CALDWELL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
** SHERIFF KEVIN H. BEAN **
2351 MORGANTON BLVD. SW * LENOIR, NC 28645
PHONE: 828-758-2324 * FAX: 828-757-8685

Caldwell County Sheriff's Office Cooperative Agreement with USDA, Forest Service: Additional Federal Funding for (Wilson's Creek)
County Contract Update: Additional Federal Funding for [**Wilson Creek**]
Presentation to County Manager (Mr. Shane Fox), and Finance (Mr. Tony Helton)
Presenters: John Runion, Derek Philyaw

December 22, 2025

Overview:
Caldwell County and the United States Department of Agriculture have had an ongoing agreement with the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office, to provide law enforcement services. Currently, in budget, the Sheriff's Office has line item "4312" which consists of $60,000 USD for salaries of deputies working Wilson Creek assignments. Caldwell County has an additional line item "4319" which has an additional $12,500 USD for salaries. Courtesy of John Runion's efforts, the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office was able to acquire an additional $120,000 USD funding per fiscal year to assist with salaries equipment, training, and special enforcement situations. The funds were allocated to counties that were directly affected by Hurricane Helene.

Due to the time constraint with the contract, the only federal money used for the 2024/2025 budget year was designated for deputies' salaries working Wilson Creek. The total for deputy salaries for the 2024/2025 year was $91,930. The (USDA), Forest Service is currently gathering requests from counties that were awarded federal funding. Caldwell County as well as the Sheriff's Office has a great opportunity to acquire equipment that would assist citizens in the Wilson Creek community as well as the rest of Caldwell County. The (USDA), Forest Service will allow up to 50% of the $120,000 funds to be used for equipment that can be utilized in the areas affected by Hurricane Helene.

Request:
Allocate $60,000 USD from county funds to line item 4319 for equipment purchases. This will maximize the return on investment for the county due to the fact we will be able to acquire $60,000 worth of equipment that will be reimbursed by the (USDA), Forest Service.

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Justifications and Proposed Equipment:

The proposed equipment addresses critical operational needs identified through routine patrols and post-Hurricane Helene response activities in the Wilson Creek area:

1. **Variable Message Board Trailer-** The Sheriff's Office currently lacks a portable message board. A message board would enable real-time communication of weather alerts, road closures, and public safety information during patrols and events. The selected option, the Stalker Radar MC360 trailer, also collects traffic data and includes a radar speed alert system.
   Subtotal: $23,485
2. **Enclosed Cargo Trailer-** Existing Sheriff's Office trailers cannot accommodate the department's UTVs. The proposed trailers would enable safe and efficient transport of UTVs to the Wilson Creek area for summer patrols, special events, and emergency response.
3. Enclosed 8.5x24 Tandem trailer $9,400
   - **Subtotal:** $9,400
3. **Traffic Control Devices-** The department currently has insufficient Type 3 break-away barricades and traffic cones for effective traffic management during high-volume periods. These items are essential for safely directing traffic and securing incident scenes.
   - 4' Type 3 Break-Away Barricades (25): $3,650
   - 36" Traffic Cones (100): $2,260
   - **Subtotal:** $7,106.78
4. **Thermal Drone System-** A DJI Matrice 30T drone with thermal imaging capabilities would significantly enhance search-and-rescue operations, emergency response, and law enforcement effectiveness in the challenging terrain of the Wilson Creek area. **Cost (including TB30 batteries and DJI Care Plus): Cost:** $14,700

Total Requested Equipment Cost: $54,691.78

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Requested Equipment:

Stalker Radar MC360 Cost: $23,485

Enclosed 8.5x24 Tandem trailer $9,400

Traffic Safety Store- 4' Type 3 Break Away Barricade (25) $3,650

36' Traffic cones (100) $2,260

DJI Matrice 30T with TB30 & DJI Care Plus- $14,700

Total: $54,691.78

Summary:

Approval of this $60,000 allocation to line item 4319 will allow Caldwell County to acquire approximately $60,000 in high-value public safety equipment at no net cost to county taxpayers, as the full amount will be reimbursed by the (USDA), Forest Service. These assets will directly support law enforcement and emergency response in the Hurricane Helene-affected Wilson Creek area while providing lasting benefits to the broader community.

Terms and scope for contract funding
2024-2025- Salaries $120,000
2025-2026- Salaries $60,000/ Equipment $60,000- Message board, trailer, drones, cones
2026-2027- Salaries $60,000/ Equipment $60,000- Swift water rescue equipment
2027-2028- Salaries $60,000/ Equipment $60,000- TBD

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2025 OPERATING AND FINANCIAL PLAN

This Financial and Operating Plan (Operating Plan), is hereby made and entered into by and between the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office, hereinafter referred to as "Caldwell County Sheriff's Office," and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service, National Forest in North Carolina, hereinafter referred to as the "U.S. Forest Service," under the provisions of Cooperative Law Enforcement Agreement #25-LE-11081100-256. This Operating and Financial Plan is made and agreed to as of the last signature date on the Cooperative Law Enforcement Agreement and is in effect through November 30, 2025, unless modified during the annual review.

Previous Year Carry-over: $0.00
Current 2025 Year Obligation: $600,000
Year 2025 Total Operating Plan: $120,000
Year 2025 Carry-over: $40,570

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Patrol on following U.S. Forest Service roads:
All Forest Service Lands in Caldwell County, including but not limited to:
Hwy 1328 – Brown Mtn Beach Road/Wilson Creek
FS RT 45 – Edgemont Road
FS RT 187 – Maple Sally Road
FS RT 4071 – Thunderhole Creek
Page 2 of 5 (Rev. 12-13)FS-1500-8a (VER. 05/24)
OMB No. 0596-0217
EXP: 05/31/2027

2. Patrol in the following campgrounds, developed sites, or dispersed areas:
Mortimer Campground
Boone's Fork
Total reimbursement for this category shall not exceed the amount of: $120,000.

SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT SITUATIONS:

A. Special Enforcement Situations include but are not limited to: Fire Emergencies, Drug
Enforcement, and certain Group Gatherings.

B. Funds available for special enforcement situations vary greatly from year to year and
must be specifically requested and approved prior to any reimbursement being authorized. Requests for funds should be made to the U.S. Forest Service designated representative listed in Item I-A of this Operating Plan. The designated representative will then notify Caldwell County Sheriff's Office when funds will be authorized for reimbursement. If funds are authorized, the parties will then jointly prepare a revised Operating Plan.

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1. Drug Enforcement: This will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The request will normally come from the patrol Captain; however, it may come from the Special Agent in Charge or their designated representative. Reimbursement shall be made at the rates specified in Section I-B. Deputies assigned to the incident will coordinate all of their activities with the designated officer in charge of the incident.

2. Fire Emergency: During emergency fire suppression situations and upon request by the U.S. Forest Service pursuant to an incident resource order, the Cooperator agrees to provide special services beyond those provided under Section II-A, within the Cooperator's resource capabilities, for the enforcement of State and local laws related to the protection of persons and their property. The Cooperator will be compensated at the rate specified in Section I-B; the U.S. Forest Service will specify times and schedules. Upon concurrence of the local patrol Captain or their designated representative, an official from the Incident Management Team managing the incident, Cooperator personnel assigned to an incident where meals are provided will be entitled to such meals.

3. Group Gatherings: This includes but is not limited to situations which are normally unanticipated, or which typically include very short notices, large group gatherings such as rock concerts, demonstrations, and organization rendezvous. Upon authorization by a U.S. Forest Service representative listed in Section I-A for requested services of this nature, reimbursement shall be made at the rates specified in Section I-B. Deputies assigned to this type of incident will normally coordinate their activities with the designated officer in charge of the incident. This includes but is not limited to situations which are normally unanticipated, or which
typically include very short notice, large group gatherings such as rock concerts, demonstrations, and organizational rendezvous.

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