

## Fork Creek Water Quality Initiative

Fork Creek headwaters are in the vicinity of The Lost Sea in Monroe Co. The creek flows generally east for about 18 miles through primarily agricultural lands before emptying into Tellico Lake. The mouth of this creek is in the southern end of Tellico Village near the Clear Creek Boat Ramp.

Because of pollution issues related to siltation, bacterial counts, and phosphate levels, Fork Creek is classified as an impaired stream on the State of Tennessee's 303(d) list. Over the past several years, WATeR personnel have been working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for water quality improvement. This included performing water quality sampling to assist TDEC to identify types and sources of pollution.



In 2012, WATeR assisted the UDDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to prepare a proposal that provided a grant of \$563,000 through which the NRCS awarded seven cost-share contracts for implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the Fork Creek watershed. These BMPs were completed over the next several years with a noticeable improvement in water quality in the creek.

On a parallel path, WATeR assisted the Monroe Co. Soil Conservation District personnel to prepare and submit for a 319 (a) grant which resulted in a TN Dept. of Agriculture grant of \$120,000. These funds were primarily utilized for septic system upgrades in rural areas of the watershed.

WATeR continues to be a key stakeholder in this network to promote environmental improvements with a goal of allowing the TN Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to remove Fork Creek from the 303(d) list of impaired streams.