



Draft Coastal Habitat Protection Plan 2021 Amendment



*DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION MEETING*

Jimmy Johnson, APNEP; Anne Deaton, Division Marine Fisheries
November 19, 2021



CHPP Public Comment

Public comment

- ❑ MFC Advisory Committees – 5 committees; 12 public comments
- ❑ Online survey – 93 respondents
- ❑ Emailed letters – 42 individuals or organizations
 - Two petitions – NC Conservation Network and NC Audubon
 - 1257 signatures strongly supporting the CHPP and its implementation



Advisory Committee	Motion
Southern, Finfish, Shellfish/ Crustacean, Habitat and Water Quality	The AC supports the intent of the 2021 draft Amendment to the CHPP and the inclusion within the plan of the stakeholder recommendations to explore including the formation of a public/private partnership with stakeholders to seek state, federal and private funding to support the plans recommended actions and stakeholder recommendations.
Northern	The AC accepts the recommendations of the 2021 CHPP with additions to the Wastewater Infrastructure Solutions for Water Quality Improvement Issue Paper relative to concerns about septic systems and infrastructure.
Northern	The AC recommends inclusion of a recommended action in the Protection and Restoration of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) through Water Quality Improvements Issue Paper to address and reduce nitrogen loading to the atmosphere from livestock waste lagoons , which is a significant source of nitrogen input to our coastal waters.
Finfish	The document should include that they work with Division of Soil and Water Conservation to introduce vegetative buffer zones on farmland and livestock operations in the coastal region and near river water ways.

CHPP Public Comment

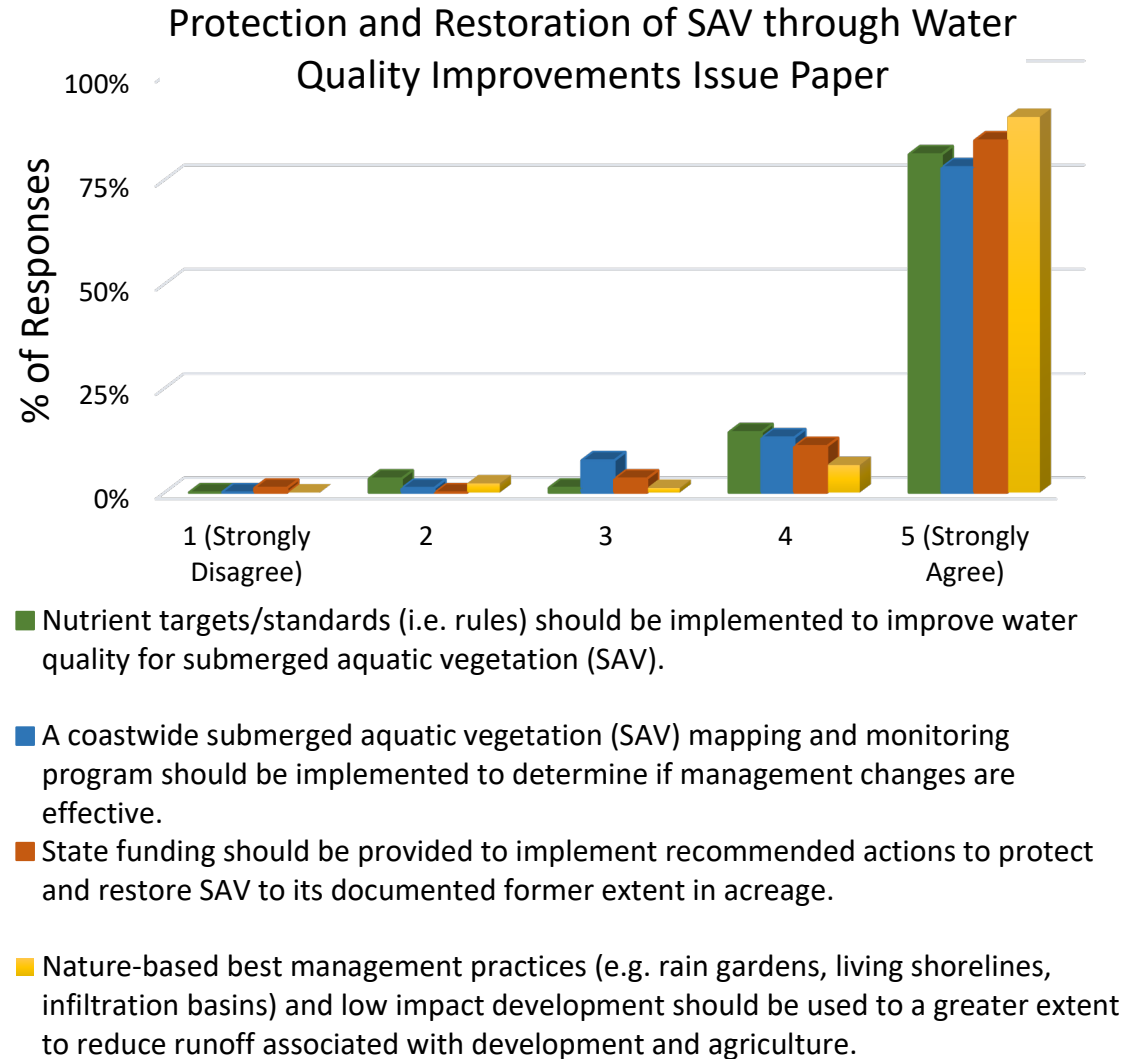
Online Survey

93 Survey Respondents

- 90% very concerned about coastal habitats and water quality

SAV Protection and Restoration Issue Paper

- >80% strongly agreed with implementation of nutrient standards
- > 90% strongly agreed that nature-based BMPs should be implemented to greater extent

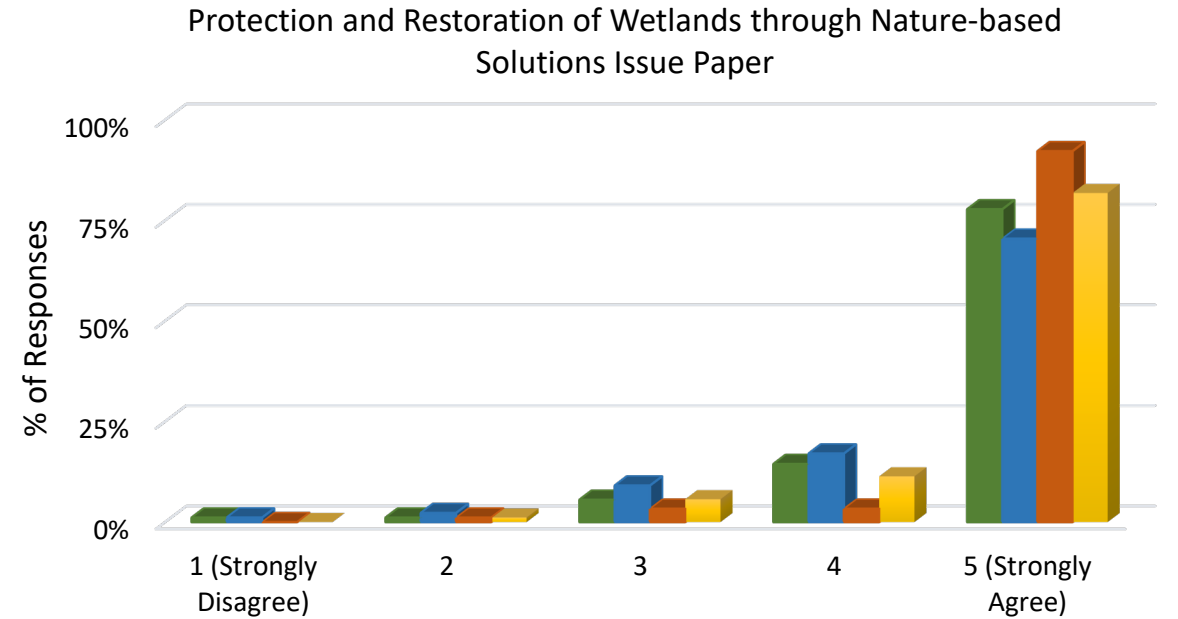


CHPP Public Comment

Online Survey

Wetland Protection and Restoration Issue Paper

- >75% strongly agreed with obtaining new accurate maps
- >90% strongly agreed that restoring wetland hydrology and conserving land for marsh migration should be done for ecosystem and community resilience
- 70% strongly agreed that oyster harvest should be prevented from living shorelines



- Obtaining accurate maps of wetland habitat are needed to evaluate status and determine if and where restoration and protection efforts are needed.
- Oyster harvest should be prevented from living shorelines that rely on oysters to maintain the integrity of the shoreline stabilization structure.
- Restoring wetland hydrology and conserving land for marsh migration should be done to increase coastal community resilience (e.g. reduced flooding, improved water quality, improved fisheries).
- I would be willing to voluntarily use nature-based solutions on my property to reduce stormwater runoff.

CHPP Public Comment

Online Survey

Environmental Rule Compliance Issue Paper

- 90% strongly agreed that rule compliance can prevent habitat and water quality degradation and funding should be provided to allow staff compliance inspections

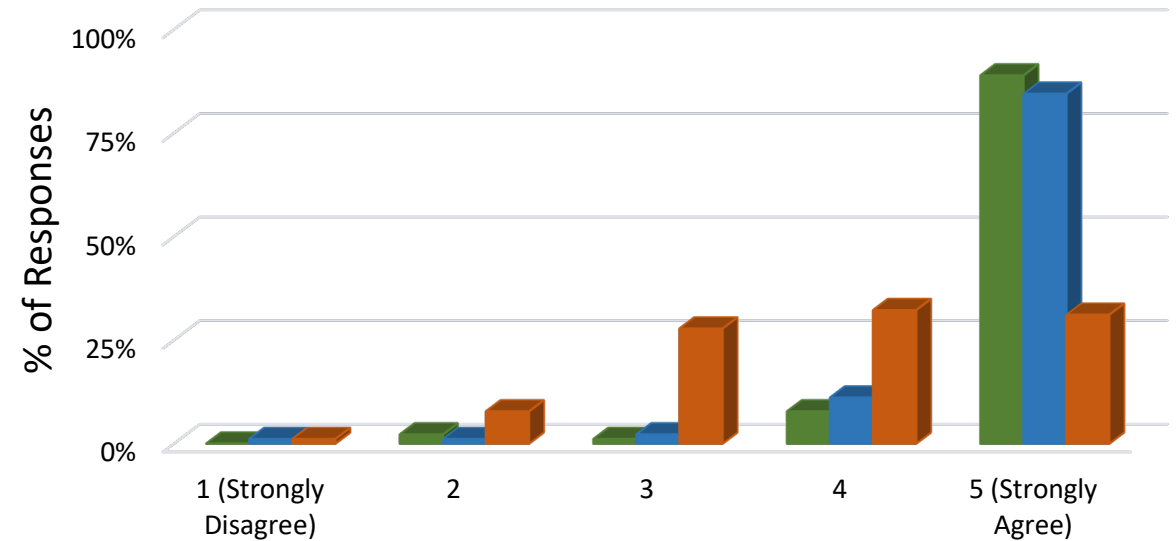
Wastewater Infrastructure Issue Paper

- 90% strong agreed that additional priority to maintain and repair wastewater infrastructure is needed

Habitat Mapping and Monitoring Issue Paper

- 85% strongly agreed that assessing habitat status was important for management

Environmental Rule Compliance and Enforcement to Protect Coastal Habitats



- Adhering to environmental rules can prevent habitat and water quality degradation (e.g. following rules on wetland clearing limits, maintaining required sediment and erosion control measures, properly constructing and maintaining stormwater management).
- I support increased staffing and funding to better enforce existing environmental rules to improve compliance.
- I would be interested in attending a workshop to learn about the rules related to land disturbing activities that affect wetlands and water quality and how to identify violations.

CHPP Public Comment

Received by Email

40 letters and 2 petitions

- 461 signed petition supporting CHPP - NC Audubon
- 796 signed petition supporting CHPP - NC Conservation Network
- 33 letters supported the CHPP plan and implementation
- 17 letters supported forming a private/public partnership
- 3 did not support regulatory nutrient criteria for SAV
- 9 commented on fishing gear concerns
- Several suggested edits to recommendations
- Several suggested edits to text



CHPP Public Comment

Received by Email

Organizations commented on CHPP recommended actions

- APNEP Leadership Committee
- Chowan Edenton Environmental Group
- Coastal Carolina Riverwatch
- **Coastal Conservation Association**
- Creation Justice Ministries
- Environmental Defense Fund
- **Lower Neuse Basin Association**
- NC Audubon
- NC Beach, Inlet and Waterways Association
- NC Catch
- NC Coastal Federation
- NC Conservation Network
- NC Council of Churches
- **NC Farm Bureau**
- NC Fisheries Association
- **NC Water Quality Association**
- Pew Charitable Trusts
- Restoration Systems, LLC
- Southern Environmental Law Center, on behalf of NC Wildlife Federation, Sound Rivers, Neuse and Tar-Pamlico Riverkeepers

CHPP Steering Committee Actions

Changes to Recommended Actions due to Public Comment

Revised wording of RA 4.1:

By 2023, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will ~~obtain~~ pursue recurring funding, as well as funding from state, federal, and private sources that includes the adequate amount of staff to successfully evaluate and meet the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) acreage goals and implement all of the SAV recommended actions that contribute to meeting the goals.



CHPP Steering Committee Actions

Changes made to recommended actions due to public comment

Revised wording of RA 4.4:

By 2022, DEQ will form a workgroup with the NC Division of Water Resources (DWR), NC Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resource (DEMRLR), Soil and Water Conservation, local governments, and other partners to increase ~~determine the baseline use of~~ best management practices (BMPs) related to water quality within the SAV waterbody regions ~~and develop a plan to increase their use by 50 percent~~ to the extent possible, consistent with current funding level, and request increased state cost-share funding.

CHPP Steering Committee Actions

Changes made to recommended actions due to public comment

Revised wording of RA 4.7:

By 2022, the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) will receive guidance from the Nutrient Criteria Development Plan (NCDP) Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) ~~will evaluate recommending the Environmental Management Commission (EMC)~~ on establishing a water quality standard for light penetration, with a target value of 22 percent to the deep edge (1.7 m) of SAV for all high salinity SAV waterbody regions, and a light penetration target of 13 percent to the deep edge (1.5 m) for all low SAV waterbody regions.

CHPP Steering Committee Actions

Changes made to recommended actions due to public comment

Revised wording of RA 4.8:

By 2022, at the request of the EMC, the NCDP SAC will evaluate the chlorophyll *a* water quality standard and as needed, recommend it be revised by the EMC to ensure protection of SAV in high and low salinity waterbody regions, beginning with the Albemarle Sound and Chowan River, and continuing with other waterbodies that support SAV.



CHPP Steering Committee Actions

Changes made to recommended actions due to public comment

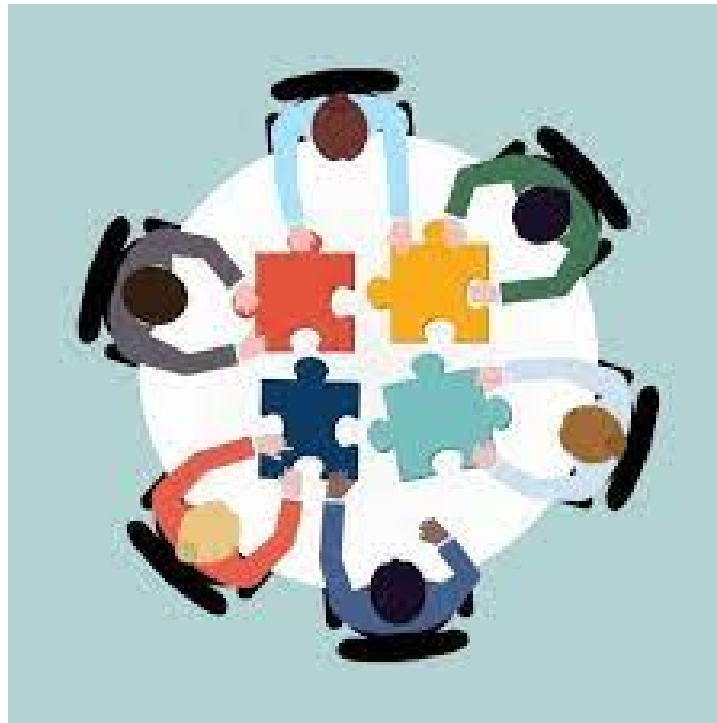
Added one new recommendation:

9.1 By 2022, DEQ will support the formation of a public/private partnership that will engage a diverse group of stakeholders to assist in developing, implementing, and securing decision-maker support and funding for measures in this 2021 CHPP Amendment that protect and restore water quality.



CHPP Steering Committee Actions

Passed motion to send the 2021 CHPP Amendment as amended by the steering committee to the commissions





Request final approval of CHPP 2021 Amendment by the three commissions



QUESTIONS?

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CHPP Information and
Meeting Materials:

[CHPP Meeting Information](#)

