



**NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT  
RESILIENT COASTAL COMMUNITIES PROGRAM (RCCP)  
2024-25 Application Guidance  
Phase 4: Implementation**

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP) is a component of the North Carolina Resilient Communities Program, called for in the [2020 North Carolina Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan](#). The North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM) has received funding from the NC State Legislature and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to implement the RCCP in coordination with the NC Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and NC Sea Grant (NCSG).

The RCCP is a four-phase program that seeks to:

1. Address barriers to coastal resilience in North Carolina at the local level, such as limited capacity, economic constraints, and social inequities;
2. Assist communities with risk and vulnerability assessments and developing a portfolio of planned and prioritized projects;
3. Advance coastal resilience projects to “shovel-ready” status; and
4. Link communities to funding streams for project implementation.

The four phases are:

Phase 1: Community Engagement and Risk Vulnerability Assessment

Phase 2: Planning, Project Identification, and Prioritization

\*Phase 3: Engineering and Design

**\*Phase 4: Project Implementation**

*\* To be eligible for Phase 4 funding a community must complete Phases 1, 2 and 3 or an equivalent level of planning, community engagement, design, engineering, and permitting.*

**DCM is hosting an informational webinar on the Phase 3 and 4 application process on April 19, 2024, from 10-11:30 am. Register for the webinar [HERE](#).**

## NOTICE OF AVAILABLE FUNDS AND REQUIREMENTS (2024-2025)

**Phase Objective:** The primary objective of Phase 4 of the RCCP is to provide funds for the implementation (i.e., the construction) of prioritized resilience projects identified by communities within the 20 coastal counties. Grant funds may be used for the construction or implementation of a project that improves your community’s resilience to identified coastal hazards (i.e., flooding, sea-level rise, storm surge, etc.). Project examples include wetland and stream restoration, flood mitigation, living shoreline stabilization, stormwater management, etc. Grants will be awarded based on the criteria identified in this document.

**Funds available:** DCM estimates that a total of approximately \$4 million will be available for Phase 4 projects in FY 2024-2025.

**Eligible Applicants:** All county and municipal governments within the [20 coastal counties](#) (i.e., counties that fall under the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) and any federal and state-recognized tribes may apply. Adjacent communities may submit a joint application for a regional grant. Applicants may also submit applications for more than one project but must indicate their funding priority and complete and submit a separate application for each project. To reach DCM staff with any questions, please use the contact information at the end of this document.

***NOTE:*** All eligible applicants must have completed Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the RCCP (or an equivalent scope of work) to apply for Phase 4. Please see the Resilience Strategy Matrix on [page 4](#) to show how you have completed the steps and minimum requirements of the program.<sup>1</sup>

**Anticipated Project Period:** July 2024 – July 2025 (12-months)

**Maximum request:** There is no limit on maximum request. However, due to the limited funds available larger requests may be difficult to accommodate. DCM anticipates the award amounts for Phase 4 will range from \$50,000 to \$750,000.

**Match Requirements:** There is no cash or in-kind match requirement for applicants. The presence of a match will not impact the scoring of your application. However, if additional funds are necessary to complete the project, the source and availability of those funds must be identified.

**Eligible Projects:** Projects include those that have been identified through the RCCP (or an equivalent process) as priority projects, have been fully designed, engineered, and permitted (i.e., “shovel-ready”), and are prepared for construction to begin.

**Program Criteria and Prioritization:** DCM will review applications and select projects based on available funding and alignment with program goals and objectives. In addition to evaluating

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<sup>1</sup> The minimum requirements of the RCCP can be found in the Program [Planning Handbook](#).

applications in accordance with the above eligibility requirements, DCM will consider the following factors:

#### Phase 4 Criteria

- The applicant has previously participated in and completed Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the RCCP or an equivalent scope of work.
- Project readiness (e.g., design and engineering complete; permitting status, etc.).
- The project's contributions to the objectives of the RCCP.
- The project is prioritized in the applicant's project portfolio or similar planning document.
- The extent to which the project incorporates nature-based components.
- The extent to which the project ensures equitable consideration of socially vulnerable, historically disadvantaged, and underserved populations (e.g., low-income and minority populations)
- The potential transferability of the project to other coastal area municipalities and counties.
- The project's cost-effectiveness

#### Project-Specific Guidelines for Natural and Nature-Based Strategies:

1. Shoreline stabilization proposals should document erosion trends and threatened infrastructure or habitats. "Living shorelines" using biodegradable, natural, and inert materials and vegetation should be prioritized over gray (hard) approaches (bulkheads, revetments, breakwaters) where they can be successfully used given site conditions.
2. Where practical, flood control projects should prioritize nature-based strategies that protect, restore, or replicate the natural capacity of the landscape to store and treat flood waters.
3. Stormwater control projects should focus on reducing the volume and rate of runoff caused by land use by providing for natural infiltration and other best management practices that restore, enhance, or replicate natural hydrology. Projects may include strategic land or easement acquisition to provide space for wetland restoration or creation, riparian buffer protection or restoration, and redirection of runoff to green space or natural infiltration areas, as well as the use of stormwater management measures outlined in the [DEQ Stormwater Manual](#), such as disconnecting impervious surfaces, rain gardens, bioswales; vegetation, stormwater wetlands, and permeable pavement.
4. Coastal wetland and oyster reef restoration projects should analyze habitat trade-offs that may result (e.g., conversion of existing shallow-bottom habitat), and document

historical deterioration or loss of wetland or oyster habitats. Proposed oyster reef restoration projects should document early coordination with the NC Division of Marine Fisheries with respect to site selection and materials.

5. Beneficial use of dredged materials proposals should document early coordination with federal and state regulatory agencies, describe any seasonal restrictions that may be required to limit impacts to sensitive coastal and marine resources, and evaluate the compatibility and suitability of the dredged materials for the proposed use. The disposal of dredged materials on coastal wetlands will require more intensive regulatory reviews and likely would require a Variance from the NC Coastal Resources Commission.
6. Priority should be given to proposals that provide tangible long-term resilience benefits; for example, those that allow for upland migration of coastal wetlands over time, provide infiltration areas for stormwater or floodwaters, or provide natural protection of public or private infrastructure.
7. All projects proposed on (or impacting) federal, state, local, or private lands should include participation or written support of the relevant management or ownership entity.

**Contracting:** DCM will be contracting directly with selected applicants. Selected applicants will be responsible for conducting their own procurement process.

#### Application Checklist

- Application cover sheet
- Question responses
- Supplemental documentation, if applicable, not to exceed 20 pages

**Submission:** Submit applications to [rccp@deq.nc.gov](mailto:rccp@deq.nc.gov) by **5:00 pm ET, Friday, May 31, 2024.**

*Direct questions regarding the application to:*

- **Mackenzie Todd**, DCM Coastal Resiliency Coordinator  
[mackenzie.todd@deq.nc.gov](mailto:mackenzie.todd@deq.nc.gov) / (252) 515-5434
- **Kasen Wally**, DCM Coastal Resilience Specialist  
[Kasen.wally@deq.nc.gov](mailto:Kasen.wally@deq.nc.gov) / (252) 515- 5424

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## ADDITIONAL PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

**Post Grant Funding Award:** After DCM issues the applicant an award notice, the applicant must enter a contract with DEQ prior to any work being completed. Any changes to the scope of the project or project budget after submission of a grant application will require the written approval of the DCM Grant Administrator and may also require a DEQ contract amendment. In seeking DCM approval, the grantee must submit, at a minimum, a justification for any proposed changes, revised scope of work narrative, and a revised budget. Unapproved changes to the project scope or budget shall not be eligible for reimbursement.

A DEQ grant contract is considered 'fully executed' once it has been signed by both a signatory authority of the grantee and DEQ Financial Services. A copy of the fully executed contract will be provided to the grantee after being signed by DEQ.

**Project Reporting:** Consistent with the "Project Timeline" provided in the application, every 2 months the grantee will be required to submit a progress report as to the status of the project. Each report should be packaged alongside its corresponding invoice. The Contract Administrator will provide both the Periodic and the Final Closeout Report Form templates. Adjustments to the schedule will require approval by the Contract Administrator.

**Contract Duration & Extension Requests:** Grant contracts for funds will have a term of 12 months. Grant contracts will be executed between DCM and the grantee. If necessary, grantees may request a no-cost extension. A request for an extension must be submitted in writing on official letterhead and include the following information:

1. Justification for the extension request
2. Summary of the current project status
3. Anticipated project schedule moving forward.

A request for an extension must be submitted 45 days prior to the contract expiration date and must be submitted via email to [RCCP@deq.nc.gov](mailto:RCCP@deq.nc.gov). Extension requests that are approved by DCM require a grant contract modification.

**Invoicing and Payment Schedule:** Reimbursements for actual expenses are subject to the Contract Administrator's approval. A reserve of 10 percent of the grant award shall be held pending submittal and acceptance of all final project deliverables. The grantee shall not request reimbursement payments more frequently than once every two months. Final invoices must be received by DCM within 30 days after the end of the grant contract period. Upon approval of the final deliverables, the State will release the final 10 percent of the grant award.

**Project Deliverables:** An official letter from the applicant stating that the project is substantially complete as designed. For construction projects, applicants should provide copies of final invoices from contractors, along with digital photos of the completed project.

GIS data must be provided in map package format. A Map Package (.mpk) consists of a map document (.mxd) and the data referenced by the layers it contains, packaged into one portable file. See esri's "[Creating a map package](#)" for guidance on creating and sharing a map package. Products must be referenced to the North Carolina State Plane North American Datum 83 US Survey Foot, to include Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) compliant metadata.

Additionally, one digital copy of all the completed work shall be provided on a USB Flash drive for review at the end of the contract period. The digital version of the Map Package should be labeled with both software and version. Additionally, each plan, map, and drawing shall be provided as a single digital file. Acceptable digital formats for document files include: .doc,.docx, .txt, .xls, .xlsx, .ppt, .pptx, and .pdf. Acceptable digital formats for image files include: .gif, .jpg, .bmp, and .tif.

CAD or AutoCAD drawings (.dwf, .dxf, and other CAD formats) are not acceptable and should be converted to .pdf for submission.

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## IF YOU RECEIVE A GRANT

**When to start:** To receive grant funds, a grantee must receive a fully executed contract from DEQ *before* beginning the access project. A DEQ grant contract is considered ‘fully executed’ once it has been signed by both a signatory authority of the grantee and DEQ Financial Services. A copy of the fully executed contract will be provided to the grantee after being signed by DEQ.

**Signing the contract:** The grantee is required to adopt a Resolution authorizing the manager to enter the grant contract with DEQ. The contract describes the project and the conditions for receiving the grant. This is a legally binding agreement between the grantee and the State of North Carolina.

**Project scope and costs** submitted in the application will be used to develop a scope of work that will be included in the contract and serve as the budget for the project. The grantee is responsible for any additional costs needed to complete the project.

**Period reporting:** The grantee will be required to submit reports as to the status and progress of the project every 2 months for the duration of the contract. DCM will provide the relevant templates.

**Completing the project:** The grantee has 12 months to complete a project. Projects may be amended and extended at the discretion of DCM.