



The Beacon

Newsletter of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program

Spring 2003

Director's Note

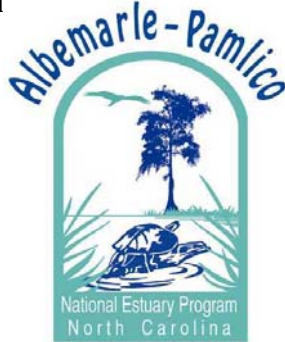
Well, spring is upon us and summer is a round the corner. We have had an active spring with Conservation Easement Workshops and Clean water Contractor Workshops to name just a few.

We received over one million dollars in requests for our latest round of APNEP demonstration projects proposals and the Regional Councils will be meeting soon to select the award recipients.

Also, we are still working on developing a strategic planning process for the program with NC State University. They will be conducting interviews this summer with Regional and Coordinating Council members, as well as other APNEP partners. We have a new, easy to remember, program web site address (www.apnep.org) and soon will have other promotional program materials.

We had another very successful EstuaryLive! event in April and will be participating in the National Event in September.

Bill



Did You Know?

The Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine System covers 30,000 square miles of watershed. The System is composed of seven sounds: the Albemarle, Currituck, Croatan, Pamlico, Bogue, Core, and Roanoke. There are five major river basins, as well as beaches, marshes, and bottomland forests.

Upcoming Meetings

Coordinating Council
June 4
Parker Lincoln Building
Raleigh
9:30

Neuse Council
June 11
Extension Office
Kinston
10:00

Tar-Pamlico Council
June 16
DENR Office
Washington
1:00

Roanoke Council
June 18
Cauldine's
Rich Square
10:00

Pasquotank Council
June 18
Town of Columbia Offices
4:00





Albemarle-Pamlico NEP Contacts

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Help Your Local Water Body

Those in the best position to notice the signs of a stream's distress are its neighbors: the people who live along its banks or use its waters. Through the Stream Watch and Citizen's Water Quality Monitoring Program (CWQMP), groups "adopt" a waterway, or a portion of one, and act on its behalf, becoming the adoptive parents of a local body of water and, as such, become its primary caretakers.

Elementary school students, scout troops, businesses and retirement groups all have shown the concern for our environment which unites them in monitoring and caring for local waters. Stream Watch and CWQMP groups can be started from scratch or existing organizations can adopt streams. Group sizes range from one or two members to several hundred.

All that is required is energy and commitment. Stream watchers and CWQMP volunteers are encouraged to become local experts on their streams' dimensions, history and wildlife, and act on behalf of the streams' best interests. Once you learn to understand what it is your stream is trying to tell you, you will be able to translate its concerns to others.

If you would like more information about how to adopt a stream, or how to help keep an eye on a stream near you, contact:

Upper Watershed Areas

David Wojnowski (919)715-5433
david.wojnowski@ncmail.net

Coastal Areas

Allen Clark (252) 328-1747
clarka@mail.ecu.edu.

DENR launching effort to educate public about Coastal Habitat Protection Plan

DENR is launching an effort to educate the public about the state's plan for protecting coastal fisheries habitats.

The 1997 Fisheries Reform Act requires DENR to prepare a Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP) for adoption by the Coastal Resources, Environmental Management and Marine Fisheries Commissions.



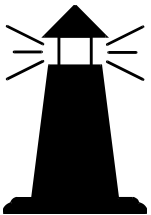
Goals of DENR's effort are to make the public aware of the CHPP; educate citizens about the reasons for the plan; solicit public suggestions on management options to be included in the plan; and include the public in evaluating management recommendations developed from the options.

Public outreach plans consist of holding public meetings across the state this summer; a newspaper insert to be distributed to 250,000 households in the coastal region in June; a short video to air on cable TV stations and at public meetings; and informational brochures.

An advisory committee consisting of members of the three Commissions and representatives of state and local government is guiding the outreach effort.

For information about the CHPP, go to www.ncdmf.net.

The Beacon Spotlight: Tar River Land Conservancy



The state's newest land conservancy is based in Louisburg and filled a hole in the state's network of private land trusts when it opened three years ago. The conservancy is growing fast as it recently acquired conservation easements on farms in Granville and Franklin counties, bringing the amount of land it has preserved, north of the Triangle area, to about 1,500 acres..

The Tar River Land Conservancy owns about 250 acres including 51 acres adjacent to Lake Rogers, the drinking-water supply for the town of Creedmoor. It protects another 1,250 acres through conservation easements. The Tar River conservancy serves an eight-county region stretching from Person to Halifax and Edgecombe counties.

For more information contact them at (919) 919-496-5902 or info@tarriver.org
Visit their web site at <http://www.tarriver.org/>

Ghost Pots

The North Carolina Marine Patrol located 4,121 abandoned crab pots and 953 ghost crab pots during the recent clean-up period for fishing pots in Tar Heel coastal waters.

Crabbing is one of the state's most important commercial activities (bringing in approximately \$25 million in 2001) and is also an important recreational pastime. There are an estimated 1.3 million crab pots fished in state waters each year.

Abandoned pots still have the fisherman's identification on either the buoy or the pot, while ghost pots do not. If left in the water, these pots continue to catch crabs and other marine life, presenting a conservation problem. In order to locate abandoned and ghost pots, fishermen are required to remove all their pots from the water Jan. 24 – Feb. 7.

Locating and then removing such a large number of pots from the water is both labor intensive and time consuming. Marine Patrol is in the final stages of pulling the pots from the water and arranging disposal, and, so far, has issued 34 citations.

For more information, please contact Nancy Fish at 252-726-7021 .

New Trail at Currituck Banks

Work has begun on a maritime forest hiking trail at Currituck Banks Estuarine Reserve near Corolla. Volunteers helped clear the 3/4-mile trail and dig postholes for trail markers in February.

The trail winds through the maritime forest, which includes many loblolly pine and oak trees. The trail ends in a stand of tall trees that form a canopy over the path, said site manager Michele Droszcz. A spectacular view of Currituck Sound is provided at trail's end.

People can access the trail from the Currituck Banks boardwalk. Droszcz will soon build steps from the boardwalk to the trail. Eventually, additional paths will spur from the maritime forest trail and lead through the reserve to the ocean beach..

The 960-acre Currituck Banks Reserve is located off Highway 12 just north of Corolla.



For more information, please contact Michele Droszcz 252-261-8891

Tax Credit

North Carolina has a unique incentive program to assist land-owners in protecting the environment and the quality of life. A credit is allowed against individual and corporate income taxes when real property is donated for conservation purposes. Interests in property that promote specific public benefits may be donated to a qualified recipient. Such conservation donations qualify for a substantial tax credit.

For more information contact Bill Flournoy
(919) 715-4191 bill.flournoy@ncmail.net

Natural Heritage Program Has New Home

The N.C. Natural Heritage Program, which inventories and helps preserve rare plants, animals and important natural habitats, has a new home. Earlier this year, the program moved within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources from the Division of Parks and Recreation, to the Office of Conservation and Community Affairs: the same home as the Albemarle-Pamlico NEP.

DENR Secretary Bill Ross said the purpose of the move was to enable the Natural Heritage Program to deliver its considerable expertise and services as directly and quickly as possible to Gov. Mike Easley's One North Carolina Naturally initiative.

"Through the One North Carolina Naturally initiative, we hope to make North Carolina's land and water conservation efforts more coordinated, better focused and more effective," he said. "The move will enhance the program's ability to share its knowledge and expertise with other agencies and organizations in and outside of state government, and will allow the continued effective operation of the Natural Heritage Trust Fund by the board of trustees and program staff."

The N.C. Natural Heritage Program is currently working on a conservation assessment of the Albemarle-Pamlico region.

State Discontinues Public Access at Natural Area Preserve

Due to state budget reductions, public access to the North Landing River Natural Area Preserve in Virginia Beach closed Feb. 16, 2003. The preserve is off Blackwater Road, northwest of Pungo Ferry Road.

The closure was made because of reductions in the operating budget of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the agency that manages the Virginia Natural Area Preserve system. The preserve will remain closed until further notice.

DCR manages 36 natural area preserves statewide. Natural area preserves are protected lands that encompass some of the state's exemplary natural communities, as well as habitats of rare plants and animals.



Fact:

Half the world's fish come from .001 percent of the ocean.
In general the waters along coastal shorelines.

APNEP Becomes Partner in the NC Clean Marina Program

The Clean Marina Program is designed to show that marina operators can help safeguard the environment by using management and operations techniques that go above and beyond regulatory requirements.

Clean Marina is a voluntary program that began in the summer of 2000. Marina operators who choose to participate must complete an evaluation form about their use of specific best management practices (BMPs).

If a marina meets criteria developed by N.C. Marine Trades Services and the Division of Coastal Management, it will be designated as a Clean Marina. Such marinas will be eligible to fly the Clean Marina flag and use the logo in their advertising. The flags will signal boaters that a marina cares about the cleanliness of area waterways.

Marinas that do not meet the standards will be able to learn about improvements needed for Clean Marina designation. Marina owners can reapply after making the necessary changes.

For information about the program, contact Lori Davis at 252-728-2170



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To:

Visit Our New Web Site ---- WWW.APNEP.ORG