

Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP)  
Summer 2016 Updates

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## Greetings from APNEP!

Temperatures are boiling, but that has not kept APNEP or our partners indoors! Discover what we have been up to during May, June, and July in this mid-summer edition of our newsletter.

Warmest regards,  
APNEP Staff



## National Estuaries Week September 17-24

Save the date for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of our favorite subject: estuaries!

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to keep up with the latest on events in the APNEP region, or find ideas on our new Pinterest page.

[Learn more](#) from Restore America's Estuaries and download a useful toolkit to help you plan events. #EstuariesWeek

Please email [stacey.feken@apnep.org](mailto:stacey.feken@apnep.org) to let us know about your events so we can share and help promote them, and let us know if you would like for us to participate!

## APNEP Staff Updates



### New Virginia Field Representative: Laura Keys

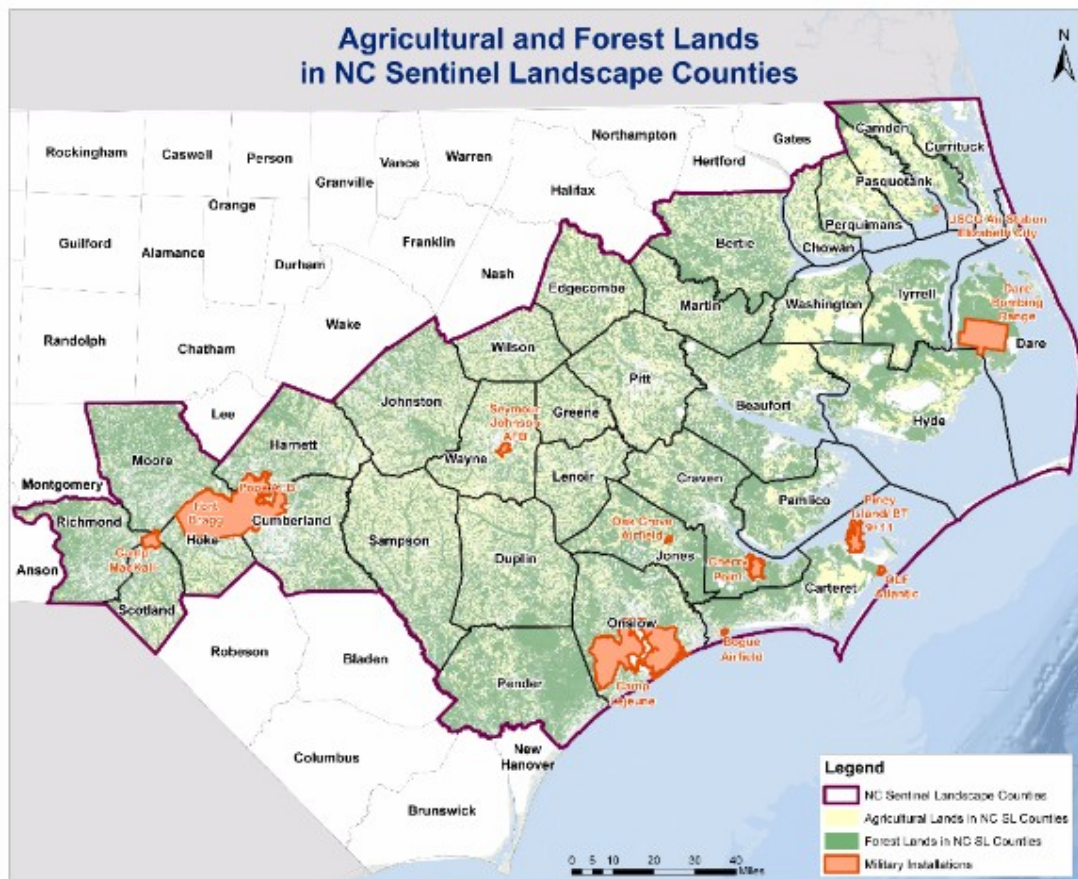
In May, Laura Keys joined the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Tidewater Regional Office as the Nonpoint Source Coordinator. She graduated with a M.S. in Ecology from the University of Georgia, with expertise in urban streams, stormwater, and green infrastructure. She has been involved in the world of water quality since 2011 through her work with non-profits, municipal governments, educators, citizen scientists, and researchers. She looks forward to continuing that work with VADEQ. As APNEP's Virginia field representative, Laura will work closely with partners in Virginia and North Carolina to help facilitate cross boundary projects. Laura can be contacted at (757) 518-2111 or [laura.keys@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:laura.keys@deq.virginia.gov)

More information about our staff is available on our [website](#).

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## Soundings

*A fresh take on the region's salty affairs*



## "Landscapes Standing Sentinel in Eastern N.C."

[Our latest Soundings post is live!](#) Learn about the North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Partnership, a new regional initiative working to preserve agricultural lands, contribute to national defense readiness, and restore and protect wildlife habitat in 33 eastern counties. Of these, 24 counties are located in the Albemarle-Pamlico watershed. The Sentinel Landscape designation is a new opportunity to increase collaboration among a diverse group of partners in North Carolina to advance conservation efforts.

## "Shoring Up Support for Oysters in the Estuary"

Oysters are not so much making waves as absorbing them, and that is one of the reasons they have been getting so much attention lately. New reports are shining light on the success and economic benefits of oyster restoration initiatives as more people see the economic, ecological, and culinary future of the coast closely linked to the fate of the common oyster. [Read all about it in our June Soundings post!](#)



Visit the [North Carolina Oyster Blueprint](#),  
and read the [State of the Oyster: 2015 Progress Report](#).

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## Kids River Fest

On May 14th APNEP enjoyed sponsoring and participating in the Kids' River Fest hosted by [Sound Rivers](#) at River Park North in Greenville, NC. More than 1,500 people enjoyed a beautiful spring day of outdoor activities that included kayaking, fishing, art, and reptile shows. It was fun to be stationed between volunteers Nancy Bray and Vera Tabakova, who led participants through [Gyotaku](#), the ancient Japanese art of printing fish, and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, who led children through the popular "Incredible Journey" activity. See the picture above of Education & Outreach Assistant Katia Griffin-Jakymec explaining the importance of wetlands to a captivated audience. She and Policy and Engagement Manager, Stacey Feken led a steady stream of children through the "Wetlands Race" activity.

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## APNEP Helps Speak for the Trees!

What do trees have to do with the estuary? Aside from being aesthetically pleasing, providing habitat for wildlife, and anchoring landscapes that are wonderful places to visit, upland ecosystems act as buffers that help trap and filter runoff--preventing sediments, nutrients, pesticides and other pollutant sources from entering the sounds. They also provide other important ecosystem benefits including carbon storage and sequestration, as quantified in our recent [economic valuation](#) report.

Protection of these valuable ecosystem benefits are recognized by Action B1.3 and C2.3 of our Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). Follow the link to other relevant actions [A3.2](#), [C1.3](#), [D1.1](#), and [D2.1](#), or review the report jointly produced by the Southern Environmental Law Center, North Carolina Conservation Network, Sound Rivers, and American Rivers highlighting the benefits of riparian buffers: [North Carolina's Riparian Buffers: A Scientific Review](#)

APNEP is excited to support our partners who work to conserve, protect, and restore these areas that are a fundamental part of the broader Albemarle-Pamlico ecosystem. Read more about recent events with Dismal Swamp State Park and the Tar River Land Conservancy below.



## **Cedar Planting at Dismal Swamp State Park**

For the third consecutive year, APNEP has partnered with Dismal Swamp State Park to support ongoing restoration efforts with Atlantic White Cedar trees. The trees were planted by volunteers including [Friends of Dismal Swamp State Park](#), Cub Scouts, and members of U.S. Navy Search and Rescue Unit Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 26 from Virginia. In early May, we joined Ranger Katie Sanford for a tour of the park and first-hand look at the success of past tree planting efforts. In case you missed it, we worked with the Division of State Parks to showcase this wonderful [partnership](#).



## **Restoring Forests with Tar River Land Conservancy**

APNEP staff toured a proposed restoration site in June with Director Derek Halberg of the Tar River Land Conservancy and County Ranger Bill Lewis of the North Carolina Forest Service. Most of the property is covered by a lush mixture of hardwoods and pine forest adjacent to Fishing Creek, which flows into the Tar River and ultimately makes its way into Pamlico Sound. APNEP plans to assist with efforts to reforest twelve acres of the property, which will be planted with several thousand native long-lived species including oaks and hickories in early 2017. The Conservancy placed a permanent conservation easement on the

[Twelve Hawks Tract](#), purchased with funds from a combination of sources including the [Clean Water Management Trust Fund](#) and [NC Attorney General's Environmental Enhancement Grant Program](#).



## Let's Go Outside Williamston!

Katia Griffin-Jakymec, Education & Outreach Coordinator, represented APNEP at the "Let's G.O. Williamston" event on May 26th. Let's Go Outside is an annual outdoor recreation and environmental education event hosted by the Town of Williamston, NC. Katia and other exhibitors shared information about local outdoor recreation opportunities, nature, wildlife, green living, renewable energy, and more. The town being adjacent to the Roanoke River and surrounded by natural areas including

the [Roanoke River Wildlife Refuge](#), we applaud town management's efforts to encourage residents to explore the treasures in their backyard!

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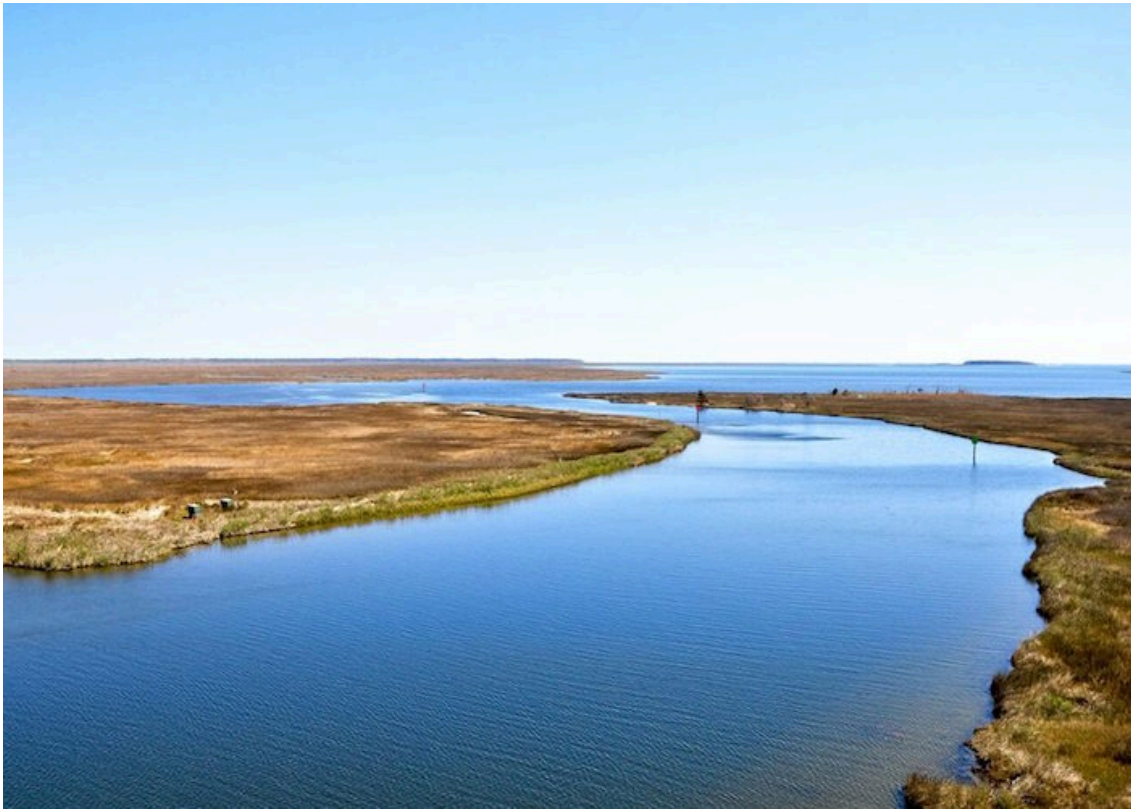


## Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Surveys

Summer is in full-swing and East Carolina University (ECU) researchers have been diligently mapping submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in Albemarle Sound. APNEP summer staff member, Tyler Peacock, is working with Dr. Joe Luczkovich and Hilde Zenil of ECU in the 2016 SAV sampling season. Dr. Dean Carpenter, Program Scientist, continues to work closely with partners to establish a network of sentinel monitoring stations and support efforts to continue to identify the significant SAV resources in our sounds. Among its many attributes, SAV provides critical nursery habitat for many economically important species of fish and invertebrates, climate related ecosystem services, and is an important indicator of water quality.

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## NC Fisheries Reform Act: An Oral History

We are excited about the [“North Carolina Fisheries Reform Act: An Oral History”](#) project and hearing first hand perspectives of fisheries legislation that has been in place for almost twenty years. Jimmy Johnson, Coastal Habitats Coordinator, is one of the collaborators on this effort. Along with our partners at the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, he has also been an integral part of efforts to implement the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan mandated by the 1997 Act. The project is funded by North Carolina Sea Grant and the William R. Kenan Jr. Institute for Engineering, Technology and Science at NC State University. [Follow the project on Facebook](#) for video interviews with key individuals who have played instrumental roles in the development and implementation of the act: [@ncfisheriesreformact](#).



## Tools of Watershed Management Workshop

APNEP staff participated in the fourth and final [Tools of Watershed Management](#) workshop held June 15-16 in Kinston. The event, hosted by the [North Carolina Watershed Stewardship Network](#) (NCWSN) and the [UNC Institute for the Environment](#), was designed to help participants improve watershed outreach, develop skills and techniques, discover resources, and create a plan of action for their watershed. Representatives from state and local government, regional councils of government, soil and water conservation districts, environmental non-profit and community organizations, and universities attended.

Participants were encouraged to join and register their organization with the NCWSN, and we ask you to do the same! Stay tuned for a future special edition of APNEP Updates highlighting the NCWSN and other collaborative watershed partnerships in the APNEP region, and notifications about future workshops including developing sustainable financial support.

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## Upcoming Events & Meetings

### [UNC-IE Teacher Institute: At Water's Edge: Science for the NC Classroom](#)

July 26-29, Trinity Center, Salter Path, NC

### [APNEP Decision Support Tools Action Team Meeting](#)

July 28, Walnut Creek Wetland Center, Raleigh, NC 10 am-3 pm

### [APNEP Science & Technical Advisory Committee \(STAC\) Meeting](#)

August 18, Greenville, NC 10:00 am – 3 pm

### [Albemarle Chowan Watershed Roundtable Meeting](#)

August, 18, Southampton County Extension Office, 21300 Plank Road, Courtland, Virginia, 9 am

### [SciREN Lesson Plan Workshop](#)

August 27, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

### [SciREN Triangle Educator Open House](#)

September 9, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

### [APNEP Combined Policy Board & Science & Technical Advisory Committee \(STAC\) Meeting](#)

November 2 (tentative), location TBD



Online registration is open for the 8th National Summit on Coastal and Estuarine Restoration and the 25th Biennial Meeting of the Coastal Society to be held December 10-15 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Conference organizers are still [accepting proposals for posters](#). Early bird registration ends October 31.

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## Grants

New opportunities can be found on our [grants page](#).



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## National Estuary Program Reauthorized

In case you missed it: bipartisan legislation [reauthorizing the National Estuary Program \(NEP\)](#) was signed in May. The law, which had lapsed over five years ago, amends Section 320 of the Clean Water Act, reauthorizing the program through 2021. It allows the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) to provide grant assistance to APNEP and the other 27 NEP's to implement our Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans, and award competitive grants to address issues that threaten the economic and ecological well-being of our Estuaries of National Significance. We appreciate the efforts of the [Association of National Estuary Programs](#) for shepherding the bill through Congress.

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Our next newsletter will be a special edition highlighting collaborative partnerships in the APNEP region including the North Carolina Watershed Stewardship Network, Albemarle-Chowan Watershed Roundtable, and South Atlantic Landscape


Conservation Cooperative. Please let us know if you would like for us to promote your group or there is something specific you would like for us to include!

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We're updating our communications plan and trying a few new things. Please contact [stacey.feken@apnep.org](mailto:stacey.feken@apnep.org) and let us know how you would like to interact with APNEP!

 Follow APNEP on our new LinkedIn page!

 Follow APNEP on our new Pinterest page!

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