

**Warren Wilson College
Sustainability Highlights
2019**

Warren Wilson College made significant progress in 2019 preparing future leaders and serving as an educational hub for sustainable land management practices in the region. To accomplish these goals, the College continued to strengthen and align its institutional framework. Here are just a few examples of how we fulfilled our educational commitments in 2019:

- The College’s new 2022 Strategic Plan directs us to “prepare graduates to engage in groundbreaking scholarship, pursue meaningful careers with professionalism, and lead purposeful lives dedicated to fostering a just, equitable, and sustainable world.” Its strategic imperatives represent the broad range of sustainability concerns with such goals as diversity, equity, inclusion, land and environmental sustainability, “with a focus on the well-being of individuals in our community.”
- In fulfillment of our mission, we launched an innovative Civic Identity framework of learning outcomes to synthesize the critical thinking skills that result from of our unique educational matrix of academics, work and service.
- In support of the “Land and Environmental Sustainability” strategic imperative, we created the Land Innovation Program and appointed a Dean of Land Resources to lead our commitment to sustainable land management innovation and educational leadership for best practices in the region and beyond.
- As an example of an early success of our Conservation Exchange outreach program the College was awarded a community grant from New Belgium Brewing Company, which helped with the purchase of additional materials for trail building and educational infrastructure. Thanks to the company’s well-organized employee service program, New Belgium volunteers joined the College Forestry Crew and an Outdoor Leadership course last spring to help with additional clean-up and repairs.
- A new part-time Coordinator of Science Communication is helping to develop our educational leadership via improved public outreach. Student interns are working with the Coordinator to document and disseminate land-based news through the Conservation Exchange.
- The College has partnered with Restoration Systems to implement a major stream restoration project on our agricultural lands. This project will have important beneficial outcomes for water quality, land aesthetics and wildlife habitat in the Swannanoa Valley, as well as providing research and educational opportunities for our students.

- The first phase of a grant-funded habitat restoration project is complete. Invasive plants that had taken over the hillside below the Orr Cottage and Boon Hall were eradicated by a herd of goats deployed for that purpose. The Landscape Crew is re-establishing native vegetation at this site. As with many horticultural sites on campus, the restoration itself is a teaching opportunity, and the result is a significant expansion of natural habitat area on campus.
- The College continues to move forward with its Zero Waste Initiative. Overall generation of waste has been significantly reduced. Recycling through composting is taking place across campus, and the success with composting vegetative and food waste has potential to extend to outside partners. WWC's recycling team, led by Lee Williams, partnered with two local producers—a coffee house and a winery—to compost their vegetative waste at the College's facility.
- Facilities Management has obtained LEED-Gold certification for operations and maintenance at Myron Boon Hall, the new academic building on campus.
- As an example of our immersive educational model, Dr. Mary Saunders Bulan, Director of Warren Wilson's Sustainable Agriculture Program, paired fieldwork on campus land with study abroad to demonstrate the global aspects of land management. In collaboration with a student who was conducting capstone research, Dr. Bulan established a pilot site on campus for testing several varieties of rice to determine the best candidates for production in western North Carolina. She then led a group of students on our International Program, "Land Use in Borneo: Food, Farming, and Forest," to meet with local rice growers in Malaysia.
- The College is bringing opportunity to the region through projects that link commerce with conservation. A recent grant from the Work College Consortium helped the College Garden Crew further develop a value-added herbalism project. In addition, in a partnership with local Sow True seed company, the student crew members are now producing heirloom pumpkin seeds at a marketable scale.
- With our 1,100 acre campus as a living laboratory, students continue to demonstrate their remarkable capabilities in scientific research related to applied ecology. Topics from the most recent student presentations at capstone seminars include the use of black walnut extracts as natural herbicides, microbial fuel cells, and a feasibility study for no-till barley.
- The Power of Place, a 125-year retrospective of the College, included lectures in the Power of Place series by nationally known leaders as Majora Carter, Jay Erskine Leutze and J. Drew Lanham.