

CAMA Amendment and Rule Readoption Schedule

North Carolina Coastal Reserve & National Estuarine Research Reserve



Presentation Objectives

- Reserve Overview
- CAMA Amendment
- Rules Readoption

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- Rules Readoption

Purpose – NC G.S. 113A-129.1-3

Codified at 15A NCAC 07O. 0101*

- **Preserve** representative coastal N.C. ecosystems
- Conduct relevant **research** to inform sound management of coastal resources
- Increase **awareness and understanding** of coastal ecosystems, their importance, and the effects humans have on them
- Accommodate compatible **traditional uses****

*Paraphrased
**Traditional uses = public trust uses including fishing, hunting, navigation, and recreation

Reserve History

1982

NC receives funding from NOAA to establish a multi-component National Estuarine Research Reserve.

1985

NC National Estuarine Research Reserve is designated. Masonboro Island Reserve is added to NCNERR in 1991. DEQ's DCM is administrator/state partner.

1986

NC Administrative Code rules for the Reserve are adopted (15A NCAC 07O).

1987 - 2002

Acquisition of additional coastal natural areas occurs: Permuda Island followed by Buxton Woods, Kitty Hawk Woods, Bald Head Woods, Buckridge, and Bird Island.

1989

CAMA amended to create the Coastal Reserve and protect additional natural areas. Established coordination with the National Estuarine Research Reserve System and NC Nature Preserves Act.

Reserve Specifics

- Protects over 44,000 acres across 10 components
  - Includes the NC National Estuarine Research Reserve
  - 9 components are Dedicated State Nature Preserves
- Stewardship, Education, Training, and Research and Monitoring Programs
- Topical themes



Water Quality



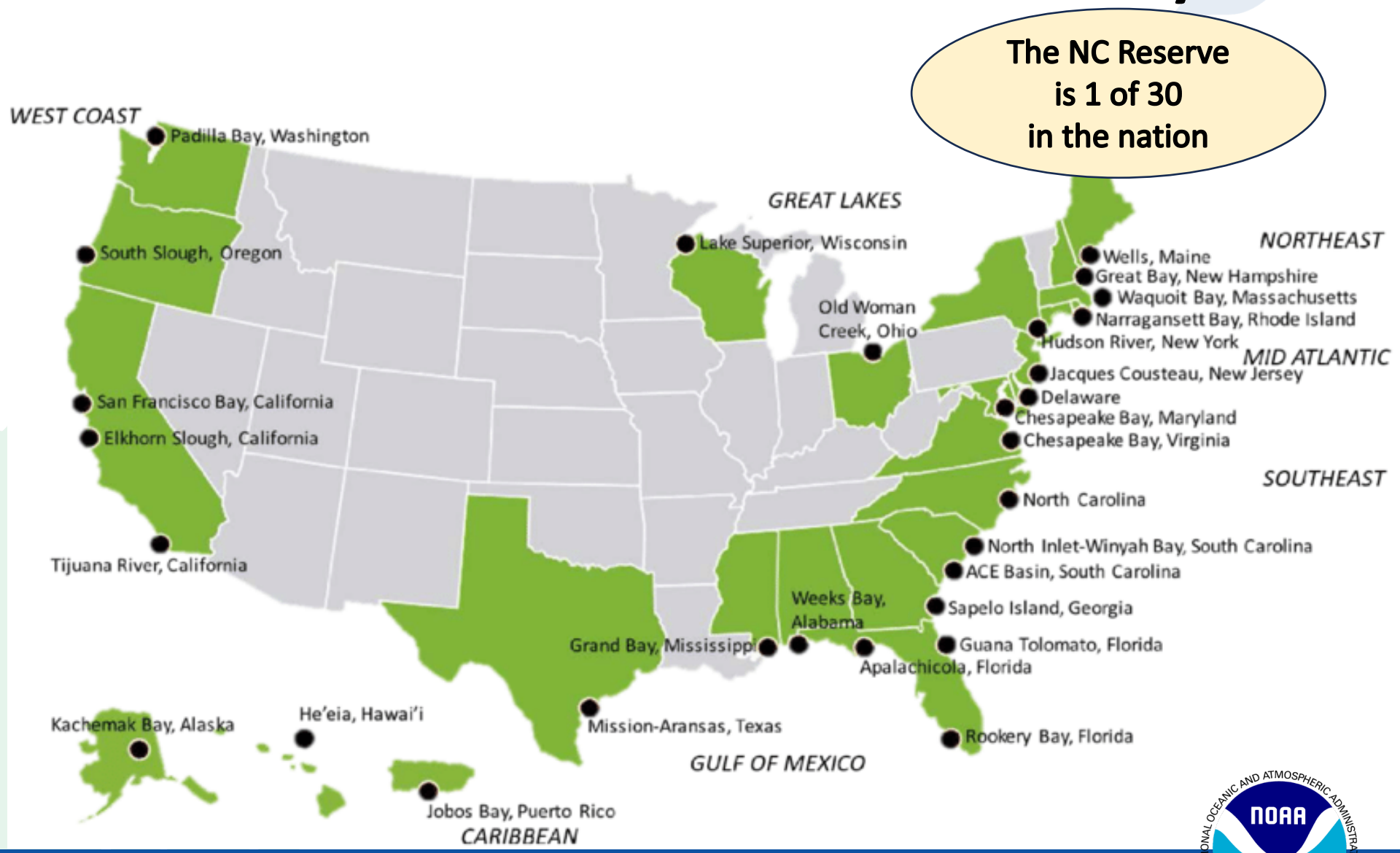
Coastal & Estuarine Ecosystem Protection



Coastal Hazards Resilience


NC Coastal Reserve
Sites and Offices
N
Virginia
Chowan River
GATES
HERTFORD
CURRITUCK
CAMDEN
PASQUOTANK
PERQUIMANS
CHOWAN
Currituck Banks Reserve
Roanoake River
BERTIE
Albemarle Sound
Kitty Hawk Woods
Manteo
Columbia
Rocky Mount
Raleigh
Tar River
TYRRELL
DARE
WASHINGTON
Buckridge Reserve
Greenville
BEAUFORT
HYDE
Goldsboro
Neuse River
CRAVEN
Pamlico Sound
Buxton Woods Reserve
Cape Hatteras
PAMLICO
Atlantic Ocean
Cape Fear River
ONSLOW
Jacksonville
Beaufort
CARTERET
Rachel Carson Reserve
Cape Lookout
PENDER
Permuda Island Reserve
Wilmington
NEW HANOVER
BRUNSWICK
Masonboro Island Reserve
South Carolina
Zeke's Island Reserve
Bald Head Woods Reserve
Bird Island Reserve
Reserve Offices
Reserve Types
State Reserves
National Reserves
Scale: 1:1,670,000
Miles
0
20
40
80

National Estuarine Research Reserve System



Operational Framework

Application of state and federal requirements to guide daily operations and decision-making:

- Federal Coastal Zone Management Act and Regulations
- Coastal Area Management Act and Administrative Code Rules
- Dedicated State Nature Preserves
  - NC Nature Preserves Act and Articles of Dedication
  - Primary Custodian: responsible for managing a nature preserve in accordance with its articles of dedication
- Management Plans
  - Required by NOAA, rule, and for dedicated state nature preserves
  - Contain research, education, natural resource management and traditional use policies
  - Approved by the DEQ Secretary with input from Local Advisory Committees, CRC, and the public

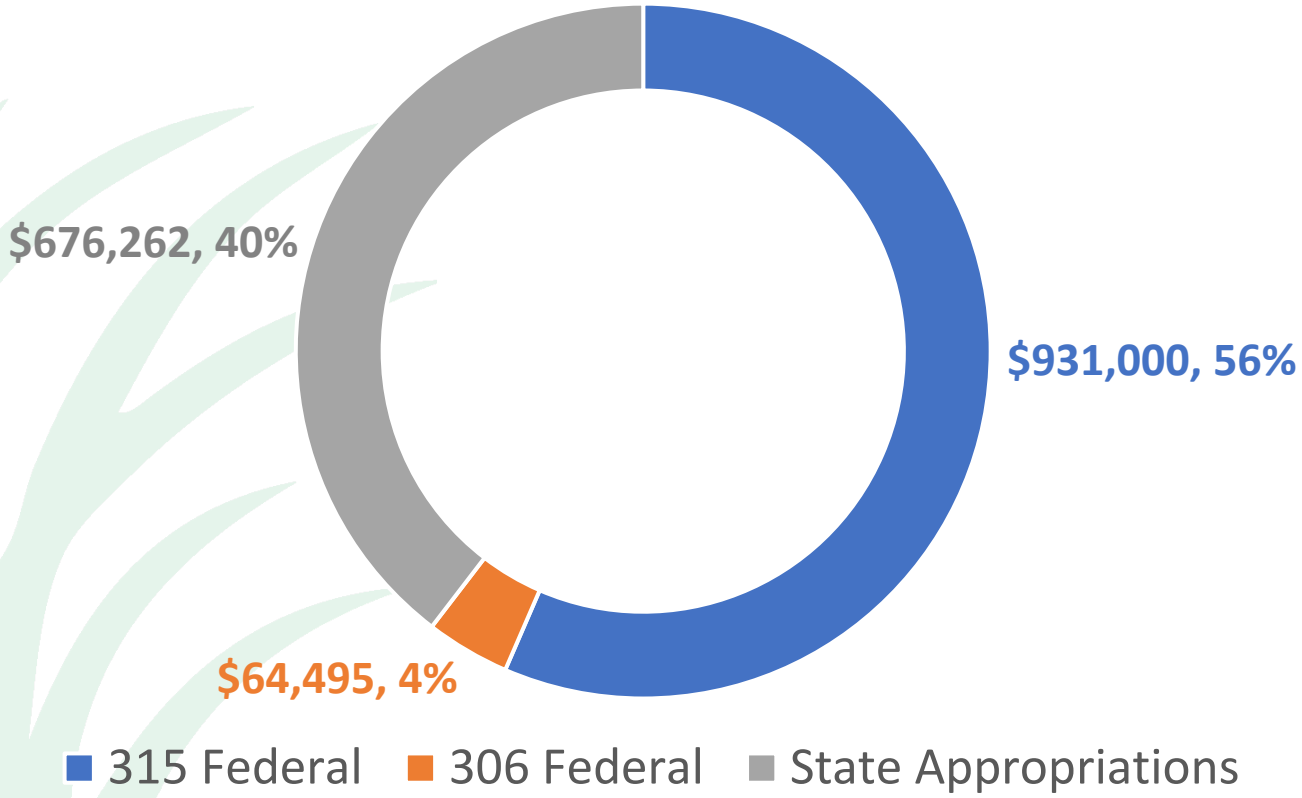
Operational Framework

Input sought on strategic initiatives to comply with state and federal requirements:

- Local Advisory Committees
  - 10 committees meet 1-2 times/year
  - Comprised of citizens and representatives from community organizations, government agencies, and non-governmental partner organizations; appointed by the DEQ Secretary
  - Input sought on rule classifications and amendments, management plan updates, and management and uses of the components
- Coastal Resources Commission
  - Input sought on rule classifications and amendments and management plan updates

Budget FY July 2026-June 2027

Total Base Budget: $1,671,757



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Stewardship

Protect sites to inform management and appreciation of coastal and estuarine ecosystems;

Accommodate compatible traditional uses





- Species protection & monitoring
- Non-native species management
- Public access
- Visitor use monitoring & issues
- Volunteers & community outreach
- Debris cleanup
- Land acquisition
- Resilience planning & implementation
- Special Activity Authorization

Education

Enhance understanding and awareness of the importance of coastal and estuarine systems







- K-college students and teachers
- Educators
- Public

Training and Engagement Program

Deliver science-based trainings and technical assistance to inform coastal decision making



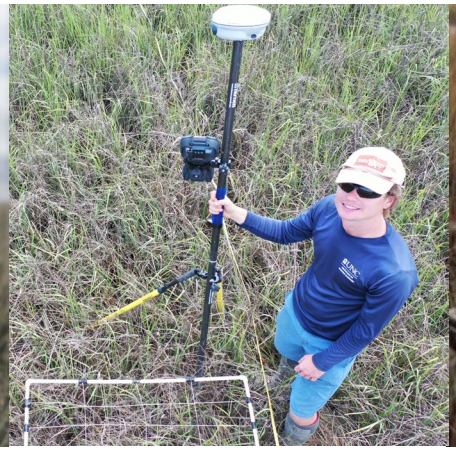


- Regulators
- Resource managers
- Consultants
- Local communities and officials
- Real estate agents
- Contractors

Research and Monitoring

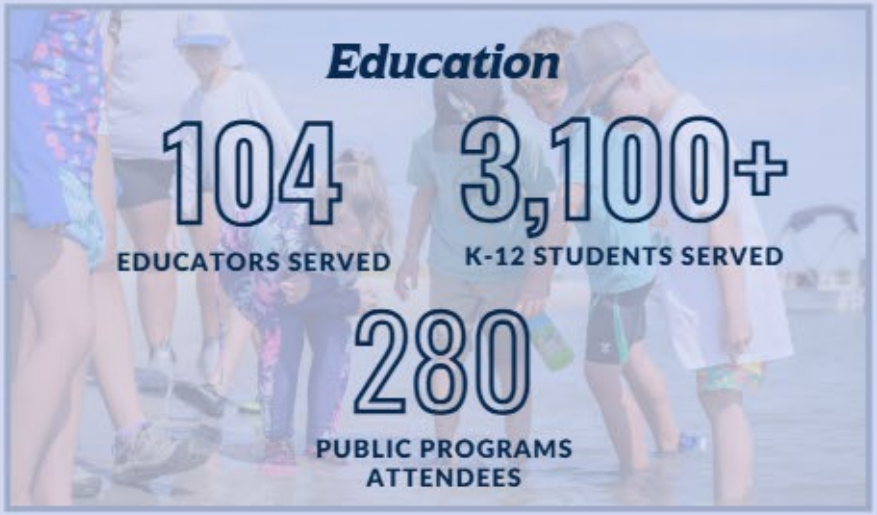
Advance scientific understanding and inform management of coastal and estuarine ecosystems






- System-wide Monitoring Program (SWMP)
- Internal research and external research partnerships
- Facilitation of research at reserve sites

2025 By the Numbers











Impact Beyond the Numbers

- Serve as ***protective barriers*** buffering communities from storms
- Serve as ***integral parts of local communities,*** supporting human health and well-being and providing ecological benefits
- Support ***local economies*** as people visit the sites and spend time and dollars in local communities
- Grow the ***next generation*** of coastal stewards and professionals
- ***Meet information needs*** through stakeholder and end-user engagement
- ***Inform policy*** through research and demonstration projects such as living shoreline design and oyster management

Impact Beyond the Numbers

- Serve as *protective barriers* [illegible] from storms
- Serve as *integral parts* [illegible] human health and well-bei[illegible]
- Support *local eco* [illegible] time and dollars in lo[illegible]
- Grow the *next g* [illegible]ls
- *Meet informati* [illegible] engagement
- *Inform policy* thr[illegible]uch as living shoreline[illegible]

20 authorized commercial businesses and institutions brought **34,722** visitors to 5 Reserve sites for compatible recreational and educational activities in 2025, equating to **$1,334,066** in estimated minimum profit for these authorized users

Presentation Objectives

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CAMA Part 5. Coastal Reserves

§ 113A-129.1. Legislative Findings and Purposes.

(a) Findings. - It is hereby determined and declared as a matter of legislative finding that the coastal area of North Carolina contains a number of important undeveloped natural areas. These areas are vital to continued fishery and wildlife protection, water quality maintenance and improvement, preservation of unique and important coastal natural areas, aesthetic enjoyment, and public trust rights such as hunting, fishing, navigation, and recreation. Such land and water areas are necessary for the preservation of estuarine areas of the State, constitute important research facilities, and provide public access to waters of the State.

(b) Purposes. - Important public purposes will be served by the preservation of certain of these areas in an undeveloped state. Such areas would thereafter be available for research, education, and other consistent public uses. These areas would also continue to contribute perpetually to the natural productivity and biological, economic, and aesthetic values of North Carolina's coastal area. (1989, c. 344, s. 1.)

CAMA Part 5. Coastal Reserves

§ 113A-129.2. Coastal Reserve Program.

(a) There is hereby created a North Carolina Coastal Reserve System for the purpose of acquiring, improving, and maintaining undeveloped coastal land and water areas in a natural state.

(b) This system shall be established and administered by the Department of Environmental ~~Quality. In so doing the Department shall consult with and seek the ongoing advice of~~ Quality, subject to: (i) use standards adopted for the system by the Coastal Resources Commission and (ii) permits and orders issued by the Coastal Resources ~~Commission.~~ Commission concerning activities allowed in the system. The Department may by rule define the areas to be included in this system and set standards for its use.

(c) This system shall be established within the coastal area as defined by G.S. 113A-103(2).

(d) All acquisitions or dispositions of property for lands within this system shall be in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 146 of the General Statutes.

CAMA Part 5. Coastal Reserves

§ 113A-129.2. Coastal Reserve Program.

(e) All lands and waters within the system shall be used primarily for research and education. Other public uses, such as hunting, fishing, navigation, and recreation, shall be allowed to the extent consistent with these primary uses. Improvements and alterations to the lands shall be limited to those consistent with these uses.

(f) With respect to any component of the system that is also a dedicated nature preserve pursuant to Part 42 of Article 2 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes, the Department and the Commission, in accordance with the authority granted to each pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, shall act as primary custodian to manage such components, in accordance with the articles of dedication. The Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources shall monitor these preserves, and shall retain authority to report alleged violations of the approved management plan or the articles of dedication for such preserves, in which case the Secretary shall request the Department of Administration to coordinate mediation with the primary custodian. If mediation is unsuccessful in resolving the issue, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources shall have standing and a right of action in the Superior Court of Wake County, or the county in which the component is located, to enforce the terms of any articles of dedication applicable to such components.

CAMA Part 5. Coastal Reserves

§ 113A-129.3. Coordination.

(a) To the extent feasible, this system shall be carried out in coordination with the National Estuarine Reserve Research System established by 16 U.S.C. § 1461.

(b) To the extent feasible, lands and waters within this system shall be dedicated as components of the "State Nature and Historic Preserve" as provided in Article XIV, Section 5, of the Constitution and as nature reserves pursuant to G.S. 143B-135.250 to G.S. 143B- 135.270. (1989, c. 344, s. 1; c. 770, s. 47; 2019-241, s. 4.)

Operationalize the CAMA Amendment

- Joint Rulemaking Authority
- Management Plans
- Dedicated State Nature Preserves
- General Coordination
- Memorandum of Understanding between DEQ and CRC

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Rules Review Process

- Legislative Periodic Review and Expiration of Existing Rules process (G.S. 150B-21.3A) requires review of rules every 10 years

- The rules review process requires that all rule citations are classified as necessary or unnecessary:

  Necessary: any rule other than an unnecessary rule
  - Must be readopted

  Unnecessary: a rule that the agency determines to be obsolete, redundant, or otherwise not needed
  - Will expire

15A NCAC 07O

- 8 rule citations
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0101 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0102 DEFINITIONS AS USED IN THIS SUBCHAPTER
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0103 RESPONSIBILITIES: DUTIES OF THE COASTAL RESERVE
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0104 STATE AND LOCAL COASTAL RESERVE ADVISORY COMMITTEES
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0105 RESERVE COMPONENTS
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0201 MANAGEMENT PLAN
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0202 RESERVE USE REQUIREMENTS
  - 15A NCAC 07O .0203 SPECIAL ACTIVITY AUTHORIZATION

- Classification report is effective; all citations classified as necessary
- Consultation request from Rules Review Commission received October 20, 2026

07O Readoption Proposed Schedule

***See Table 1 in CRC-26-80 for full schedule**

Readoption schedule approved	CRC, DEQ
Rule amendments drafted and input sought	DEQ, CRC, LAC
Updated draft rule amendments approved	CRC, DEQ
Fiscal analyses development and approval	OSBM, CRC, DEQ
Public comment period + 2 public hearings	CRC, DEQ
Updated draft rule amendments and fiscal analyses shared as needed	DEQ, CRC, LAC
Rule amendments and fiscal analyses adopted	CRC, DEQ July 1, 2029
Rules filed with the Rules Review Commission	
Rules become effective	

Requested Action

DCM requests the CRC approve the proposed readoption schedule for 15A NCAC 07O as outlined in Table 1 with a readoption date of July 1, 2029.

