



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Grants awarded for estuary awareness campaigns

RALEIGH – The Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program announced grant awards today for three campaigns to raise awareness about environmental issues in the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine region, which covers parts of northeastern North Carolina and southeastern Virginia.

Citizen members of the APNEP Policy Board’s Executive Committee selected the campaigns, which support APNEP’s mission to identify, protect and restore the natural resources of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system. Details about each project follow:

- The North Carolina Aquarium Society was awarded funds to conduct an “Estuary Essentials” program for libraries throughout northeastern North Carolina. “Estuary Essentials” is a one-hour presentation to introduce library patrons to the critical components of a healthy Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system. The presentation also will introduce attendees to the variety of animals in the region’s rivers and sounds. This project will be completed in partnership with the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island.
- North Carolina’s Division of Soil and Water Conservation will conduct an environmental education bookmark contest. The theme of the contest: the importance of estuaries, their significance in eastern North Carolina and the challenges these estuaries face in our changing world. This campaign is projected to reach more than 4,000 fifth-grade students and 8,000 adults in the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary watershed. Winning bookmarks will be distributed in local libraries throughout the region.
- The North Carolina Coastal Reserve and the National Estuarine Research Reserve were awarded funds to conduct a multi-faceted campaign to promote stewardship of the region’s estuarine habitats and shorelines. This effort will reach a variety of audiences, including K-12 teachers and students, coastal decision-makers and estuarine-front property owners. The campaign also includes workshops for marine contractors and local decision-makers, development of a curriculum targeting children in third, fourth and fifth grades and public field experiences throughout the region.

“The estuaries of the Albemarle-Pamlico region are a national treasure” said Bill Crowell, the director of APNEP. “We are very pleased to support these excellent campaigns, each of which will promote stewardship of these resources for years to come.”

Estuaries are areas where river and ocean waters mix, supporting a rich array of terrestrial and aquatic life. The Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system provides coastal storm protection and a key nursery area for many coastal fish and shellfish, which support the region’s fishing and tourism industries. The Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system was designated by Congress as an “estuary of national significance” in 1987. For more information, see www.apnep.org, or contact Jim Hawhee, APNEP’s community specialist, at (919) 733-0121 or jim.hawhee@ncdenr.gov.

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