

Applying the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment approach to assess the status and trends of coastal habitats

Establish internal working group to establish goals of an ecosystem assessment and state ecosystem report card.



Conduct workshop with stakeholders, scientists and managers to select ecosystem indicators and establish appropriate thresholds.



Calculate scores and create a state report card that is easily accessible to a wide audience.



Communicate status and trends of coastal ecosystems to stakeholders, decisionmakers, and the public.



Strategic Habitat Area validation and implementation

Explore feasibility of using DMF independent sampling data to validate SHAs for Albemarle Sound and Pamlico Sound regions



Develop issue paper that presents validation of Strategic Habitat Areas statewide and propose designation options to the MFC



Establish internal working group to develop management options for Strategic Habitat Areas.



Conduct a workshop with state partners to further establish potential management strategies.



Complete a SHA management issue paper and present management options to the appropriate commissions and external partners.



Submerged aquatic vegetation protection and restoration

Prioritize progress on the recommended actions from the 2021 CHPP amendment to improve water quality for SAV, especially by collaborating to facilitate the passage and implementation of a water clarity standard to protect SAV.



Initiate formal MFC rulemaking process to develop a CHPP habitat-based rule framework



Work group to explore barriers to on-the-ground SAV restoration and identify research needs



Thin layer placement (TLP)

Create a state-wide multi-agency workgroup to progress TLP to facilitate establishment of best practices for TLP specific to North Carolina.



Evaluate the status and trends of wetlands across coastal North Carolina, incorporating high-resolution land cover data obtained through the 2021 CHPP.



Leverage existing tools and data sources to identify candidate areas that may benefit most from TLP.

