

WETLAND PRACTICES SUPPORTIVE OF PUBLIC RECREATION AND HUNTING

**ANNUAL REPORT
TO THE
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMISSION**

Winter 2021

North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pursuant to NC General Statute 143-214.15 the Department of Environmental Quality (Department) reports annually to the Environmental Review Commission on the actions taken to encourage wetland mitigation practices supportive of public recreation and hunting on mitigation sites. The Department's mitigation sites are comprised of lands owned in fee and conservation easements held on private lands. The following report reflects the Department's supportive activities for Calendar Year 2020. This is the fourth annual report prepared pursuant to NC General Statute 143-214.15.

MITIGATION CREDIT FOR DIVERSE HABITATS UPDATE

As a member of the North Carolina Interagency Review Team (IRT), the Division of Water Resources (DWR) works with the US Army Corps of Engineers as well as the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) staff and other agencies to ensure that the appropriate wetland and stream mitigation is taking place for impacts to those resources, and analyzes sites for the appropriate mitigation credit.

During 2020, DWR worked with the IRT on promoting larger more contiguous stream and wetland mitigation sites. These sites can allow for greater system-level functional uplift by including critical connections from headwater wetlands and seeps to zero order and first order tributaries to segments of the higher order streams. Additionally, the IRT worked with Mitigation Bank Providers and Division of Mitigation Services (DMS) to encourage encompassing wider stream buffers and buffers along wetland areas within site conservation easements. Wider buffers allow for improved resource protection and inclusion of a greater diversity of habitats and ecological community types. DWR also supported proposals made by DMS and bank providers to include a mosaic of wetland types within appropriate sites, and worked with them on site-specific monitoring and success criteria.

DWR also participated in the IRT Vegetation Workgroup. The Workgroup was established to review trends in species diversity and appropriateness proposed for planting in sites across the state's ecoregions, and work with bank providers and DMS on measures to enhance site species diversity and successful target community establishment.

DWR and WRC staff continue to coordinate with other IRT members to optimize the amount of stream and wetland diverse habitats that occur on mitigation sites in North Carolina.

POTENTIAL WILDLIFE HABITATS UPDATE

To conserve, protect and enhance the natural resources of North Carolina, the Department protects mitigation properties through conservation easement (ABE), fee simple deed acquisition (ABD), and re-allocation (ROL) of State-owned lands. These land holdings are managed in perpetuity to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, open space, and compensatory mitigation credits.

For calendar year 2020 the Department held mitigation interest in 1242 parcels across the state. This includes 4 property re-allocations, 25 properties held in deed, and 1213 properties held in conservation easement. An inventory of the Department's ABD and ROL mitigation lands with determinations of potential wildlife habitats can be found in **Appendix A** of this report. This inventory has been provided to the Wildlife Resources Commission and the Department continues to consult with the WRC to determine which mitigation land holdings qualify as potential wildlife habitats.

PUBLIC HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES UPDATE

Since the inception of the mitigation program the Department has provided public hunting opportunities on select ABD mitigation properties thru the award of term-limited hunting leases. Currently the Department leases approximately 5073 acres of mitigation lands for hunting. In 2021 the Department plans to make an additional 64 acres of mitigation lands available for hunting leases.

APPENDIX A

ABD and ROL Mitigation Land Holdings with Retained Hunting Rights

APPENDIX A.

DEQ Mitigation Land Holdings with Retained Hunting Rights

DEQ Determination of Potential Wildlife Habitat	Department Name	Transaction Type Name	SPO File No	SPO Land Asset ID	Project Name	County Name
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	35-011.001	13	MOCCASIN CREEK	Franklin
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	96-040.001	562	NORWOOD GAINNEY WETLAND	Wayne
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	92-234.002	4918	SMITH-AUSTIN CREEK	Wake
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	67-073.001	5532	US EPA SETTLEMENT (HPS&R SITE)	Onslow
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	92-234.001	5587	SMITH AUSTIN	Wake
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ROL REALLOCATION OF LAND	92-236.001	5589	CHAVIS PARK RESTORATION SITE	Wake
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	34-036.001	5667	BRUSHY FORK CREEK	Forsyth
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	70-032.001	5849	KNOBBS CREEK	Pasquotank
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	13-016.001	5940	CODDLE CREEK	Cabarrus
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	46-031.001	5985	NUCOR STEEL MILL SITE	Hertford
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	74-041.001	7224	MIDDLE SWAMP CREEK (JOHNSON-DALE SITE)	Pitt
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	92-241.001	13195	NEW LIGHT CREEK (BOLD RUN)	Wake
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	92-241.002	13196	TERRIBLE CREEK	Wake
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	26-045.002	22209	BIG POND BAY	Cumberland
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	82-021.008	22388	GREAT COHARIE SWAMP TRACT	Sampson
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	28-090.023	22408	OUTER BANKS MITIGATION - LOT 39 AT HOLIDAY SHORES (SUMMERELL SWANVIEW SHORES)	Dare
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	08-020.001	22873	SALMON CREEK (NICHOLLS FARM)	Bertie
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	79-018.001	23924	SHARPE WETLAND PRESERVATION	Rockingham
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	80-020.001	25099	DOUBLE THUMB RESTORATION SITE	Rowan
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	80-020.002	25100	DOUBLE THUMB RD. RESTORATION SITE	Rowan
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	28-096.001	27733	USACOE IMPACTS (CARLYLE 2 ON THE SOUND)	Dare
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	82-021.010	23169	GREAT COHARIE	Sampson
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	90-011.035	28319	WAXHAW CREEK WETLAND	Union
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ROL REALLOCATION OF LAND	68-041.038	28409	CHAPEL CREEK-FINLEY GOLF COURSE	Orange
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	90-011.044	29688	CROOKED CREEK NO. 2-TUCKER TRACT	Union
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ROL REALLOCATION OF LAND	68-041.041	28864	MORGAN CREEK FLOODPLAIN	Orange
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ROL REALLOCATION OF LAND	14-020.008	28954	BROWN BRANCH	Caldwell
TRUE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	23-012.012	29582	FIRST BROAD RIVER WETLANDS	Cleveland
FALSE	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ABD ACQUISITION BY DEED	90-011.036	29705	CROOKED CREEK NO. 2	Union