

Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP)
January 2022

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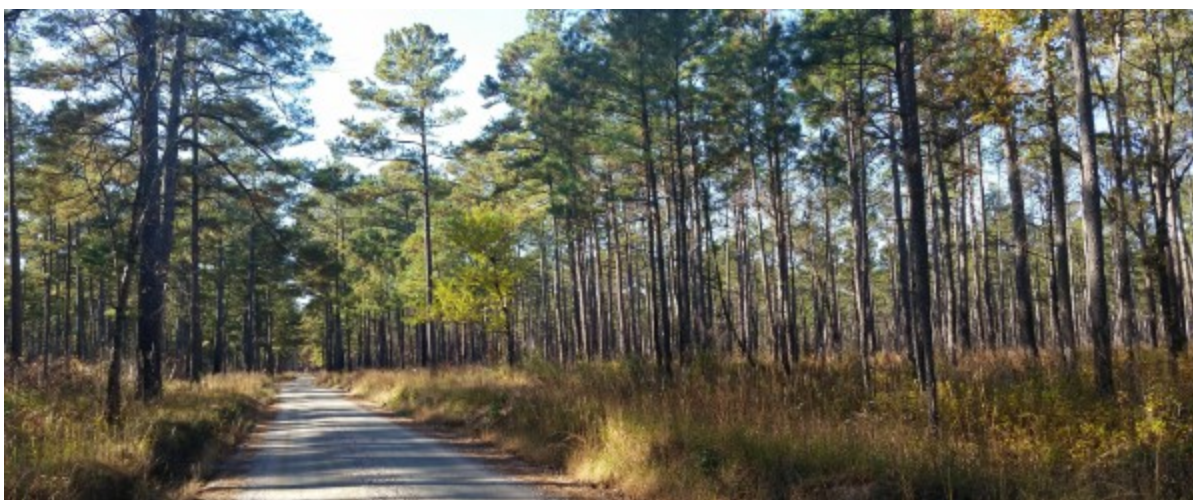
Albemarle - Pamlico

National Estuary Partnership

Sound Stories



January 2022



2022 has been off to a good start at APNEP, with a number of projects and initiatives underway this month. We're excited to have recently published an [infographic and information sheet for local governments](#) about the economic value of submerged aquatic vegetation in our region. These materials were created by our summer intern Abigail McNaughton and are now [available on our website](#). We're also happy to see the efforts of a number of APNEP staff and partners highlighted in the [2021 issue of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Habitat Hotline Atlantic](#).

Each February is marked by the ["I Heart Estuaries" campaign by Restore America's Estuaries](#) and we encourage each of you to take a moment this upcoming month to celebrate the diversity of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system. [From A to Z](#), our region is full of unique history, culture, and natural beauty that is worth protecting.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bill Crowell

APNEP Director

APNEP News

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

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



New Infographic Highlights Value of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation for Local Governments

Underwater meadows, also called submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), are a valuable natural resource for our state, local, and regional economy. Strategies to protect seagrass include management measures from multiple partners. Local governments can help by adopting policies which protect seagrass through water quality improvements, land conservation, and utilizing natural infrastructure for shoreline stabilization.

Our 2021 Communications and Outreach Intern Abby McNaughton produced an infographic for local governments to highlight the value of SAV and promote protection measures which can be adopted at the local level. Among other partners, she worked with Holly White, Principal Planner with the Town of Nags Head, NC and Vice Chair of the [APNEP Leadership Council](#), to produce materials which can be used by planners, managers, and elected officials.

The materials include results from our study on the economic impacts of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation loss, conducted by an interdisciplinary team from the NC State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences [Center for Environmental and Resource Economic Policy \(CEnREP\)](#) and [Sanford School of Public Policy](#).

[Learn more about the study and view the outreach materials](#)



Feel the Estuary Love this February!

It's that time of year! Time to spread estuary love and share why we love the special places where rivers meet the sea. The #IHeartEstuaries campaign is coordinated by Restore America's Estuaries, National Estuarine Research Reserve Association, and the Association of National Estuary Programs. *Photo credit: Wells Reserve*

[Check out #IHeartEstuaries](#)

[Learn more about estuaries](#)

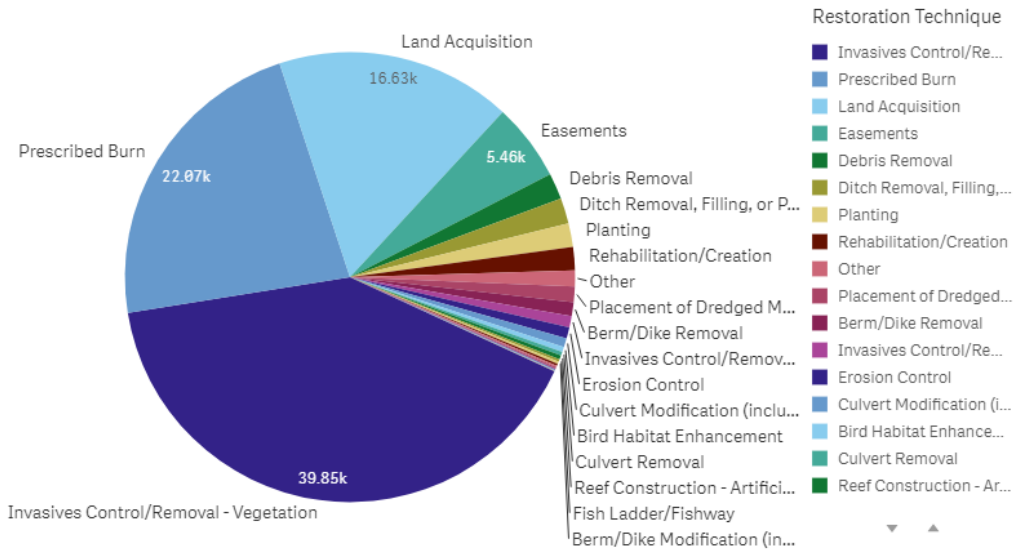


APNEP Staff and Partners' Work Highlighted in New Issue of *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*

The 2021 issue of *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*, published by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, includes a number of insightful articles about fisheries issues relevant to our region. APNEP Coastal Habitats Coordinator and current ASMFC Habitat Committee Chair Jimmy Johnson introduces the issue and provides North Carolina-specific updates, while APNEP Program Scientist Dr. Dean Carpenter details how fish habitats provide ecosystem services that buffer climate change

Federation. [Read the 2021 Habitat Hotline Atlantic.](#)

Acreage vs Restoration Technique



* The data set contains negative or zero values that cannot be shown in this chart.

Thank You to Our Partners for Habitat Protection Efforts in 2021

We appreciate our partners who take time every year to respond to our annual request for your habitat protection and restoration efforts in the Albemarle-Pamlico region. This year, National Estuary Programs around the country collectively reported over 98,000 acres of habitat within NEP boundaries protected and restored in total. The chart, reported by the Partnership Programs Branch at EPA Headquarters, shows the variety of techniques utilized by NEPs around the nation, including APNEP.

This reporting helps us meet reporting requirements to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Estuaries and Clean Water Act, Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), and enabling legislation under the Clean Water Act, and helps ensure continued funding for the National Estuary Program (NEP). Your habitat protection and restoration efforts help support our mission of identifying, protecting, and restoring the significant resources of our “estuary of national significance.” The information also helps tracks progress made by all partners towards implementation of our [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#).

[Learn more](#)

**NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL HABITAT
PROTECTION PLAN
2021 AMENDMENT**
EMBRACING COASTAL FISHERIES THROUGH HABITAT
PROTECTION AND RESTORATION



In case you missed it, The NC Coastal Habitat Protection Plan 2021 Amendment was approved by the Marine Fisheries, Environmental Management, and Coastal Resources commissions in November 2021 and by the Department of Environmental Quality in December 2021. It was transmitted to the General Assembly in January 2022. The CHPP received overwhelming public support for implementation of the recommended actions. The 2016 CHPP Source Document will continue to serve as the background document for the amendment.

The CHPP is a guidance document that addresses the habitat and water quality efforts needed to protect, enhance, and restore fish habitat in North Carolina. APNEP Coastal Habitats Coordinator Jimmy Johnson works with the NC Division of Marine Fisheries to implement the CHPP and to integrate its priorities with those of [APNEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#) (CCMP). [Learn more about the CHPP.](#)



Upcoming Events & Meetings

- [APNEP Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Team Meeting](#), Session 1 | February 2nd, 12:00pm - 2:00pm (via Webex)
- [APNEP Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Team Meeting](#), Session 2 | February 9th, 12:00pm - 2:00pm (via Webex)
- [APNEP Science and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting](#) | February 17th, 12:30pm - 3:00pm (via Webex)

All meetings associated with APNEP's committees, Action Teams, and Monitoring & Assessment Teams are free and open to the public. For more information, please contact apnep@ncdenr.gov.

Current Grant Opportunities



- February 3: [NFWF Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund 2021 RFP](#)
- February 4: [NC Sea Grant Community Collaborative Research Grant](#)
- Ongoing: [NC Community Foundation Disaster Relief Fund](#)
- Ongoing: [NC Sea Grant Minigrants Program](#)

Grant details

Partner Spotlight



NC Land and Water Fund Awards \$60 Million in Grant Funds

After passage of the state budget by the General Assembly and Governor in late 2021, the North Carolina Land and Water Fund Board awarded funds to 83 projects totaling over \$60 million dollars, including:

- 51 land acquisition projects totaling over 50,000 acres that will add new public access and recreation opportunities via state parks, historic sites, game lands, local parks and preserves and more.
- 18 restoration projects will restore or enhance over 30 miles of our streams, rivers, and shorelines and 39 acres of wetlands.

- 2 innovative stormwater projects that will advance the science of stormwater management.

[Learn more](#)

What We're Reading

- [Currituck County: More than Just a Vacation Destination](#) (*Coastal Review Online*)
- [Climate in Peril: A Coastal NC Farmers' Perspective](#) (*Coastal Review Online*)
- [Lower Neuse River Adapted, Recovered from Florence](#) (*Coastal Review Online*)
- [North Carolina's coastal highway is disappearing – so I took a road trip](#) (The Guardian)



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