



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Spring/Summer 2026



## 52 Years of Protecting What Makes the Coast Home

Welcome to the Relaunch of CAMAGram – Celebrating 52 Years of Coastal Stewardship!

April 2026 marked the 52nd anniversary of the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA), landmark legislation enacted in 1974 to help guide the responsible use, protection, and development of North Carolina’s coastal resources.

For more than five decades, CAMA has provided a framework for balancing growth, environmental stewardship, and public access along North Carolina’s coast. Through planning, permitting, and partnerships with local governments, CAMA has helped protect beaches, wetlands, and estuarine systems while supporting coastal communities and economies.

North Carolina’s coast is dynamic by nature. Shorelines shift, storms reshape barrier islands, and communities evolve alongside natural systems.

CAMA recognizes these realities and helps ensure that development and use of coastal areas account for both environmental sensitivity and long-term risk.

As coastal pressures increase—from population growth to erosion and flooding—the principles behind CAMA remain essential. While this anniversary is a moment to reflect on past accomplishments, it is also an opportunity to look ahead.

Protecting the coast today helps ensure future generations can continue to live, work, and enjoy what makes North Carolina’s coast unique.

Sincerely,

Director, Division of Coastal Management  
North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality

In this newsletter you can expect:

**“What is CAMA?” / Educational Corner**

**CRC News**

**DCM’s Distinguished Employees**

**Community Spotlight:**

Discover the Reserve Tour; Topsail Nature Preserve

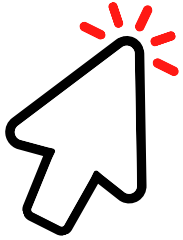
**Community Impact:**

Resilient Coastal Communities Program; Boating Infrastructure Grant; Local Permit Officer Program

# What is CAMA?

The final legislative approval of the Coastal Area Management Act took place on April 11, 1974.

Check out [A Legislative History of the Coastal Area Management Act](#) to learn more.



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Article 5

12-1-1974

A Legislative History of the Coastal Area Management Act

Milton S. Heath Jr.

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**Recommended Citation**

Milton S. Heath Jr., *A Legislative History of the Coastal Area Management Act*, 53 N.C. L. Rev. 345 (1974). Available at: <https://scholarship.law.unc.edu/nclr/vol53/iss2/5>

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**new commission at work**

**MAJOR TASK AHEAD FOR COASTAL COUNTIES**

"Can you imagine taking 20 counties in 300 days and doing a complete 20-year land study projection? That's what we have got to do."

With that analysis, Chairman Thomas D. Eure put the new Coastal Resources Commission to work. The task was established when the 1974 session of the North Carolina General Assembly approved the Coastal Area Management Act. The legislation asks the people of the 20 counties that border the ocean and the sounds to take inventory of their resources and to prepare blueprints for the future development of their communities. The Coastal Resources Commission was set up to support and assist in the local planning and management efforts.

There is one tremendous impact that this law is giving to a group of people who are not elected officials," said Eure at the first joint meeting of the Commission and its Advisory Council. The Beaufort engineer added, "They've put us on a very tight schedule. If we don't get it done it's almost self-destructive. We're going to get it done."

But Eure is aware that the Coastal Resources Commission will not have to work alone. In its role as a standard-setting and review board the Commission has already been met with tremendous support from all 20 counties and dozens of the municipal policies.

Part of the support is linked to the fact that the Commissioners are coastal residents, nominated mostly by local governments in the coastal counties. The vice chairman is David Stick of Kitty Hawk. Other members of the Commission are Frank Purlough, Columbia; L. D. Smith, Holly Ridge; J. Parker Chason, Elizabeth City; Eric Hays, Hertford; Glenn Lancaster, Windsor; Doug Powell, Wightville Beach; William Kopp,

cont. on page 2

This is the first edition of *The Coastline*. This newsletter is the publication of the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission established by the Coastal Area Management Act of 1974. The North Carolina General Assembly approved the legislation to insure planned growth and fruitful development in the twenty counties bordering the ocean and sounds.

The Coastline is designed for people who live in the coastal area, work in the coastal area, or own property in the coastal counties. After reading this first edition you may wish to examine the form on the last page. If you have questions for the Coastal Resources Commission or suggestions for this publication, please write or call *The Coastline*.

Future editions of this publication will appear approximately every two months. Each edition will deal with the process of implementing the Coastal Area Management Act, problems encountered, and solutions found in the coastal counties.

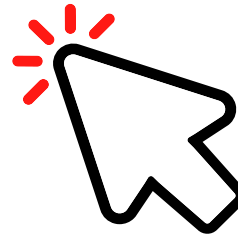
**BILL SETS TIGHT SCHEDULE**

One of the first challenges set up by the Coastal Area Management Act has already been met by all 20 counties involved in the legislation. October 29 was the date for local governments to state whether they would prepare their own land use plans. The board of county commissioners in each of the counties advised the Coastal Resources Commission before the date that they would produce their own plans.

In addition, many of the towns and cities in the area also stated intentions to undertake plans. The Act specifies that towns enforcing zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and the State Building Code shall have plan-making authority if they want it. Other towns can either make recommendations to their county commissioners or ask for authority to be delegated from the county commissioners.

cont. on page 2

In January 1975, [The Coast Line](#)—a publication of the Coastal Resources Commission—made its debut. Click [here](#) for the complete issue.



# What is CAMA?

The newsletter was renamed "NEWS of the North Carolina Management Program" in 1977.

The newsletter was first published as "CAMAgram" on September 9, 1982.

Click [here](#) for complete issue!



# cama<sup>g</sup>ram

coastal resources commission report for the august 26-27 meeting

September 9, 1982

### LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMITTEE HEARINGS SET...

Three public hearings in the coastal area have been set by the Legislative Study Committee established by the General Assembly to review the Coastal Area Management Act. The hearings will be held:

- Monday, September 13 at the Pine Knoll Shores Marine Resources Center from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.;
- Tuesday, September 14 at the UNC-Wilmington Chemistry Building from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.; and
- Wednesday, October 13 in Manteo at the Marine Resources Center from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Members of the public are invited to attend and speak at these public hearings which the Study Committee has scheduled to hear how local people in the coastal area feel about CAMA. The members of the Study Committee are: Senators Melvin Daniels (co-chairman), Joe Thomas, Ken Royall, Billy Mills, and Craig Lawing; Representatives Charles Evans (co-chairman), Bruce Etheridge, Harry Payne, Tom Babon, Al Adams, and Howard Coble; and Mr. Henry von Oesen.

### GRIMSLEY ADDRESSES COMMISSION...

On Thursday morning, NRC Secretary Joseph W. Grimsley met again with the Coastal Resources Commission to give an update on the financial and legislative issues facing CAMA and to pledge his strong support for the program. Grimsley reiterated his firm belief that the state/local partnership of CAMA is the proper tool for protecting the resources of the coast to maintain environmental quality and assure wise economic growth. Grimsley urged all interested citizens to communicate their views about CAMA to the Legislative Study Committee during the upcoming hearings. The Secretary also stated that funding for CAMA was the top budgeting priority for the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development in the next session of the General Assembly. The phase-out of federal funding for this state

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COUNTIES COVERED  
BY CAMA:  
BEAUFORT  
BERTIE  
BRUNSWICK  
CAMDEN  
CAROLINE  
CHowan  
CRAVEN  
CURRITUCK  
DARE  
GATES  
HERTFORD  
HYDE  
NEWHANOVER  
"LOW"  
LENOIR  
PISQUOTTANK  
PERQUIMANS  
TYRRELL  
WASHINGTON

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Happy 52<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary!

## Coastal Resources Commission News

Main actions and decisions taken or advanced during the **Feb. 25-26, 2026** meeting of the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC):

- Approved August and November Minutes
- Appointed Dr. Gregory Williams to the Science Panel
- Granted a Variance for Figure 8 Island, Sandbag Extension
- Approved rulemaking for Permit fees Increases
- Adopted 15A NCAC 07H .2302 General Permit for Replacement of Existing Bridges and Culverts
- Granted a Petition for Rulemaking to 15A NCAC 07H .0106, .0205, .0206, .0207 Manmade Ditches to be consistent with Session Law 2025-48
- Approved the final classification report for Periodic Review of Existing Rules that 15A NCAC 07A, 07H, 07I, 07J, 07K, 07L, 07M are necessary



Main actions and decisions taken or advanced during the **April 15-16, 2026** meeting of the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC):

### April 15

Ocean Isle Beach Field Trip

### April 16

- Approved the minutes of the February 25-26, 2026, CRC meeting.
- Granted a variance request to Joseph Winslow and Jacquelyn Sgambati authorizing a 480 foot long, one-slip pier and gazebo in Calabash, Brunswick County.
- Approved amendments to 15A NCAC 07H .0106, .0205, .0206, and .0207 exempting certain man-made ditches from CAMA permitting requirements.(next step: write a fiscal analysis for CRC review and approval)
- Approved proposed language for 15A NCAC 07H .2800 and amendments to 07H .0309 authorizing temporary weather monitoring equipment under a new General Permit (next step: write a fiscal analysis for CRC review and approval)
- Approved updated erosion rates and setback factors within in the ocean hazard and inlet hazard areas(next step: write a fiscal analysis for CRC review and approval)
- Readopted 15A NCAC 07B as part of the Periodic Review of Existing Rules required by the Administrative Procedures Act. (next step: Rules Review Commission review and approval)

Coastal Resources  
Commission News  
(continued)



CRC Proposed Rules Sign Up



DCM Interested Parties List Sign Up



NEXT MEETING: June 18  
DoubleTree New Bern Riverfront

## Understanding the Impact: Science Panel Advances Work on Oceanfront Hardened Structures Report

The Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) Science Panel continued its work this spring on a comprehensive report examining the use of oceanfront hardened structures and their potential impacts on North Carolina's coastal environment, communities, and shoreline management policies.

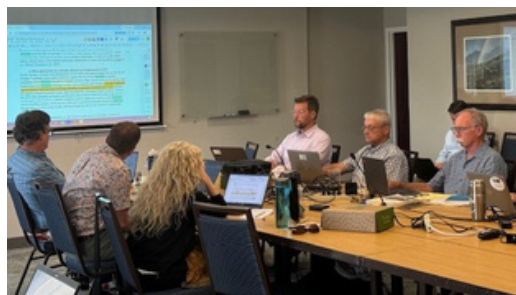
The report represents months of research, discussion, and collaboration among panel members, who were tasked with reviewing the best available science related to hardened structures such as terminal groins, seawalls, revetments, and other shoreline stabilization measures.

During its recent meeting in May, the panel worked through draft sections of the report, refining content and ensuring scientific findings were presented clearly and accurately. The report explores how hardened structures can influence shoreline dynamics, erosion patterns, coastal habitats, public beaches, and neighboring properties, while also examining their role in protecting infrastructure and development.

The report comes at a time when coastal communities continue to face increasing challenges associated with erosion, flooding, storms, and long-term shoreline change. Understanding the potential benefits, tradeoffs, and impacts of various shoreline management approaches is critical as communities seek solutions that balance environmental protection, public access, and property interests.

**The Science Panel is expected to present its findings at the Coastal Resources Commission June meeting.** The report will provide commissioners with a science-based foundation as they consider future discussions regarding oceanfront hardened structures and coastal management strategies.

Established by the CRC, the Science Panel is composed of experts from universities and research institutions across North Carolina who provide scientific guidance on issues affecting the state's coastal resources and communities.





## Celebrating Excellence at DCM: Distinguished Employee and Team Achievement Award Winners

At the N.C. Division of Coastal Management (DCM), our work to protect and manage North Carolina's coastal resources is made possible by the dedication, expertise, and passion of our staff. Each year, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) takes a moment to recognize individuals who go above and beyond in service to our mission—and this year's **Distinguished Employee Award** winners exemplify the very best of DEQ!

DCM was well-represented in several categories at the spring 2026 event. These outstanding team members have demonstrated exceptional commitment to public service, whether through innovative problem-solving, leadership in complex projects, outstanding customer service, or consistent excellence in their day-to-day responsibilities. Their work supports the foundation of the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) and helps ensure that North Carolina's coastal communities remain resilient, sustainable, and thriving.

From the field to the office, to meeting rooms and community partnerships, these award winners represent the strength of collaboration across our division. They are trusted colleagues, problem-solvers, and stewards of the coast—bringing professionalism and purpose to everything they do.

We are proud to celebrate their achievements and grateful for the positive impact they make on DCM, our partners, and the communities we serve.



Please join us in congratulating our Distinguished Employee Award winners and thanking them for their continued dedication to North Carolina's coast!

**Kara Guthrie**  
Nomination Category: Core Values

**Woody Webster**  
Nomination Category: Core Values

**Scuppernong Engagement Strategy Team  
APNEP and Division of Coastal Management**  
Whitney Jenkins (DCM), Woody Webster (DCM),  
Stacey Feken (APNEP)  
Nomination Category: Scope of Work

**DCM Transportation Project Team**  
Cathy Brittingham, Lee Cannady,  
Stephen Lane  
Nomination Category: Scope of Work

Click [here](#) to view DEA Awards program and hear from your DCM team!



*Congratulations!*





## Discover the N.C. Coastal Reserve Tour rolls on

**Buckle up!** We've been hitting the road to explore some of North Carolina's hidden coastal gems through the Discover the N.C. Coastal Reserve Tour. Our journey began in 2023, and it's only getting more exciting.

### **2023: The Journey Begins**

"Discover the N.C. Coastal Reserve" is a multi-year campaign to raise awareness of the N.C. Coastal Reserve and the role the 10 Coastal Reserve sites and programs play in protecting the state's coastal resources now and into the future. The campaign, which runs through 2026, will involve invited guests visiting sites throughout the coast to learn more about the ecosystems they protect and the critical work happening at the sites.

The tour kicked off at Currituck Banks Reserve in 2023, Rachel Carson and Bird Island Reserves in 2024 and Masonboro Island Reserve in 2025. The tour continues with a series of visits across the state's coastal reserves. From scenic boardwalks to rich maritime habitats, we highlighted the natural treasures that make our coastal environment so unique.

Invited guests join staff for hands-on activities, guided walks, and educational talks that made the outdoors more accessible and fun for everyone.

### **Kitty Hawk Woods Reserve May 2026**

The adventure continues! Our next stop was Kitty Hawk Woods Reserve, where the dunes meet maritime forests. At this tour stop, we also highlighted the Division of Coastal Management's Public Beach and Water Access and Resilient Coastal Communities Programs and the Division of Marine Fisheries' Marine Patrol.

### **Discover the Reserve Tour Highlights Kitty Hawk Woods Reserve and Coastal Programs in Dare County**

The N.C. Division of Coastal Management (DCM) welcomed state and local leaders, partners, and community members to Kitty Hawk Woods Reserve on May 1 for the fifth stop of the Discover the N.C. Coastal Reserve Tour. **[Click the link at the bottom of the page 9 to see tour stops 1-4!]**

The event featured a guided look at one of the most ecologically significant maritime forests on the Outer Banks while also highlighting the many programs working together to protect North Carolina's coast.

North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Reid Wilson joined DCM staff and local officials for the visit, which included a guided hike through the reserve, remarks from state and local leaders, a boat tour, and a visit to a Public Beach and Water Access site.

Spanning approximately 1,900 acres, Kitty Hawk Woods Reserve includes one of the largest remaining maritime forests on the Outer Banks. The reserve features maritime deciduous forest, maritime swamp forest, marshes, and creeks, while supporting recreation and traditional uses compatible with conservation, research, and education.

The reserve was formed through a long-standing partnership between the State and the Town of Kitty Hawk. A 462-acre tract acquired by the Town in the early 1990s is protected through a state-held conservation easement, while additional lands were acquired with assistance from The Nature Conservancy and funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program and the North Carolina Land and Water Fund.



## Discover the N.C. Coastal Reserve Tour rolls on (continued)

Today, visitors can explore approximately five miles of hiking trails and five miles of paddle trails throughout the reserve.

Special guests attending the tour included:

Representative Ed Goodwin, Representative Celeste Cairns, North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission Chair Renee Cahoon, Kitty Hawk Mayor Charlotte Walker, Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Pruitt, Council member Peter Mantz, Nags Head Mayor Ben Cahoon, Commissioner Bob Sanders, and DEQ Assistant Secretary for Resilience Kathie Dello.



## A Lasting Coastal Impact: DCM Assumes Management of Topsail Nature Preserve

In May, N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Division of Coastal Management (DCM), in partnership with the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust (NCCLT), marked the transfer of the Topsail Nature Preserve on the south end of Topsail Island to state management, ensuring the continued protection and responsible use of this ecologically significant coastal site.

Following remarks by DEQ Secretary Reid Wilson, local leaders and conservation partners gathered for a ribbon cutting ceremony and a self-guided tour of the site. The handoff from NCCLT to the State of North Carolina reflects a shared commitment to conserving the state's coastal resources while maintaining public access for residents and visitors.

"The Topsail Nature Preserve is a unique coastal resource, and we are committed to protecting its natural integrity and maintaining responsible public access," said DEQ Secretary Reid Wilson. "Conserving places like this strengthens the long-term resilience of our coastal communities, protects natural habitats and preserves the natural features that help our coast adapt to changing environmental conditions."

During the event, the land trust was recognized for its vision and leadership in acquiring and protecting the property, helping to preserve important coastal habitats and maintain access for the public.



## A Lasting Coastal Impact: DCM Assumes Management of Topsail Nature Preserve (continued)

“The Coastal Land Trust is proud to have partnered with the Topsail community to help conserve the South End,” said Harrison Marks, Executive Director, North Carolina Coastal Land Trust, “We are thrilled to see this remarkable coastal resource permanently protected for future generations under the stewardship of the State of North Carolina.”

Under DCM management, the Preserve will remain open and accessible to the public, with a continued emphasis on conservation, education and responsible recreation. Visitors are encouraged to follow posted guidelines designed to protect wildlife, sensitive habitats and the overall integrity of the site.

Management of the area will include coordination with local and state partners, implementation of best practices for coastal stewardship and opportunities for community engagement.





## Strengthening Our Coast - A Closer Look at the Resilient Coastal Communities Program

### How Belhaven is Building Resilience for Today and Tomorrow

Across North Carolina's coast, towns are facing increasing challenges from flooding, storms, and changing weather patterns. The **Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP)**, administered by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management, empowers local communities with the planning tools, technical support, and funding needed to build long-term resilience against these hazards. Through a collaborative, community-driven process, towns assess their vulnerabilities, prioritize projects, and implement solutions that protect people, property, and the natural environment.

#### What's Happening in Belhaven, NC?

Located along the Pungo River and Pantego Creek, Belhaven is a waterfront community where the entire town lies within a special flood hazard area. Through its participation in the Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP), Belhaven has taken proactive steps to address recurring flooding and stormwater challenges, moving from community engagement and planning to implementation of projects that support residents, businesses, and long-term resilience.

The story unfolding in Belhaven is just one example of how the Resilient Coastal Communities Program is making a meaningful difference throughout coastal North Carolina.

**"We've had a lot of solutions in the past, but we never had a plan for implementing measures to help our community in the face of a storm or its aftermath,"** said Lynn Davis, **Town Manager, Belhaven.** **"The RCCP put the critical pieces together to help Belhaven build a better future and be ready for whatever may come our way."**

By equipping communities with the tools to assess their risks, engage stakeholders, and implement prioritized solutions, the RCCP is strengthening coastal towns against future hazards — and fostering a more resilient, vibrant future for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

In recent years, Belhaven completed a Resilience Strategy and Project Portfolio, identifying key areas where investments could reduce risks from flooding and enhance quality of life for residents.

Building on that planning foundation, the town secured grant funding for projects that will make measurable differences on the ground.

One of the flagship efforts supported by the RCCP is the **Wynne's Gut Tidal Gates and Flood Attenuation project**, which aims to improve flood control infrastructure and better manage stormwater. This implementation-ready project was awarded significant implementation funding, showcasing how the earlier planning work paid off in moving toward tangible resilience investments.



## Strengthening Our Coast - A Closer Look at the Resilient Coastal Communities Program

### How Belhaven is Building Resilience for Today and Tomorrow (continued)

#### Looking Forward: Active Planning and Community Engagement

Belhaven is also engaged in advanced planning initiatives like the Stormwater Action Plan and Easement Acquisition Plan, where engineers, surveyors, and environmental experts are conducting field work and data collection to map existing infrastructure and identify opportunities to reduce flood risk. This work — informed by extensive community input — lays the groundwork for future resilience investments and helps town leaders make science-based decisions that benefit all residents.

Local officials have noted the importance of this strategic approach.

Belhaven is experiencing increasing impacts from "sunny day flooding," a type of flooding that occurs even when there is no rainfall. As sea levels rise and high tides become more frequent, seawater can be pushed into stormwater drainage systems that were originally designed to carry rainwater away from streets.

When this happens, water backs up through the drainage network and floods roadways and low-lying areas, creating challenges for residents, businesses, and local infrastructure.

By leveraging RCCP support, Belhaven can address chronic flooding — even on typical high-water days — without overburdening taxpayers, helping ensure that resilience efforts are both effective and equitable.

#### Current stats:

- RCCP Community Participant since 2021
- Received approx. \$1M in RCCP funding over 5 grants to improve the town's resiliency
- Phase 1 & 2 Participant (\$30,000) Planning
- Phase 3 (Engineering & Design) Wynne's Gut Tidal Gates and Flood Attenuation (\$84,800)
- Phase 3 (Engineering & Design) Stormwater Action Plan and Easement Acquisition Plan-Upgrade the Stormwater System (\$500,000)
- Phase 3 (Engineering & Design) Floodplain & Stormwater Ordinance Update (\$123,050)
- Phase 4 (Construction) Wynne's Gut Tidal Gates and Flood Attenuation (\$263,300)

Read the Case Study [here](#).





**Quick Facts:**

- Now managed by DCM
- For grants issued prior to 2022 please contact the [N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries](#)
- Supports transient boating access along coastal waterways
- Funded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Funds docks, slips, and boater amenities
- Enhances access across coastal communities

## Expanding Access: DCM Assumes Management of Boating Infrastructure Grant Program

The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management (DCM) is expanding its role in supporting coastal access and recreation through administration of the **N.C. Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program**.

DCM has assumed management of the program, which provides funding to develop and improve boating infrastructure for transient recreational vessels along North Carolina's coast. **DCM anticipates accepting new grant applications in Summer 2026.**

### Supporting Access on the Water

The Boating Infrastructure Grant Program, funded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, helps marinas and public facilities enhance access for transient boaters traveling along coastal waterways.

Eligible projects may include:

- Transient slips for recreational vessels
- Docking facilities and mooring areas
- Boater amenities such as restrooms, fuel access, and pumpout stations
- Infrastructure that supports safe and convenient access to coastal destinations

By improving these facilities, the program supports both recreational boating and the coastal economies that depend on it

### Building on Existing Programs

With DCM now managing the BIG Program, the Division is able to better align boating infrastructure investments with its broader

coastal management efforts, including:

- Public access initiatives
- Clean Marina and Clean Boater Programs
- Water quality protection and stewardship efforts

This coordination helps ensure that infrastructure improvements are both functional and environmentally responsible.

The BIG Program supports the development environmentally sound boating facilities for **transient recreational boaters in vessels 26 feet or longer**. The program provides funding for the construction, renovation, and maintenance of public and private tie-up facilities that are open to the public.

**To qualify**, facilities must provide transient tie-up opportunities—defined as stays of 15 consecutive days or fewer—for recreational vessels 26 feet or more in length and be open to the public. Click [here](#) to learn more!

### Looking Ahead

As DCM begins managing the BIG Program, the Division will work with partners across the coast to identify opportunities for investment and improvement.

These efforts will help ensure that North Carolina's boating infrastructure continues to meet the needs of residents and visitors while protecting the resources that make these experiences possible

Click [here](#) to join the BIG Interested Parties List for updates, resources, and opportunities to apply.



“

**QUICK FACTS**

- \$100,000 Pumpout grant funding available
- 50+ certified Clean Marinas
- 20 coastal counties served
- 4 programs supporting clean waterways
- Voluntary, prevention-focused initiatives

## DCM on the Water: Small Actions, Big Impact

On any given day along North Carolina’s coast, you’ll find boats heading out at sunrise, marinas preparing for a busy weekend, and families enjoying time along the shoreline. What often goes unseen are the everyday choices that help keep these waters clean, safe, and thriving. The **N.C. Department of Environmental Quality’s Division of Coastal Management (DCM)** is shining a light on those choices—and the programs that make them possible.

### A Coast Worth Protecting

North Carolina’s coastal waters support communities, local economies, and ecosystems that are constantly in motion. Protecting them doesn’t always require big changes. **Often, it comes down to simple, consistent actions—properly disposing of waste, maintaining equipment, and keeping shorelines free of debris.**

That’s where DCM’s **Marina/Boater Programs** come in.

### Turning Everyday Actions Into Lasting Impact

Across the state’s 20 coastal counties, marina operators, boaters, and coastal partners are working together through four key programs:



**Clean Marina Program:** More than 50 marinas are leading the way by adopting best management practices that go beyond regulatory requirements—helping protect water quality and marine life.



**Clean Boater Program:** Encourages individuals to take pride in clean, safe boating habits that protect waterways for future generations.

- **Pumpout Program:** Provides funding to install and maintain pumpout stations, reducing the risk of sewage entering coastal waters.
- **Adopt Your Shoreline:** Brings marinas and their communities together to reduce marine debris and care for the coast one shoreline at a time.



Together, these efforts create a ripple effect—small actions adding up to meaningful, long-term protection of North Carolina’s coastal resources.

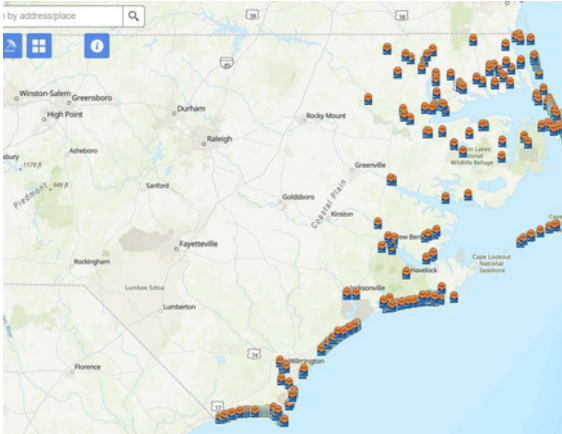
### Investing in Cleaner Water

Supporting these efforts, DCM is currently offering approximately \$100,000 in funding through the **Marine Sewage Pumpout Station Grant Program**. Funded through the **Clean Vessel Act**, these matching grants help marinas and boating facilities install or upgrade pumpout stations—an important tool in reducing pollution and improving water quality.

### A Shared Responsibility

Protecting the coast is not the responsibility of one group—it’s shared by everyone who lives, works, and spends time on the water. Whether it’s choosing a certified Clean Marina, properly disposing of waste, or volunteering to keep shorelines clean, each action contributes to a healthier coast.

These programs serve as a reminder that protecting North Carolina’s coast is an ongoing effort—one built on partnership, stewardship, and everyday decisions. Because when it comes to the coast, small actions don’t stay small. They add up to something much bigger.



## Impact of Coastal Access Program Expands Public Enjoyment of North Carolina’s Beaches and Waterways

As North Carolina’s beach season gets underway, coastal residents and visitors have an easier way than ever to discover and enjoy the state’s beaches, waterfronts, and recreational amenities thanks to the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality’s Division of Coastal Management (DCM) Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program.

A key tool supporting that mission is DCM’s mobile-friendly, interactive Public Beach and Waterfront Access Map, which helps users locate more than 800 public access sites along North Carolina’s ocean beaches and estuarine waters. Accessible from both smartphones and desktop computers, the map provides detailed information about site locations and available amenities, making it easier for residents and tourists to connect with the coast.

One of the map’s most popular features, “Find Sites Near Me,” allows users to quickly identify public access locations within 10 miles of their current location. Additional tools enable visitors to search for sites based on amenities such as restrooms, showers, parking, and other conveniences, helping families and outdoor enthusiasts plan their coastal adventures with confidence.

The interactive map is just one example of the lasting impact of DCM’s Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program. Since its inception in 1981, the program has awarded 538 grants totaling more than \$56.7 million to improve public access to North Carolina’s beaches and waterways.

These investments have helped communities create and enhance a wide range of access facilities, including walkways, dune crossovers, parking areas, restrooms, piers, and waterfront revitalization projects. Program funding has also supported land acquisition efforts that preserve public access opportunities for future generations.

By improving access and providing easy-to-use tools for locating recreational sites, the program continues to strengthen tourism, support local economies, and ensure that North Carolina’s coastal resources remain accessible to residents and visitors alike.

To explore public beach and waterfront access locations across the state, visit the [Public Beach and Waterfront Access Map](#).

Questions or comments about access sites may be directed to Rachel Love-Adrick at [Rachel.love-adrick@deq.nc.gov](mailto:Rachel.love-adrick@deq.nc.gov).



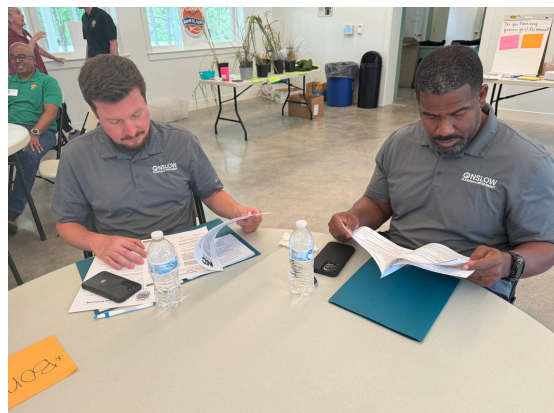
## Strengthening Coastal Impact Through Local Permit Officer Training

Local Permit Officers (LPOs) from the central and southern regions of DCM's 20 CAMA counties gathered in Swansboro May 20–21 for a two-day workshop. The training provided coastal permitting staff with an opportunity to strengthen technical knowledge, discuss emerging issues, and share best practices related to implementation of the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA).

The workshop brought together local government partners and DCM staff to discuss permitting procedures, policy updates, coastal hazards, and field-based examples of coastal management challenges and solutions. Sessions focused on improving consistency in permitting decisions while supporting collaboration between local governments and DCM staff.

LPOs play a critical role in administering the CAMA Minor Permit Program in North Carolina's coastal counties and municipalities. As the first point of contact for many residents, contractors, and property owners, LPOs help guide development in environmentally sensitive coastal areas while balancing resource protection, public access, and community needs.

Training sessions included discussions on current permitting trends, shoreline stabilization approaches, dunes and oceanfront development, and updates related to coastal resilience and regulatory coordination. Participants also had opportunities to exchange experiences and discuss common permitting questions and challenges facing coastal communities.



## Strengthening Coastal Impact Through Local Permit Officer Training (continued)

Field sessions provided hands-on learning opportunities at several coastal sites. At Hammocks Beach State Park, participants reviewed coastal wetland lines, normal high water (NHW), and field indicator delineations alongside DCM and Division of Water Resources field staff. In Emerald Isle, participants visited the western regional access at Islander Drive to examine dune systems and discuss the differences between the first line of stable natural vegetation (FLSNV) and planted vegetation.

The training also reinforced the importance of continued coordination among local governments, state agencies, and coastal partners as North Carolina's coastal communities continue to grow and adapt to changing environmental conditions.

DCM regularly hosts workshops for LPOs to support professional development, strengthen permitting consistency, and provide opportunities for collaboration across North Carolina's coastal region.

Stay tuned for the fall LPO workshop with our northern regions!

Click [here](#) to Find a Local Permit Officer in your CAMA Region!



Click [here](#) to Find a Field Rep in your CAMA Region!



## Impact Through Local Voices: Coastal Reserve Seeks Advisory Committee Members

The N.C. Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve is inviting community members to help shape the future of North Carolina's protected coastal habitats by applying to serve on one of its [local advisory committees \(LACs\)](#).

**Applications are open June 1-30, 2026**, for advisory committee positions at each of the Coastal Reserve's 10 sites: **Bird Island Reserve, Bald Head Woods Reserve, Zeke's Island Reserve, Masonboro Island Reserve, Permuda Island Reserve, Rachel Carson Reserve, Buxton Woods Reserve, Kitty Hawk Woods Reserve, Currituck Banks Reserve, and Emily and Richardson Preyer Buckridge Reserve.**

Local advisory committees play an important role in the management and stewardship of these nationally significant coastal sites. Committee members provide guidance and feedback to Coastal Reserve staff on reserve management, education, research, conservation, and community engagement efforts. Their input helps ensure management decisions reflect local knowledge, community needs, and the diverse ways people use and value these coastal resources.

The committees also serve as a vital link between the Coastal Reserve and surrounding communities, helping foster communication, collaboration, and public involvement. Members bring a variety of perspectives and expertise, including education, research, recreation, commercial activities, hunting and fishing, neighboring property ownership, volunteerism, and nonprofit community interests.

Community members with experience or interest in one or more of these areas are encouraged to apply. Following the application period, selected applicants will be appointed by the Secretary of the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. New members will begin their service in 2027 and serve five-year terms.

Applications and additional information about the local advisory committees, including operating procedures and responsibilities, are available at [deq.nc.gov/coastal-reserve-LAC](http://deq.nc.gov/coastal-reserve-LAC).

By serving on a local advisory committee, community members can have a direct impact on the stewardship, conservation, and future management of North Carolina's treasured coastal reserves.



*Thank you for reading!*

<p>NC DIVISION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT</p>	<p>252-515-5400</p>
<p>Sign up: DCMnewsletter@deq.nc.gov</p>	<p>400 Commerce Ave. Morehead City, NC 28557</p>