

Columbus County

ADMINISTRATION

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February 27, 2025

Congressman David Rouzer
U.S. House of Representatives
7th District of North Carolina
2333 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20215

RE: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency State and Tribal Assistance Grants (EPA STAG)

Dear Congressman Rouzer:

I am writing on behalf of Columbus County to request a time to speak with you about EPA's STAG Program and how it could benefit the Buckhead Community in our county. This area is not currently served by a central water system, and the citizens have requested to be connected to the County's Water District IV. This geographical area is recognized by the NC Community Mapping System as a disadvantaged area and is also the Waccamaw Siouan Tribal Area. The Waccamaw Siouan Indian Tribe is one of eight state recognized tribes in North Carolina.

The County fully supports providing a reliable water source for the Buckhead Community. This project would include approximately 25 miles of waterline, a 250,000-gallon elevated water tank, one water supply well, and a booster pump as well as SCADA with cyber security and backup power for resiliency. An additional waterline will extend to the Town of Bolton to provide auxiliary water supply to the town and adequate fire suppression to the new consolidated school currently under construction.

The total cost of this project is \$15,089,000, and Water District IV received approval from the NC Department of Environmental Quality for a \$3,500,000 grant and a \$11,589,000 loan. The debt service on the loan amount is in excess of what the District can annually budget, and STAG funding is needed to reduce the loan amount and make the project affordable for this community.

Please let me know if there is time you are available to meet with the County and discuss what would be needed to move forward with potential STAG funding. You may reach me directly at (910) 640-6630 or emadden@columbusco.org. I look forward to your reply and the opportunity to work together to serve the citizens of this community!

Sincerely,

Edwin H. Madden, Jr.
Columbus County Manager

cc: Chance Lambeth – District Director

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