

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES DENR HELPS 11 MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES  
FIND ADDITIONAL WATER SUPPLIES**

*Preparations Underway For Local Access To Alternative Water Sources As Drought Continues*

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that the state has identified alternative water supplies for the 11 North Carolina communities facing the most severe water shortages due to the drought. Most of the projects would involve connecting systems that are at the greatest risk to another water system with water to share. Other systems could drill new wells or tap into nearby lakes, rivers or quarries.

“These 11 communities are the ones most likely to run out of water if the drought continues into the spring and summer,” said Easley. “We helped them identify other water sources and now we are working with them to find the money to hook up so they will have enough water for the summer and beyond.”

At last month’s Emergency Water Shortage Response Planning Workshop in Greensboro, Easley called on managers from the 30 most vulnerable water systems to find alternate water supplies, conduct water system audits and adopt conservation based rates to encourage citizens to conserve water. Since then, Department of Environment and Natural Resources officials have worked with the 11 communities closest to running out of water to help them identify new sources. The department is now moving to assist the other 19 water systems.

Water system interconnection projects done last fall, with the state's assistance, include links between Siler City and Sanford and between Rocky Mount and Wilson. The 11 water systems where alternative sources have been identified are: Bessemer City, Blowing Rock, Boone, Hendersonville, Lenoir, Marshall, Monroe, Robbinsville, Tryon, Valdese and Yadkinville. While the state is helping identify water sources and ways to pay for the connections, it is up to the local water systems to decide whether to undertake the projects.

The water systems and the identified alternate water sources are:

Bessemer City	Interconnection from Gastonia
Boone	Interconnection from Appalachian State University and new reservoir
Blowing Rock	Interconnection from Boone and ASU
Hendersonville	Intake to deeper inlet
Lenoir	Intake to deeper inlet
Marshall	Additional new wells

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Monroe	Inlet to quarry
Robbinsville	Additional new wells
Tryon	Interconnection to Columbus temporarily/Hendersonville permanently
Valdese	Intake to deeper inlet
Yadkinville	Interconnection from Davie County

Easley also reminded citizens that scattered rainfall during the last few weeks has not slowed the drought's advance across the state, and he continued to ask residents to do everything they can to save water.

The federal drought map released Thursday shows 67 counties listed in exceptional drought (the worst level); 25 in extreme drought and 8 in severe drought. Four western counties; Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Transylvania, improved from exceptional to extreme drought. One eastern county, Lenoir, worsened this week from extreme to exceptional drought. As of today about 5.45 million people in North Carolina, or 80 percent of those served by water systems tracked by the state, are subject to either mandatory or voluntary water use restrictions.

Information about the drought, water conservation ideas along with video and audio drought busting tips can be found on the web at [www.ncdrought.org](http://www.ncdrought.org)

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