

ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS JOURNAL®

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EBJ Awards 2025 & Executive Review

Environmental Business International Inc.

EBJ BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS RECOGNIZE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE, M&A, PROJECTS, TECHNOLOGY & LEADERSHIP

Environmental Business Journal presents its annual EBJ Business Achievement Awards for outstanding business performance in 2025. Congratulations to the winners, and thanks to all the companies that submitted nominations. All are welcome to attend the official awards ceremony and dinner as part of Environmental Industry Summit XXIV at the Coronado Island Marriott Hotel (Coronado, Calif.) on April 2, 2026, from 7-9pm. Environmental Industry Summit XXIV runs April 1-3, 2026 at the Coronado Island Marriott in San Diego, Calif.

2025 EBJ Business Achievement Awards



Business Achievement: Large Firms

WSP

WSP Global Inc. took over the number one spot in environmental consulting & engineering with continued growth and acquisitions in 2025. In December 2025, WSP Global acquired **TRC Companies** from its private equity owner Warburg Pincus for \$3.3 billion, boosting WSP's profile in the power and energy sector, and creating the No. 1 Power & Energy platform in the United States, with the sector contributing 34% of WSP's U.S. net revenues.

The TRC deal followed the 2024 acquisition of **Power Engineers** and the June 2025 acquisition of the UK-based firm **Ricardo plc**. TRC, founded in 1969, is one of the oldest and largest environmental engineering and consulting companies in the United States. Combined with TRC's 8,000 people, WSP says it will become the largest engineering and design firm in the United States, with 27,000 employees combined.

"With TRC's innovative, technology-oriented power business, underscored by an advanced use of digital, we will significantly strengthen WSP's Power & Energy offering. Additionally, TRC's globally recognized Environmental & Infrastructure business, which is the seed from which

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WESTON-BERING JV COMPLETES RESPONSE TO DISASTER STRICKEN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Design-build process add resilience for future events

Weston Solutions is a U.S.-based, 100% employee-owned environmental and infrastructure services firm committed to safety and delivering value for government and industrial clients. Founded by Roy F. Weston in 1957, the firm is recognized as a pioneer environmental engineering firm and continues today, ranked #25 on EBJ's list of top U.S. environmental consulting & firms.

Rinku Shah is a Principal Project Manager at Weston Solutions in the Federal Project Management organization and a certified PMP®. He brings 20+ years of experience leading complex federal projects spanning environmental remediation, construction, and emergency/disaster response and has managed multidisciplinary efforts valued from roughly \$10M to \$50M+ for clients including USACE, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Air Force. Mr. Shah led fast-track delivery and oversight of the temporary pretreatment/turbidity reduction system at Bee Tree Reservoir to support the City of Asheville's drinking water operations.

EBJ: Remind us of the scale of the storm, how unexpected was it, and how monumental were the damages to infrastructure?

Weston Solutions: What made Hurricane Helene so devastating for Asheville was not just the scale of the damage, but how it impacted infrastructure. This storm had weakened by the time it reached North Carolina, so there was no expectation that a city hundreds of miles inland would experience this magnitude of catastrophic impacts. Asheville was hit with record-breaking rainfall that overwhelmed rivers, destabilized steep mountain terrain, and caused widespread flooding and landslides across Buncombe County.

In 24 hours, the storm dumped 13 inches of rain on Asheville and up to 31 inches on the surrounding area. The storm produced average winds of 40 to 50 miles per hour (mph) and gusts up to 90 mph, spawning 8 tornadoes, breaking power poles in half, uprooting trees, and tearing buildings apart. The storm caused landslides; washed out roads, bridges, water supply pipes, and sewers; caused widespread power outages and loss of communications; and blocked transportation roadways with debris.

The dam at the Bee Tree Reservoir was saved by partially opening the spillway stage gates to relieve the high water

levels and pressure. The storm caused 108 fatalities, making it the deadliest storm in North Carolina's history.

One of the most serious impacts was the shutdown of Asheville's water treatment plants (WTPs) and damage to the water distribution system. The William DeBruhl WTP at Bee Tree Reservoir is a critical source of drinking water for the city. Mudslides driven by the storm runoff sent enormous volumes of sediment into the reservoir, turning the normally clear blue water into a muddy orange mess.

The solids in the water increased to over 500 nephelometric turbidity units (NTUs), well beyond the 5 NTU treatment capacity of the WTP. This WTP remained offline until the turbidity reduction system (TRS) was installed and operating to reduce turbidity levels. Roughly 156,000 residents were left without potable water for more than seven weeks. That level of disruption was unprecedented for Asheville and ranks among the longest municipal water outages tied to a hurricane in recent U.S. history.

Ultimately, Hurricane Helene changed how people think about risk in Asheville and how the city prepares for and manages storm response. It showed that storms can generate unexpected conditions that cause widespread infrastructure to multiple utilities. Mountainous communities are in-

EBJ Award: Project Merit: Rapid Response Mobile Turbidity Reduction System

When Tropical Storm Helene struck Asheville, N.C. on September 27, 2024, it delivered 14 inches of rain and caused severe infrastructure damage. Mudslides sent debris into Bee Tree Reservoir, elevating turbidity beyond the capacity of the City's three water plants. This severely impacted the water supply and left 156,000 residents without potable water for seven weeks. To address the water quality issue, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Wilmington District partnered with Weston Solutions, Inc. through the Bering-Weston Joint Venture (BWJV), to design and install a mobile turbidity reduction system (TRS). Within 48 hours of award, BWJV mobilized a rapid-response team to restore water quality. Construction was completed by January 12, 2025, and the system was operational by January 16, 2025. The system integrated dissolved air flotation units, sand and bag filters, filter presses, and advanced conveyance systems. The team focused on commissioning, performance testing, and seamless integration with existing infrastructure, ensuring reliability and regulatory compliance. This innovation reduced turbidity to 1.5 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU), safeguarding public health and achieving regulatory compliance. The TRS processed up to 5 million gallons per day. USACE rated the project "Very Good," citing BWJV's ability to exceed requirements under a compressed schedule.

Tropical Storm Helene caused landslides; washed out roads, bridges, water supply pipes, and sewers; caused widespread power outages and loss of communications; and blocked transportation roadways with debris.

creasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events that cause widespread destruction. The storm exposed critical infrastructure vulnerabilities and underscored the urgent need to rethink resilience and preparedness for communities like Asheville.

EBJ: Tell us about your existing contract with the Army Corps of Engineers and your joint venture with Bering and what they specialize in. Is it specifically about emergency response, or does it have a broader mandate?

Weston Solutions: Weston and the **Bering-Weston JV LLC** (BWJV) have contracts that allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to access our resources for immediate disaster response. In this case, USACE provided the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with access to us to support this large-scale emergency response work to the City of Asheville and local residents.

Weston has a long-standing relationship with USACE that extends well beyond disaster response and is grounded in decades of delivering hundreds of mission-critical infrastructure projects for federal clients and local stakeholders.

Across multiple USACE districts in the United States, Europe, and the Pacific, Weston supports a wide range of programs that include water and wastewater infrastructure, energy and power resilience, environmental remediation and permitting, secure construction, multimedia compliance, and large-scale design-build and design-bid-build modernization efforts. Emergency response is an important capability, but it represents only one element of a broader portfolio focused on delivering reliable, low-risk solutions for both time-critical and long-term federal projects.

That relationship is further strengthened through BWJV, a Small Business Administration (SBA)-certified 8(a) Small Disadvantaged Business designed and built to deliver high-end design and construction services, including emergency response and time-critical delivery. BWJV combines Weston's engineering, technical, and program management expertise with the construction capabilities, federal con-

tracting infrastructure, and Alaska Native Corporation backing of **Bering Straits Native Corporation**. Built on successful prime and subcontractor collaboration, including secure construction, BWJV provides federal clients with high confidence of successful and timely performance in secure and complex environments while enabling streamlined procurement and flexible delivery.

While BWJV is well recognized for rapid mobilization during emergency response efforts, including post-disaster infrastructure repair, that capability represents only part of its capacity. BWJV also delivers non-emergency projects such as natural gas utility, mechanical, and electrical infrastructure upgrades; water and wastewater system rehabilitation; energy and fueling systems; secure facility construction and renovation; and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Emergency response is a core strength, but it sits within a broader mission to provide quality, high-end construction and infrastructure solutions that support federal readiness, resilience, and long-term operational needs.

EBJ: How much time did you have to mobilize and how challenging was it to obtain the hardware to integrate into the existing systems?

Weston Solutions: We mobilized to the site in 48 hours, and we completed the initial safety, staffing, and construction plans during this period. The communication and trust built in our decades-long USACE relationship allow us to work quickly under the most strenuous circumstances. We completed the initial site preparation work in 7 days working 24 hours per day. We installed generators as soon as the site was prepared to provide power for the TRS construction and operation. On-site engineers designed the TRS while overseeing the construction in fast-track simultaneous design-build mode.

Our first challenge was the site access and limited space for construction. We needed to repair roads to access the site and sequence deliveries when space was ready to receive and install equipment. The available space was further limited by

the surrounding steep terrain, which required creative design and construction to fit equipment at locations needed for the treatment sequence.

Local labor, material, and equipment supply were constrained by the large-scale recovery effort occurring across the region. We reached outside the region for the treatment equipment, large-diameter piping, valves and fittings, instruments and controls, and construction labor and equipment.

The project demanded complex logistics and supply chain coordination, bringing together 20 suppliers and 9 on-site construction subcontractors operating 24/7. This was supported by daily coordination meetings with contractors, suppliers, and state, local, and federal stakeholders.

Removing the solids required a complex treatment process that combined chemical addition with dissolved air flotation units to remove the majority of turbidity, followed by sand and bag filters for final polishing before the treated water was supplied to the existing WTP. We used chemicals approved for potable water treatment to expedite the permitting process. The chemical additions were tested on-site and continuously monitored due to changing water conditions.

Work was conducted during cold winter conditions, with operations halted on two separate days due to severe winter storms and high winds. We prepared the equipment and operations for each major storm and monitored conditions to make sure all workers and facilities were safe during storms and regular construction operations. We had full-time safety managers on-site continuously during construction and operations.

The TRS was constructed in just 60 days, followed by 11 months of continuous operation to ensure uninterrupted service at the WTP. The project achieved more than 35,000 safe work hours with no injuries or serious accidents. This fast-tracked, high-performance outcome was made possible by a highly motivated team working around the clock, delivering quality work through constant communication and

close collaboration among suppliers, contractors, city staff, federal personnel, and state regulators. The result was an extraordinary effort completed both quickly and safely.

EBJ: We assume the DoD has modular drinking water systems for mission-critical operations or combat readiness. Is that correct and are any of those resources deployable for applications such as this?

Weston Solutions: Yes, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) maintains modular, mobile deployable drinking water systems designed to support mission-critical operations, combat readiness, and contingency environments; however, the system required for this project is bigger than most of DoD's modular drinking water systems. The TRS provided 5 million gallons per day (MGD) of water treatment capacity in continuous operation for 11 months. Equipment delivery required 25 semi-trucks plus over 100 additional deliveries for materials and smaller items.

DoD modular drinking water systems like reverse osmosis water purification units and tactical water purification systems are built to be rapidly deployed and can produce potable water from a wide range of source conditions. In some cases, those assets are used for disaster response and humanitarian missions in coordination with civilian authorities. However, those systems are primarily designed for short-term, stand-alone use and to support relatively limited populations, such as deployed units or temporary installations.

The TRS was installed at the William DeBruhl WTP to provide the high-volume water supply needed to restore drinking water service and to integrate seamlessly with the existing municipal treatment and distribution infrastructure. This is beyond the size and scope of most DoD modular mobile water treatment systems.

The TRS provided a unique modular engineered treatment solution that could be integrated into the city's existing system, meet regulatory requirements, and operate reliably at the scale needed to serve the community.

EBJ: Urgent restoration of drinking water was clearly a primary objective, but were there any measures for long-term resilience?

Weston Solutions: Restoring drinking water quickly was the immediate priority, but the response also incorporated measures aimed at longer-term resilience. While the TRS was deployed as an emergency solution, it was deliberately engineered to stabilize the City of Asheville's existing treatment operations and to add a layer of pretreatment capacity that did not previously exist at Bee Tree Reservoir. The system was designed to handle extreme turbidity levels well beyond historical conditions, operate reliably for extended periods, and integrate seamlessly with the William DeBruhl WTP, helping protect the city against future high-sediment events rather than simply addressing a one-time failure.

In addition, the project generated valuable operational data and real-world performance benchmarks that can inform future infrastructure upgrades and watershed protection strategies. By demonstrating that modular pretreatment can be rapidly deployed, scaled, and operated with high reliability in adverse weather conditions and in a space-constrained environment, the response helped Asheville and its federal, state, and local partners better understand how to build redundancy and flexibility into critical water systems. In that sense, the work at Bee Tree was not just about restoring service after Hurricane Helene, but about strengthening the system's ability to withstand more frequent and severe storms in the future.

Based on this experience, Asheville is currently designing robust pretreatment facilities that can be constructed and operated over the long term to provide a more permanent and resilient water treatment system. These new facilities, when complete, will help Asheville respond to future events that cause widespread destruction and infrastructure damage. ■

Environmental Industry Webinars 3rd Friday of Every Month

EBI Webinars are monthly strategic market segment presentations and interactive discussion panels with 90-120 minutes of audio & video content, and one combined presentation file.

February 2026: Sustainability Consulting & Engineering

January 2026: Federal Remediation Contracting & PFAS

December 2025: EBJ Annual Review

November 2025: Environmental Industry Outlook 2026

October 2025: Climate Resiliency Planning & AI Applications

Sept 2025: Digital Water Market

August 2025: Impact of the BBB on Energy and Environmental Infrastructure

July 2025: Electricity & Grid Resilience

June 2025: NEPA Reform & Markets

May 2025: AI Applications in the Environmental Infrastructure

April 2025: EBJ Summit Recap: The First 90 Days

March 2025: MAGA Markets

February 2025: The first 30 days

January 2025: Data Centers: Permitting and Powering a New Sector

December 2024: Election 2024 & Preview of Trump 2.0

November 2024: Election Preview

October 2024: Hydrogen and Its Role in the Energy Transition

September 2024: Market Evolution Scenarios in Remediation and PFAS

August 2024: Leveraging IT, AI & Technology in Environmental Services

July 2024: Perspectives on Industrial & Infrastructure Construction Markets