



Permuda Island Reserve
Local Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2019 10:00 a.m.
Sneads Ferry Environmental Center & Public Library, Room 105

Attendance

<u>LAC Partner Organization Members</u>	<u>Present</u>
Town of North Topsail Beach, Planner, Deb Hill	Yes
Town of North Topsail Beach, Manager, Bryan Chadwick	Yes
Town of North Topsail Beach, Police Department	No
NCDCNR Archaeology, Nathan Henry	Yes
N.C. Coastal Federation, Kerri Allen	No
<u>Community Members</u>	
Mike Yawn	Yes
<u>Others Present</u>	
Jason Dail, DCM, Field Officer	Yes
Paula Gillikin, DCM/NCCR & NCNERR Central Sites Manager	Yes

Reserve-wide Administrative Update

30th Anniversary

The Reserve is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year! Based on the success of establishing the NCNERR in the mid-1980s, the State was inspired to protect additional coastal habitats for research, education, and stewardship. The Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) was amended in June 1989 to create the N.C. Coastal Reserve to protect both state and national reserve sites for research, education, and compatible traditional uses. The Reserve will kick off its celebration in May with an outreach campaign extending through the summer, celebrating 30 years of research, education, and stewardship.

Hurricane Florence Recovery Update

Hurricane Florence recovery continues, although many operations have returned to normal.

All Reserve sites are open except a portion of the Bald Head Woods Reserve. The Division is partnering with the N.C. Forest Service to address downed trees and limbs at the Reserve to

ensure visitor safety and forest health.

The Division is also working with the N.C. Coastal Federation to secure federal funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Emergency Watershed Protection program to address large marine debris such as dock sections and lumber and remaining vessels stranded on public lands as a result of Hurricane Florence. This funding will address these issues at the Rachel Carson and Masonboro Island Reserve sites.

Thank you to the many volunteers who have helped clean up the sites post-Florence.

Periodic Rules Review

The Rules Review Commission approved the requested readoption timeline of November 30, 2021 for Coastal Reserve rules (15A NCAC 070). Staff are discussing potential rule language based on committee input on 15A NCAC 070.0202 at the fall 2018 meetings. This work is part of the Legislative Periodic Review and Expiration of Existing Rules process (G.S. 150B-21.3A).

N.C. NERR Management Plan

The Reserve addressed feedback from NOAA on the draft management plan for the N.C. National Estuarine Research Reserve that will cover 2019-2024 and the plan is currently under review by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. A 30-day public comment period for the draft management plan will be scheduled after all reviews are complete and 3 public meetings, in the northern, central and southern regions of the coast, will be scheduled during the comment period.

Federal Budget

The budget table below is a summary of the current status of the federal budget* for fiscal years 17, 18, 19, and 20 as it relates to the Coastal Reserve.

Federal Budget Lines	Final Omnibus Appropriations FY2017	Final Omnibus Appropriations FY2018	Final Omnibus Appropriations FY2019	President's Budget Request FY2020
NERRS Operations	\$23.5 M	\$25 M	\$27M	\$0 M
CZM Grants	\$70 M	\$75 M	\$75.5M	\$0 M

- Federal Fiscal Year 20: The President's budget request does not include funding for the NERRS Operations or the CZM Grants budget lines. Next steps for the federal fiscal year 20 budget include the House and Senate marks and chamber votes, conferencing between the chambers, chamber votes to agree on a final budget, and a final budget going to the President for signature into law.
- Thank you to the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association and Friends of the Reserve for their work to educate Congress on the value of the national system and the NCNERR.

Margaret A. Davidson Fellowship Program

A 2016 external Blue Ribbon Panel Report recommended that the National Estuarine Research Reserve System establish a graduate fellowship program to increase graduate research within reserves and develop the next generation of scientists and managers. Congress provided an additional \$2M to NOAA in the FY19 Omnibus appropriations bill for the National Estuarine Research Reserve System to implement the Margaret A. Davidson Fellowship (see table above).

The goal of the Margaret A. Davidson Fellowship is to build the next generation of leaders in estuarine science and coastal management by affording graduate students the opportunity to conduct collaborative science addressing key reserve management issues, partake in professional development opportunities, and receive quality mentoring to support their professional growth. The fellowship will offer graduate students enrolled in a M.S. or Ph.D. program the opportunity to conduct estuarine research within a National Estuarine Research Reserve. One fellow will be selected at each of the 29 reserves in the system for a two-year duration. A strong emphasis will be placed on mentoring the fellows at a local and national level, as well as providing professional development opportunities to build knowledge and skills to enter the workforce.

The Request for Proposals for the fellowship will be published in the next few months with proposals due towards the end of the calendar year. Look for more information from the Reserve regarding this exciting opportunity in the coming months.

Staffing News

- Paula Gillikin, Central Sites Manager, received a 2018 Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service in October. Paula's exceptional commitment to serving the public

extends throughout and beyond her work with the Division to her volunteer work which focuses on those cannot speak or advocate for themselves including animals and children.

- Whitney Jenkins, Coastal Training Program Coordinator, received a 2018 Department of Environmental Quality Distinguished Employee award in November. Whitney was recognized for her work in delivering trainings to and assisting local communities such as the Town of Beaufort in taking action to address stormwater and harbor management challenges. Whitney also received the National Estuarine Research Reserve System's Cathy Angell Communication Award for bringing diverse stakeholders together to make environmental improvements to local coastal communities as well as for incorporating communication best practices in her outreach activities.
- Kate Jones left the Northern Sites Manager job in early November to take a job with the Town of Nags Head. Thank you to Kate for her hard work during her tenure with the program and best of luck in her new position. Interviews have been conducted for the vacant position.

Upcoming Program Activities

Find upcoming event information on the event calendar at www.nccoastalreserve.net.

- Join Reserve staff in celebrating Earth Day at Crystal Coast Earth Day at Fort Macon State Park on April 21 and at the Wilmington Earth Day Festival on April 27.
- The Reserve will host an informational session and training for those interested in volunteering for the 2019 sea turtle nesting season at the Masonboro Island Reserve. The event takes place on April 25 in Wilmington.
- Reserve local advisory committees will meet this spring beginning the week of April 29.
- For the sixth year, the Reserve and NC Wildlife Resources Commission are teaming up to estimate the diamondback terrapin populations through the use of citizen science. Citizen scientists who attended the April training will kayak designated routes at the Masonboro Island Reserve and document terrapin sightings in May. WRC is expanding this methodology to Carteret County, hosting a pilot Tally this season.
- A teacher and educator workshop will be held in Wilmington on May 14. Participants will receive content aligned with state and national education standards to support incorporation of estuary and watershed topics into classroom teaching. Teacher renewal credits and Environmental Education Certification credits are available for this workshop. Registration is required.
- The Coastal Training Program will host two workshops on low impact development & water quality for real estate agents and property owners May 22 and 23 in Wanchese. These trainings provide real estate professionals background in how land use decisions impact water quality and how to help protect water quality by using low impact development techniques. Participants will also learn how to use stormwater control measures to meet state and local regulations while maintaining functionality and aesthetics.
- The Coastal Training Program will also host 'Social science basics for coastal managers' with NOAA on July 11 in Beaufort. This training provides the basic knowledge and skills

to help coastal managers understand their stakeholders and includes modules on survey design, conducting focus groups, and conducting interviews. Registration is required.

- Registration for Summer Science School, in partnership with the NC Maritime Museum in Beaufort, is open. Reserve education staff will lead programs for students in Preschool to 10th grade from June to August.
- Sarah Donaher is the recipient of the 2019 North Carolina Coastal Research Fellowship. Sarah is a graduate student at UNC-IMS (advised by Dr. Rachel Gittman from ECU) and will study the resilience and restoration of seagrass beds. The fellowship is co-sponsored by North Carolina Sea Grant and the N.C. Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve, and supports work on priority coastal management issues at the N.C. reserve sites.

* The federal fiscal year is October 1-September 30. The National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) budget line provides funding to the 29 reserves within the System through cooperative agreements that are matched by the states, and supports national coordination of programs and implementation of system-wide and competitive projects. The Coastal Zone Management (CZM) grants budget line provides funding to coastal states with approved coastal management programs through cooperative agreements that are matched by the states. The Division of Coastal Management (DCM) receives funding from both budget lines to operate the N.C. National Estuarine Research Reserve (NCNERR) and N.C. Coastal Management Program. The CZM grant funds DCM receives provides funding for Reserve staffing, state site operations, and administrative support.

Site Update/New Business

- As per Section II.F.10 of the Operating Procedures, the N.C. Coastal Reserve Local Advisory Committee Operating Procedures document will be reviewed and updated every five years. Reserve staff have reviewed and updated the document that was presented to the committee via email prior to the local advisory committee meeting. Technical changes such as changes in agency names or site acreages and minor edits that serve to clarify existing language were made. A few more substantive changes were made to more accurately reflect current implementation of procedures. Stewardship staff will determine the best method to resolve any comments received and will be in communication with committee members, as appropriate, to finalize a revised document if any additional changes are required.
- Mike Giles retired from the N.C. Coastal Federation and Kerri Allen will be replacing him on the Permuda Island Local Advisory Committee.
- Since Chief Casey Fillinger is no longer with the North Topsail Beach Police Department, a new representative will be requested to serve on the committee.
- The Division of Coastal Management, the Reserve's parent agency, and N.C. Coastal Federation have applied for Emergency Watershed Protection funds to clean-up hot spots of debris from the South Carolina border through Hyde County, including Permuda

Island. These funds would be used to remove large items such as dock sections and piles of lumber that were deposited by Hurricane Florence.

- Local jurisdictions are authorized by the N.C. General Assembly to pass ordinances that deal with the removal and disposal of abandoned vessels. Beaufort was highlighted as a Town that recently passed such an ordinance and obtained funding to remove 11 abandoned and/or derelict vessels from its waters.
- The committee discussed the boundaries of Permuda as it relates to nearby shellfish aquaculture leases. The boundaries of Permuda do not include any water; although erosional areas do leave small areas of water within the boundary. No shellfish operations are located within the boundary.

Roundtable Discussion

- The committee discussed a few ideas about local volunteer groups that might be interested in removing shoreline debris from Permuda.
- The Town of North Topsail Beach will ask law enforcement to contact the owner of a sailboat that has been grounded for at least several weeks adjacent to Permuda.
- The committee discussed the annual state-wide crab pot clean-up and asked that Permuda be put on the list for 2020, if needed.
- Jason Dail offered to deploy and monitor a wildlife camera for documenting natural history at Permuda. This had been done previously, but was discontinued.
- Town Planner, Deb Hill, announced that the Town of North Topsail Beach is about to update its CAMA Land Use Plan. She plans to incorporate language in the plan that outlines the protection and management of Permuda by the State with support, as appropriate, from the Town.
- Nathan Henry described that abandoned and derelict vessels over 10 years of age become property of the State via NCDENR Archeology. If a jurisdiction or other entity wishes to get rid of such a vessel, the State can sometimes issue a permit for the vessel to be removed if it is not deemed a significant cultural resource that will be preserved.
- Deb Hill inquired about changes in local water quality that may have occurred after Hurricane Florence. Jason Dail will point her to water quality monitoring information.
- The Town of North Topsail Beach is excited to work with volunteer groups that offer to clean-up shoreline debris. Paula suggested that the Town look at the draft N.C. Marine Debris Action Plan and see where they might like to help implement one or more actions related to the coast-wide effort.

Public comment

- None

Action items

- Paula Gillikin will send the registration information of the grounded sailboat and the draft N.C. Marine Debris Action Plan to the Town Manager.
- Paula Gillikin will work with Jason Dail to ensure the wildlife camera is deployed for natural history monitoring.
- Paula Gillikin will coordinate with Nathan Henry and Jason Dail for a site management visit to Permuda.