North Carolina's APNEP EST Project
Quarterly Progress Reporting

Project Title: Experiencing the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary: Fostering Watershed Stewardship

DWQ Contract Number: 2030-0020
Contract Period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025
Project Manager(s): Laura Frazier
Reporting Period: July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Quarterly Outputs and Deliverables (*cut and paste from milestone table***):**

1. Preparation for second quarter pollinator garden plantings

2. Deliver 3 Educational Programs/Nature Outings

3. Pollinator gardens planted at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge's Millennium Forest and Merchants Millpond State Park

4. Install signage at Pocosin Lakes Wildlife Refuge's Millennium Forest

5. Deliver 2 Educational Programs/Nature Outings

6. Preparation for third quarter invasive species removal

Progress Toward Milestone in This Quarter (*insert reporting period***):** July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024
Please report activities for each deliverable listed above, following the same numbering system. "No activity" is acceptable if there was no progress made for a given deliverable for the quarter being reported.

1. Milestone was fully achieved with dates set for invasive species removal and pollinator garden plantings, events publicized, 200+ volunteers recruited, and plants and supplies ordered and delivered to designated sites. Additionally, NCWF Wildlife Stewards of Northeastern NC Chapter and volunteers cleared an impressive 660 pounds of invasive Japanese stiltgrass at Merchants Millpond State Park in preparation for planting.

2. Milestone was fully achieved with these educational activities delivered in the first quarter:

    a. July 20, 2024 – Red Wolf Program at Dismal Swamp State Park – NCWF Wildlife Habitat Stewards of Northeastern NC Chapter welcomed NCWF Red Wolf Education and Outreach Coordinator Katerina Ramos for an engaging program about Red Wolves and the Red Wolf Recovery Program at Dismal Swamp State Park.
    b. July 20, 2024 – ecoEXPLORE Entomology Season: Build a Beetle – NCWF, Pocosin Lakes NWR, and Tyrrell County Library teamed up for

this month's ecoEXPLORE program where the Entomology Badge and Beetle Field Focus Badge were introduced. Participants explored the outdoors in search of beetles and created their own beetle based on advantages in different body structures.

c. August 17, 2024 – ecoEXPLORE Moth Night – NCWF, Pocosin Lakes NWR, and Tyrrell County Library partnered for an ecoEXPLORE Moth Night at the library. Youth and adult participants observed species including a Filbertworm moth, Elegant grassveneer, Oblique-banded leafroller moth, and cicada.
d. September 24, 2024 – ecoEXPLORE Ichthyology Badge – NCWF, Pocosin Lakes NWR, and Tyrrell County Library teamed up for our kickoff to the Ichthyology ecoEXPLORE Field Season. Participants learned more about the study of fish and how they can make fish observations over the next 2 months. ecoEXPLORErs ventured down to the Scuppernong River to observe fish and aquatic vegetation using bathyscopes.

3. Milestone was fully achieved with NCWF Wildlife Habitat Stewards of Northeastern NC Chapter, local volunteers, and Columbia High School science students planting 600 native flowering plants and grasses at the newly established educational pollinator garden in the Millennium Forest at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Additionally, NCWF Wildlife Stewards of Northeastern NC Chapter and local volunteers planted 500 native grass plants to engage park visitors in watershed stewardship and restore wildlife habitat along Merchants Millpond State Park's Coleman Trail.

4. Planned signage has been purchased for two sites, including a total of four signs. This includes two signs, one in English and one in Spanish, for Pocosin Lakes Visitor Center and two signs, one in English and one in Spanish, for Pembroke Creek Wetland Park, with installation taking place in the near future.

5. Milestone was fully achieved with these educational activities delivered in the second quarter:

    a. October 15, 2024 – ecoEXLPORE and Water Badge Check-In – In partnership with Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and Tyrrell County Library, NCWF presented an ecoEXPLORE program to help youth explore their local wetland habitat and discover fish and subaquatic vegetation in the Scuppernong River.
    b. October 17, 2024 – Pollinator and Red Wolf programs with Columbia High School – In partnership with Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, NCWF hosted students from Columbia High School for an opportunity to learn about Red Wolves and the Red Wolf Recovery Program. They also learned how to collect and identify pollinators that can be found within our community. After identifying pollinators as a group, the students helped plant over 100 native plants at the new educational garden at the Millennium Forest

c. November 12, 2024 – ecoEXPLORE Mammalogy & Rodent Badges – NCWF, Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, and Tyrrell County Library teamed up to offer this month's ecoEXPLORE program introducing two badges that ecoEXPLORERs can earn this season. Participants learned about what makes a mammal a mammal and created their own "fantastic furball" rodent superhero as one of the three challenges needed to earn this season's Rodent Badge.

6. While this milestone refers to preparation for invasive species removal in the third quarter at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge's Sounds Visitor Center and Pembroke Creek Park, our priority for this period became the removal of Japanese stiltgrass at Merchants Millpond State Park with volunteers clearing 660 pounds. Preparations have been made to begin work at Pembroke Creek Park starting with a community litter cleanup on January 11th to promote watershed stewardship in Edenton. Following the cleanup, local volunteers are invited to gather for lunch at La Oaxaqueña to talk more about conservation and stewardship opportunities in the community.

Below, please list previously submitted reports, including quarter and date of submission:

No other reports have been submitted.