North Carolina Onslow Bight Conservation Forum

Presentation to the
Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program
Science & Technology Subcommittee
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North Carolina Onslow Bight Conservation Forum

Coalition of organizations with interest in conserving the natural resources of eastern North Carolina through land acquisition, conservation easements, sound land management practices, and education.

-Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in March 2003.

-The following organizations are signatories to the MOU.

- Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune
- Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point
- U.S.D.A Forest Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- NC Department Of Transportation
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Ducks Unlimited
- NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Endangered Species Coalition
- NC Chapter Of The Nature Conservancy
- NC Coastal Federation
- NC Coastal Land Trust
Onslow Bight Mission:

to develop and implement a strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity and ecosystem sustainability throughout the Onslow Bight Landscape compatible with the land use objectives of the partners.
Onslow Bight Conservation Forum
Technical Subcommittees

- Conservation Reserve Design
- Fire Learning Network
- Red-cockaded woodpecker
U.S. Fire Learning Network
Vision

- Partnership will work with others to continue to grow and sustain a U.S.-based Fire Learning Network (USFLN)

  - Our vision is to engage *more than 100* landscape projects

  - FLN Landscapes, Networks and Projects serve as **centers of innovation and learning** to:
    - Increase the capacity for fuels reduction
    - Restoration of an ecologically appropriate and culturally acceptable role of fire
Onslow Bight
Fire Learning Network &
LANDFIRE Partners

- **Department of Defense**
  - Camp LeJeune & Cherry Point
- **NC Department of Natural Resources**
  - Division of Forest Resources
  - Natural Heritage Program
  - Division of Air Quality
  - State Parks
- **NC State University**
  - Gap Analysis Project
- **Nature Serve**
- **US Forest Service**
- **US Fish & Wildlife Service**
  - Cedar Island Refuge &
    Endangered Species Office
- **The Nature Conservancy**
  - National Fire Initiative & NC
    Chapter staff
- **Wildlife Resources Commission**
- **Coastal Land trust**

*40 individuals / 14 agencies in attendance*
Onslow Bight
Red-cockaded Woodpecker
Subcommittee Goals

- To identify potential RCW habitat outside of the existing managed areas that is demographically connected to the recovery population

- To develop a searchable GIS-based tool for use by Onslow Bight partners interested in parcels with RCW habitat potential

- To provide a forum for discussion of RCW issues within the Onslow Bight
RCW Habitat Analysis First Steps:

- Create a shapefile containing all parcels within 5 miles of the existing RCW managed areas
- Identify spatial data that may be useful for determining RCW potential and reducing the number of potential parcels
Longleaf pine communities under pre-settlement conditions
RCW Habitat Analysis

Using parcel data and estimates of pre-settlement coastal pine vegetation types, a shapefile was created that calculated the proportion of each pine community type contained within each parcel.

Pine community classes:
- Longleaf pine/wiregrass
- Longleaf pine/mixed pine with occasional hardwoods
- Pond pine woodlands
- Pocosin
Parcels containing 50% or more of pre-settlement longleaf pine community types and are 100+ acres in size.
RCW Habitat Analysis: Next Steps

Additional searchable fields will be added to the parcel shapefile, including:

- Distance from existing RCW cluster (<0.5mi, 1 mi, 2 mi, 5 mi)
- Total acres of potential pine
- Is the parcel within a designated conservation corridor? Y/N
- Is the parcel adjacent to a managed area? Y/N
OB partners will provide input as to usefulness of shapefile for identifying parcels containing potential RCW habitat and meeting individual partner’s priorities.
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