

# PROTECTING N.C.'S SUBMERGED AQUATIC VEGETATION IS WORTH IT

Underwater meadows, or Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV), are **crucial to our environment and our economy.**

#### Submerged Aquatic Vegetation:

- Improves water quality
- Provides habitat for fish and wildlife
- Stores carbon dioxide that would otherwise enter the atmosphere and contribute to climate change

And we have over **130,000 acres** of it! That's **98,500 football fields.**



But N.C.'s SAV is under threat, primarily from **deteriorating water quality.**

A **50% decline** ↓ in North Carolina's SAV could cost well over **\$88 million**, and that's just over the next decade.

**-\$55 million** ☁️ in lost carbon storage

**-\$22 million** 🏠 in decreased residential property values

**-\$7 million** 🦀 in declines in commercial catch for blue crab

**-\$4 million** 🐟 in declines in recreational catch for spotted seatrout and red drum

SAV provides benefits for our communities beyond what we can measure, including:

Supporting and sheltering other economically important species

Protecting our coasts from erosion and flooding

Attracting hunters and birders to our waters

Making our coast a great place to call home

**Protecting SAV is far cheaper than restoring it after it has been destroyed.**



## • What can you do about it? •

### LEARN

- **Our Work to Protect NC's SAV** ([tinyurl.com/APNEPsav](http://tinyurl.com/APNEPsav))
- **SAV Extent in North Carolina** ([tinyurl.com/SAVinNC](http://tinyurl.com/SAVinNC))
- **Read the full economic valuation** ([tinyurl.com/SAVvaluation](http://tinyurl.com/SAVvaluation))

### PROTECT

- Advocate for policies that improve water quality and dedicate more resources to SAV protection
- Avoid overusing fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides in your home and garden
- Don't tear up shallow SAV with boat props or bottom-disturbing fishing gear