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STATE OF THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER WATERSHED 2018

How clean is the river?

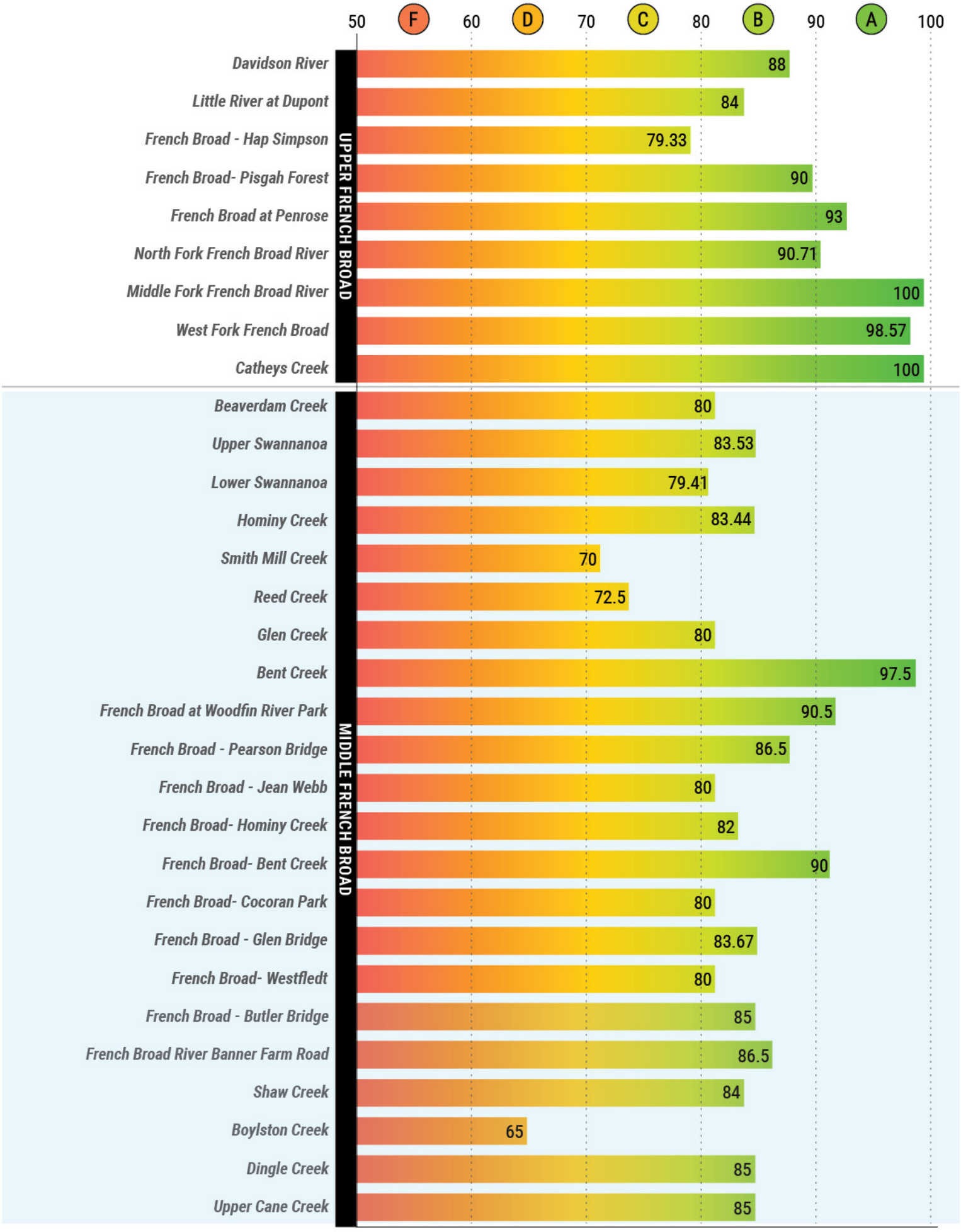
Before jumping on the water, this is the number one question people ask the French Broad Riverkeeper. This report is an answer to that question – it takes water quality data from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, the Volunteer Water Information Network, the Stream Monitoring Information Exchange, and MountainTrue and synthesizes it into an easy-to-read summary of the state of the river.

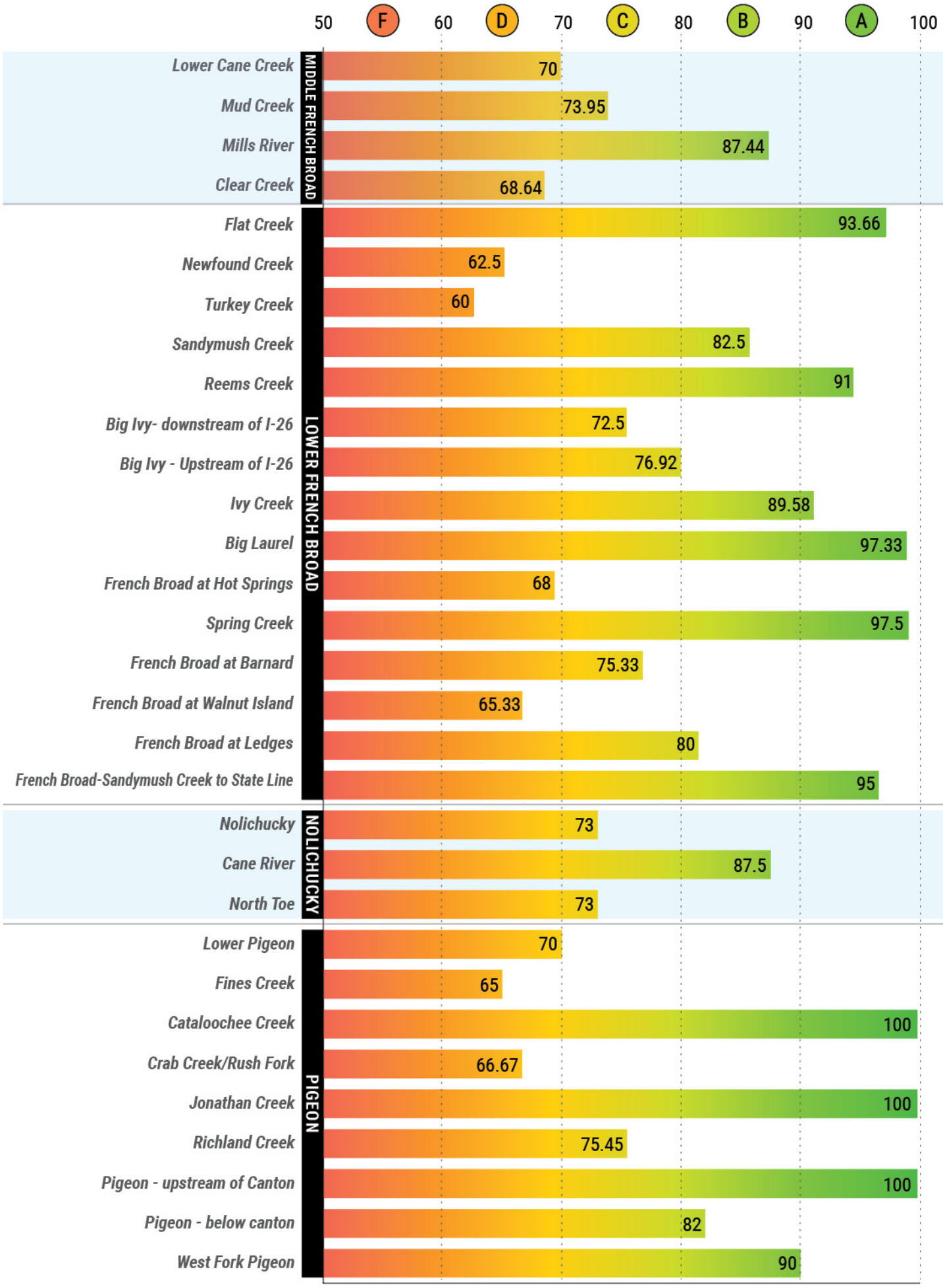
We've come a long way, but as this report shows, improvements are still needed. On the positive side: 66% of our streams are rated an A or B, with B-rated streams accounting for the largest portion of streams, at 37%. That's a dramatic improvement from decades past, but still 34% of our streams are rated as C or D.

The cleanest waterways, such as Cathey's Creek, Cataloochee Creek, and the upper Pigeon River are all well protected from pollution. Most of their watersheds are located in protected public lands and lack a lot agriculture, development or industrial pollution sources. The dirtiest streams, such as Turkey Creek, Newfound Creek, Clear Creek and Fines Creek, lack many land-use protections and are heavily impacted by bad agriculture practices and development.

Sediment and bacteria pollution are the most common sources of impairment to our waterways. Sediment pollution is caused by runoff from construction sites and agricultural operations, as well as eroding stream banks, while bacteria pollution comes from agriculture runoff, sewage leaks, and faulty wastewater treatment plants. The French Broad Riverkeeper has volunteer programs and Smartphone apps to address these concerns.

If you're interested in helping continue the improvements of the French Broad River, join us! You can find volunteer opportunities and more information on the sources of this data at mountaintrue.org.


50
F
60
D
70
C
80
B
90
A
100
UPPER FRENCH BROAD
Davidson River
88
Little River at Dupont
84
French Broad - Hap Simpson
79.33
French Broad- Pisgah Forest
90
French Broad at Penrose
93
North Fork French Broad River
90.71
Middle Fork French Broad River
100
West Fork French Broad
98.57
Catheys Creek
100
MIDDLE FRENCH BROAD
Beaverdam Creek
80
Upper Swannanoa
83.53
Lower Swannanoa
79.41
Hominy Creek
83.44
Smith Mill Creek
70
Reed Creek
72.5
Glen Creek
80
Bent Creek
97.5
French Broad at Woodfin River Park
90.5
French Broad - Pearson Bridge
86.5
French Broad - Jean Webb
80
French Broad- Hominy Creek
82
French Broad- Bent Creek
90
French Broad- Cocoran Park
80
French Broad - Glen Bridge
83.67
French Broad- Westfledt
80
French Broad - Butler Bridge
85
French Broad River Banner Farm Road
86.5
Shaw Creek
84
Boylston Creek
65
Dingle Creek
85
Upper Cane Creek
85


50
F
60
D
70
C
80
B
90
A
100
MIDDLE FRENCH BROAD
Lower Cane Creek
70
Mud Creek
73.95
Mills River
87.44
Clear Creek
68.64
LOWER FRENCH BROAD
Flat Creek
93.66
Newfound Creek
62.5
Turkey Creek
60
Sandymush Creek
82.5
Reems Creek
91
Big Ivy- downstream of I-26
72.5
Big Ivy - Upstream of I-26
76.92
Ivy Creek
89.58
Big Laurel
97.33
French Broad at Hot Springs
68
Spring Creek
97.5
French Broad at Barnard
75.33
French Broad at Walnut Island
65.33
French Broad at Ledges
80
French Broad-Sandymush Creek to State Line
95
NOLICHUCKY
Nolichucky
73
Cane River
87.5
North Toe
73
PIGEON
Lower Pigeon
70
Fines Creek
65
Cataloochee Creek
100
Crab Creek/Rush Fork
66.67
Jonathan Creek
100
Richland Creek
75.45
Pigeon - upstream of Canton
100
Pigeon - below canton
82
West Fork Pigeon
90

French Broad Watershed

A These streams represent excellent water quality, with low pollution levels and healthy aquatic insects and fish populations.

B These streams represent good water quality, but have some pollution inputs and in general there is a mostly healthy aquatic life and fish population.

C These streams represent average water quality. There are some concerns about pollution levels and in general the aquatic life and fish populations are not thriving.

D These streams represent below average quality. Pollution is a concern and in general aquatic life and fish populations are not as healthy as they should be.

F These streams represent poor water quality. Pollution levels are often high and aquatic life and fish populations are not healthy or widespread.

mountaintrue.org

828.258.8737

ASHEVILLE OFFICE:
29 N. Market Street, Suite 610
Asheville, NC 28801