, North Carolina 28684 | www.toddnc.org

*To develop our community
by sustainable means
while preserving our
history, our cultural
heritage and our natural
resources.*

2026

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March 12, 2026

Dear Ashe County Commissioners,

Todd Community Preservation Organization (TCPO) acquired the 10 acre Todd Island in 2000 with the goal of making it a public park for river access, outdoor recreation, and wildlife habitat. A one-mile trail was developed, a parking lot established, native trees and shrubs planted and a pedestrian bridge installed. The very popular park has become a New River Paddle Trail access and a Delayed Harvest Trout Waters location. In 2024 Hurricane Helene's floodwaters rose twenty feet over the park and the 90 foot pedestrian bridge was pushed off its abutments and destroyed. The park was covered in downed trees, trash, debris, and silt. The TCPO, volunteers and the Army Corps of Engineers have already removed much debris, and we are working to return access to the park. Anglers, kayakers, and tubers have returned to the parking lot side of the river across from the island and used it extensively in 2025. Fish & Wildlife have continued stocking Todd Island Park.

In 2021 TCPO received much appreciated funds from Ashe County to match a grant that would complete Phase II of a three-phase plan to stabilize the river banks on Todd Island Park. Phase I had been completed at this point. Phases I and II addressed approximately two thirds of the island's riverbanks. These two completed phases were battered during Hurricane Helene, but the structures and native vegetation held the banks and underscore the benefits of streambank restoration. They will need some repairs, but the damage would have been much worse had the river banks not been stabilized.

This year we are asking Ashe County to help complete Phase III, the final third of the riverbank stabilization, and to help with Helene damage repair to Phases I and II. River Bank stability is crucial to restoration and future development of the park.

The total amount needed for Phase III is \$207,300 and the repairs are estimated at \$67,000, totaling \$274,300. Jonathan Hartsell of Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Council is project manager and has been applying for grants for these projects, which we have been successful in receiving in the past. There will be matching funds required for these grants. Any monies not needed for matching funds will go directly to repairs. We respectfully ask Ashe County for \$45,000 to help with this important project.

We feel the benefit of having free and convenient access to a beautiful and unique island and the South Fork New River in Todd is a valuable asset to Ashe County and draws many visitors. The TCPO has acted as a good community partner for over 25 years in providing both the Todd Island Park and Cook Memorial Park, the site of our popular summer music series, as public spaces. In 2025 the TCPO spent over \$85,000 raised solely through private donations along with countless volunteer hours and in-kind donations to restore Cook Memorial Park. Although Todd Island Park is entirely in Ashe County, it borders Watauga County and is used by Watauga residents as well as the rest of North Carolina, and we plan to ask Watauga County for funding as well.

If you need additional information, we will be happy to discuss this project further. Thank you for partnering with us in the past and for your consideration of this important funding request.

Sincerely,

Susan McBurney
President, TCPO

Todd Island Park Riverbank Restoration Partners:

- Todd Community Preservation Organization
- New River Conservancy
- Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Council
- New River Soil and Water Conservation District
- USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- NC State Parks
- Trout Unlimited