



2023 Climate Strategy Report

NC Department of Public Safety

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Introduction

About NC Department of Public Safety

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) is the primary state agency affected by and responsible for addressing climate-related impacts to the public safety sector. NCDPS serves as the state’s chief protector and defender of the public and is the statewide public safety and homeland security agency. It is home to Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE), Emergency Management (EM), Governor’s Crime Commission (GCC), Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP), NC National Guard (NCNG), NC Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR), Private Protective Services (PPS), Samarcand Training Academy, State Capitol Police (SCP), and State Highway Patrol (SHP) and employs more than 6,000 full time personnel and 12,000 NCNG members. DPS also provides administrative support to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC), Boxing and Combat Sports Commission, Criminal Justice Information Network, and the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI).

NCDPS focuses citizen and legislative attention on law enforcement and public safety issues, such as justice reinvestment; highway safety; crime prevention; victim services; and homeland security. NCDPS is also responsible for preparation for, response to, and recovery from natural and man-made disasters, as well as coordinating and providing the public face of North Carolina’s resiliency efforts.

NC Department of Public Safety's Vulnerabilities to Climate Change

Climate stressors increase vulnerability and risk for North Carolina's communities, residents, emergency management services, and NCDPS employee health and safety. Given the impacts of recent hurricanes, attention has been on the effects of riverine and overland flooding and storm surge, but wildfires, sea level rise, tidal flooding, extreme heat, and drought are also becoming major concerns. The JJDP Wayne Group Home is prone to flooding and related issues, being shut down twice in the last four years for substantial flood damage.

Response to extreme weather events and disasters are a routine part of NCDPS's mission and services. Plans and protocols such as the North Carolina Emergency Operations Plan and the North Carolina Hazard Mitigation Plan already exist to outline response protocols for when the state is hit by the natural hazards outlined in the state's Climate Science Report. But as the frequency and severity of natural and climate disasters increase, NCDPS is focused on helping communities and residents shift their focus from response to preparedness and improving their abilities to withstand stronger hurricanes, lingering tropical storms, more intense heat waves, larger wildfires, and more.

NC Department of Public Safety's Approach to Fulfilling the Strategies in the Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan

Internally, NCDPS has begun integrating the recommendations in the Resilience Plan into daily workstreams, existing programs, and budget asks. NCORR, for example, has made significant progress on "Developing an online Climate Resilience Clearinghouse and Toolbox" (Resilience Plan Chapters 4 and 7, as well as in the Natural and Working Lands Action Plan. See Action 2.3.3 for details). As another example, EM expanded the focus of the State's Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan to integrate climate science, more clearly address climate resilience through stated actions, and include an emphasis on "protecting, communicating with, and serving low-income populations, communities of color, older adults, and people with disabilities during and after emergencies" (Resilience Plan Chapters 4, 5, and 7). See Action 2.3.9 for details.

NCDPS is also adding new climate resilience efforts not listed in the Resilience Plan. For example, in an ongoing effort that began in summer 2022, NCORR in collaboration with EM, as well as the Departments of Administration, Environmental Quality, and Transportation and the Governor's Office in developing what became Governor Cooper's Executive Order 266, which directs the Department of Administration to update the Uniform Floodplain Management Policy for State Construction. This effort will minimize flood damage to renovated and newly constructed state-owned assets.

Reducing Energy Use

Subsequent to the legislatively directed division of NCDPS into two departments, NCDPS has been without an Energy Manager and technical professional staff. This has left NCDPS in a state of transition for the second half of fiscal year 2022-2023. NCDPS is actively recruiting professional staff to provide

technical services and oversee facility matters. Although the Governor’s budget included an Energy Manager position, it does not currently exist and was not included within the House or Senate budgets, yet it is critical to ensure proper focus on climate matters. Without this position, NCDPS will have to close the ‘opt out’ program with the electrical utilities which will increase utility rates because there is no person to manage the program.

With the formation of the Department of Adult Correction (DAC), the bulk of Institutional facilities referenced in prior reports have since been removed from the DPS portfolio. While JJDP has facilities with high Energy Usage Intensities (EUI), they are much smaller and more efficient in comparison to the larger and older DAC facilities. The remainder of DPS facilities are business occupancies and two major law enforcement training centers.

Several NCDPS facilities and leased spaces are in process of being replaced with modern facilities that have lower EUI. These include the SBI Headquarters, SHP-SBI Joint Armory, SHP Technical Services Unit, and Rockingham County Youth Development Center. Many other facilities are undergoing renovations and upgrades to reduce EUI and maintenance burden, thus improving resiliency. These include: 1) Building automation upgrades at Lenoir, Edgecombe, and Cabarrus Youth Development Centers; 2) Major renovations to Richmond, Perquimans, and CA Dillon Youth Development Centers; 3) Thermal envelope improvements at the SHP-SBI Garner Road campus; and 4) Flood damage mitigation efforts at the Wayne Multi-Purpose Group Home.

As noted in prior reports, a Department-wide effort to convert all lighting to LED began in 2019 for the prison system (now under DAC) and with JJDP starting in 2021. This is often referred to as “LED in ‘23” and, to date, has had a measurable impact on energy reduction. For JJDP, the cost of retrofit lighting to date is \$46,217 with a total return to date of \$12,733 and a reduction of 80,954 kWh/yr. This yields a Return on Investment of 6.7 years. Programs for SHP and Samarcand have been undertaken on an understandably smaller scale, to include training field lighting and classroom lighting respectively.

Addressing Environmental Injustices and Inequities

As requested by Executive Order 246, NCDPS has named its environmental justice lead, who coordinated the development of the DPS public participation plan. NCDPS has begun new initiatives to address environmental injustices inherent in its mission and observed throughout the state. For example, NCORR is integrating equity and justice into the content of an online climate resilience resource center, currently under development (See Action 2.3.3). When designing the Clearinghouse, NCORR obtained intentional input from environmental justice organizations and organizations that support people of color.

Public Participation Plan

NCDPS recognizes that all citizens of North Carolina have the right to access government services and to meaningfully contribute to government decisions. Building a more inclusive society affects and requires

the participation of all North Carolinians. Outreach to and engagement with North Carolina's residents is critical for NCDPS to be successful in meeting its mission to safeguard and preserve the lives and property of the people of North Carolina through preparation, prevention, and protection with integrity and honor. To this end, the [NCDPS Public Access and Participation Plan](#) includes the commitment to:

- Develop staff capacity to represent NCDPS to the public, and to be responsive to citizens who contact the Department seeking help;
- Continually review how the public accesses NCDPS, to promote transparency, and better enable meaningful participation; and
- Strive for continuous improvement in the areas of public access, participation, and engagement.

1.0. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

1.1 Reduce energy consumption per square foot in state-owned buildings by at least 40% from fiscal year 202-2003 levels

1.1.1 Completely retrofit all DPS facilities with LED lighting by FY 23-24

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: FY 23-24

ABCC

- ABCC completed the Progress Energy Grant to upgrade and retrofit exterior lighting fixtures in all ABCC office and warehouse buildings.
- ABCC stores are installed with motion detectors and LED lighting.
- ABCC plans to replace all lighting in the administration building and the warehouse building with energy efficient LED lighting.
- ABCC plans to install motion detector lights in breakrooms, bathrooms, and other rooms that are not always occupied, and utilize natural light wherever possible.

GCC

- GCC has some office lights that turn off after a time with no motion.
- In the next 12 months, GCC will investigate LED lighting options with the landlord and create a policy to turn off lights when leaving the office and create reminder signs.

JJDP

- 32% of Juvenile Justice Light fixtures have been converted to LED. 35% of pending fixtures have been ordered.
- Install next third of LED replacement light fixtures in JJDP facilities. Order final third of replacement LED light fixtures. Both to be accomplished as resources permit.
- Retrofitted all perimeter pole and exterior wall pack lighting to LED at Lenoir Youth Development Center and retrofitted four of the six wall packs to LED at Perquimans Juvenile Detention Center (currently under renovation).
- Over the next 12 months, expect to complete LED retrofit of wall pack and exterior pole lighting at Cabarrus JDC/YDC and Perquimans JDC.

Samarcand

- In the past year the entire Samarcand facility has been equipped with LED lighting. This upgrade provides a lower wattage usage rate, provides optimal illumination with less heat emissions, and greater energy efficiency.
- All rooms, including office spaces, and classrooms have motion censored lighting with automatic shut off which reduces energy usage.

SCP

- Lights in the SCP Station are on a timer and the majority of rooms have sensor light switches.

1.1.2 Systematically upgrade and integrate building management systems (BMS) at JJDP facilities

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: FY 26-27

- Completed design and initiated construction on two BMS upgrades Lenoir and Edgecombe Youth Development Centers.
- Initiated design and construction on BMS upgrades at Cabarrus Youth Development Center.
- Will develop framework and standards to integrate all BMS under one platform. This will reduce local modifications, allow issues to be identified/resolved faster, and reduce maintenance burden. This will provide engineering and maintenance personnel a unified access to BMS for all DPS facilities.
- Over the next 12 months, JJDP expects to complete BMS upfits at Cabarrus, Lenoir and Edgecombe YDCs.

1.1.3 Increase energy efficiency at NCNG facilities

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCNG, through State of North Carolina and Department of Defense initiatives, has made significant strides in designing and constructing energy efficient facilities. NCNG has constructed 50,150 square feet of a high performance and energy efficient building system, which also meets LEED Silver standards for sustainability. Additionally, the Guard is currently constructing 62,217 square feet of facilities meeting the same standards.

The organization has implemented ASHRAE energy audits as a tool to target energy reduction. The Guard has implemented targeted energy efficiency projects for existing facilities such as: high efficiency boilers, energy efficient HVAC systems, installed building automation systems within seven facilities, and retrofitted 222,474 square-feet with LED lighting.

Due to the opportunity to develop new facilities, NCNG retired 14 facilities, consisting of 223,029 square-feet. These aged facilities were constructed more than 50 years ago and did not meet the organization's energy efficiency goals.

In the next 12 months NCNG will construct 114,044 square feet and initiate planning and design of 55,000 square feet of high performance and energy efficient facilities. NCNG will renovate 35,581 square feet to implement an energy efficient building system and continue targeting energy efficiency projects throughout its facilities.

1.1.4 Reduce energy consumption in SHP buildings

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

As SHP expands the infrastructure with building and remodeling, they will attempt to aggressively pursue funding to ensure all facilities are outfitted with energy efficient appliances to help maintain energy conservation measures. SHP will continue to retrofit facilities with LED lighting when feasible

Over the next two years SHP will be expanding and building an energy efficient armory, Technical Services building, and new dormitories at the Highway Patrol Training Academy.

1.1.5 Incorporate building automation systems (BAS) at NCNG facilities

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: 2025

NCNG is incorporating BAS's to monitor, control, and troubleshoot facility Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems. Newly constructed/renovated facilities, where modern central HVAC systems are installed, will be monitored and controlled through one centrally managed BAS that is located at the Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ).

Progress in the last 12 Months: Eight facilities that are located throughout the state are fully functional utilizing remote access.

Next 12 Months: NCNG is seeking to incorporate the Lenoir Readiness Center, Lenoir Field Maintenance Site, and the Winston Salem Readiness Center. Ultimately, over the next several years as new facilities are constructed, or existing facilities are modernized, NCNG will incorporate those facilities into existing Unified Front End.

1.1.6 Provide solar power canopies at NCNG location in Fort Liberty, NC

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: 2028

The Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Project is a new category within the Defense-wide Military Construction (MILCON) program intended to fund projects that improve energy resilience, contribute to mission assurance, save energy, and reduce energy costs. When approved through National Guard Bureau, NCNG will design and construct Solar Photovoltaic Canopies for M1 Tank fleet at the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site (NCMATES) in Fort Liberty, NC. Projected construction cost is estimated at \$5M.

Progress in the last 12 Months: NCNG has conducted master planning and prepared necessary programming document to remain competitive for design and construction authorization.

Next 12 Months: NCNG will continue to improve upon annual packet submission based on National Guard Bureau MILCON Hard Lock feedback.

1.1.7 Reduce energy consumption at Samarcand

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

- Energy efficient appliances are used on campus, such as kitchen appliances, laundry machines, and electronics.
- The preventative maintenance program greatly improves the performance, energy usage, and efficiency of HVAC/heat pump units across campus and maintain gas refrigerant collection and containment programs.
- In the past year Samarcand implemented installation of mini-split HVAC/heat pump units which are more energy efficient than traditional units.
- Erosion control measures are utilized in campus capital projects and maintenance construction projects.
- Thermostat controlled processes are utilized to conserve energy.

1.2 Support the use and expansion of energy efficient and clean energy resources

This section is not applicable to the mission of NCDPS.

- 1.3 Increase the number of registered Zero Emission Vehicles to at least 1,250,000 by 2030 so that 50% of in-state sales of new vehicles are zero-emission by 2030

This section is not applicable to the mission of NCDPS.

1.4 Prioritize Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) in the purchase or lease of new vehicles and for agency business travel

1.4.1 Prioritize ZEVs in the purchasing for a new fleet vehicle for SHP

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

SHP will continue to monitor the electric vehicle market to upgrade its current infrastructure to support an electric vehicle fleet of patrol cruisers. SHP will continue to seek funding to allow its fleet to move towards cleaner energy vehicles in the coming years.

1.4.2 Integrate ZEV infrastructure requirements into NCNG planning

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: 2027

NCNG must integrate the infrastructure requirements to support approximately 300 ZEV's for transition of General Services Administration (GSA) fleet vehicles in 2027, and full implementation in 2035.

Progress in the last 12 months: Master planning is complete for several locations and duct banks for future electrical infrastructure have been installed at Morganton Readiness Center (RC). Both Mcleansville Regional RC and Field Maintenance Shop are designed, and construction commenced in August 2023. The infrastructure requirements are currently being incorporated into the design process at the future Rocky Mount RC. Master Planning is ongoing for the JFHQ, brigades, and battalion headquarters sites.

Next 12 months: Complete master planning efforts.

1.5 Initiate other initiatives to decarbonize the transportation sector

1.5.1 Installation of electric vehicle charging stations at NCDPS facilities

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

As a design standard looking forward, NCDPS will install charging stations during major renovations or new construction. Decision making to be based upon cost-benefit and nature of fleet at the site.

JJDP

- Installed ZEV charging station at Dillon Juvenile Detention Center.
- Currently constructing two charging stations at Rockingham Youth Development Center.
- Two charging stations are slated for the upcoming renovation of the Richmond County Youth Development Center.
- Over the next 12 months, JJDP expects to install ZEV charging stations at Rockingham Youth Development Center (under construction).

SBI

- Two charging stations are planned for installation with the new SBI Headquarters project.

SHP

- One charging station is planned for installation with the new SHP Armory and Technical Services Unit projects.

1.5.2 Reduce NCDPS vehicle emissions

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ABCC

- Consider purchasing a hybrid car to help with fuel efficiency and help to eliminate some of the air pollutants emitted from fossil fuel combustion.

Samarcand

- Where possible, personnel utilize golf carts for on-site campus transportation to reduce vehicle emissions.

SCP

- Currently SCP has 3 electric vehicles and 10 hybrid vehicles.
- In the process of receiving a grant for an electric motorcycle, electric Ford Mustang, and a quick charging station to be erected at the SCP station.
- Officers have been directed to not let their vehicles idle where possible and to be more deliberate in operations around the state government complex.

SHP

- Seeking funding to transfer all WatchGuard servers to a cloud environment storage system to decrease the amount of time vehicles are left idling at offices while having to download. Transferring to a cloud storage system will allow videos to download continuously and not require officers to travel lengthy distances for office downloads.

1.6 Initiate other projects aimed at reducing statewide greenhouse emissions

1.6.1 Reduce NCDPS staff commuting emissions

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ABCC

- Currently, our entire Product and Special Services sections operate on flexible remote schedules.
- All employees have the option to request remote work options and/or flexible schedules based upon their individual position requirements, supervisory approval, and operational considerations.

GCC

- GCC has a flexible hybrid work policy that reduces staff commutes by private vehicle to the office since many of our staff live in other towns. The in-person schedule could be a 4-day week or reduced days in the office depending upon the staff's length of time with GCC.

JJDP

- Implemented work weeks of four 10-hour days in Court Services districts as approved by chief court counselors, dependent upon staff vacancy rates and caseloads.

SHP

- SHP will continue to allow employees to attend meetings virtually through Microsoft Teams software. SHP will allow some employees an opportunity to telework. Both these projects are aimed to conserve on fuel costs and increase work productivity by reducing travel.

1.6.2 Reduce waste and paper consumption at NCDPS

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ABCC

- ABCC is working toward an online filing system with their ongoing scanning project to help eliminate paper waste in the future and free up valuable space.
- In 2023 ABCC purchased additional recycling bins from their vendor.
- ABCC plans to create a standard operating procedure for employees to make them aware of where to recycle various items. And increase the frequency of recycling pick up to encourage recycling bin usage in their facilities.
- ABCC will continue to encourage employees to avoid hardcopy handouts and meetings and encourage electric note-taking systems as alternative to paper notes.

GCC

- In the next 12 months GCC will investigate the use of recycled toner cartridges and other regular purchases

Samarcand

- Samarcand has implemented recycling programs for paper products, aluminum cans, and recyclable goods.

1.6.3 NCNG building electrification for future military construction projects

Status: Planned

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

This requirement is a new federal Executive Order (14057) and supported through Department of Defense Memorandum, "Electrification of Standard Building Operations", dated 29 March 2023. Requires the NCNG to incorporate planned and new construction projects to incorporate steps to reduce its energy and water consumption and dependency on carbon emitting energy sources using electrification guidance. Existing design projects below 35% design approval and future MILCON and Renovation and Modernization projects have not yet considered electrification concepts into the design.

Next 12 Months: NCNG will ensure that this directive is addressed with current and future design projects. Anticipated to be ongoing into future years.

1.6.4 Optimize mechanical efficiency at ABCC facilities

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: June 30, 2024

- Warehouse refueling/dispensing pump tank was replaced in 2012.
- Underground pipes to the cooling tower and boiler room were replaced in 2013.
- Evapco closed circuit cooling tower was replaced in 2020.
- Will research options for centralized temperature control with remote capability to help eliminate hot and cold pockets competing with one another, allowing for greater energy efficiency with our existing HVAC system.
- Will work with DPS to conduct an energy efficiency study for our 40-year-old building to identify inefficiencies that could feasibly be corrected/improved.
- Will work with DOA to install additional air returns in offices that don't have them, for less strain and greater efficiency of the existing HVAC system.

1.6.5 Digitize operations at ABCC

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: June 30, 2024

One of the primary functions at the Commission is issuing permits to the public. Per current legislation, the application process requires the applicants to provide numerous documents in hard copy. Some of our documents will still be required until legislation changes though certain information is no longer required.

- Understanding the efficiency of digital processes over paper processes, our Permits section has been working with our IT section to transition the permit-issuing process to a paperless, digital one.
- ABCC is creating a new public permit website and internal website allowing all permit applications to be electronically submitted.
- The process for issuing Limited Special Occasion permits and Special One-Time permits is now fully electronic. Eventually, all permit-issuing processes will be streamlined and digital.
- Transitioning permit applications online will not only reduce paper waste, but it will enable applicants to apply from their location, rather than traveling to the ABCC in Raleigh, cutting back on fuel consumption and emissions. Additionally, all permittees that have "on premises" sales are required to have a recycling program as part of their application packet.

2.0. Increase statewide resiliency to the impacts of climate change

2.1 Evaluate the impacts of climate change on NCDPS's programs and operations

2.1.1 Conduct a vulnerability assessment of NCNG facilities and relocate buildings as needed

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: January 2040

NCNG is shifting to a "Hub and Spoke" model of a few large Regional Readiness Centers with a network of smaller Readiness Centers surrounding them strategically. The Guard's Construction and Facility Maintenance Office is applying data on sea level rise and other resilience information to determine which current facilities are not sustainable given current climate projections. With that information, the Guard will prioritize new construction projects and decide what properties can be retired. This process is expected to be ongoing over a period of decades as Congress makes more funds available to re-envision how the NCNG operates from a structural standpoint. Climate resilience will always be a critical element of decision making.

2.2 Integrate climate change adaptation practices and resiliency planning into NC Department of Public Safety’s policies and operations

2.2.1 Facilitate a stream management and flooding reduction working group

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR has established an intergovernmental working group comprising representatives from the state agencies including the Departments of Environmental Quality, Transportation, Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Natural and Cultural Resources, among others, local government representatives, and nongovernmental stakeholders such as nonprofits and business community members. For the last two years, NCORR has submitted biannual reports to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Fiscal Research Division regarding the findings and recommendations of the working group.

Thus far, the working group has identified several issues for further discussion and recommendation, including the need to restrict new residential development in the floodplain and expanding the requirements for floodproofing. The working group has noted the challenge of protecting the lives and property of North Carolinians when residential development in the floodplain continues to greatly outpace (at a ten to one ratio) the number of floodplain buyouts by NCORR and EM.

Over the course of the next 12 months, the working group will further refine and develop this and other recommendations for the legislature.

The working group also recent submitted public comment to the North Carolina Real Estate Commission in support of a proposed update to the residential real estate disclosure requirements that would require disclosure of flood history, flood risk, and flood insurance requirements. The working group was strongly in support of these proposed updates, which are currently under consideration by the Commission.

2.2.2 Facilitate the State Disaster Recovery Task Force to coordinate efforts and advise state government as needed on recovery and resilience

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR manages the State Disaster Recovery Task Force (SDRTF), which supports and advises state agencies as they address long-term recovery and undertake resilience-building initiatives statewide. The SDRTF is made up of 12 committees called Recovery Support Functions (RSFs). Since the start of this year, the Environmental Preservation RSF has held several meetings to update members on ongoing resilience efforts across state agencies, including rainfall modeling and data gathering, local capacity building, and nature-based flood reduction planning efforts for which NCDEQ has received funding through NCORR's Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) program. The Environmental Preservation RSF has also provided feedback to NCORR staff regarding the development of the Climate Resilience Clearinghouse.

2.2.3 Support the development of an update to the NC Uniform Floodplain Management Policy for State Construction

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: January 2024

NCORR, in partnership with EM and the Department of Administration (DOA), worked with the Governor's Office to develop Executive Order 266, which Governor Cooper signed in July 2022. EO 266 directs DOA to update the state's requirements for construction on state land subject to flooding. A direct outgrowth of NCORR's work with the Interagency Resilience Team, the EO will result in increased resilience for state assets by both updating the requirements for such construction (which requirements had last been updated in 1990) and by expanding the scope of projects subject to such requirements by implementing a flood risk management process beyond application of the previous 100-year floodplain standard.

NCORR staff have assisted DOA with developing the new requirements, including chairing the effort's ad hoc committee on incorporating nature-based infrastructure for flood and stormwater mitigation. NCORR co-hosted a public stakeholder engagement session on May 10, 2023 in Raleigh, in coordination with the Stream Management and Flooding Reduction Working Group, NC Coastal Federation, and the Pew Charitable Trust to solicit input on the incorporation of nature-based solutions.

The update is currently in development by DOA. A draft will be released for public comment in September 2023, and the final update will be released in early 2024.

2.2.4 NCNG Wildland Fire Management Program for Camp Butner

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: 2025

The NCNG Wildland Fire Management Program (WFMP) is considered a critical mission element to minimize the risk of wildland fire to the installation and training and testing lands, as well as personal safety. Managing lands through prescribed burning has significant benefits for fuel reduction, mission and training support, meeting ecosystem management principles, managing smoke for optimal atmospheric conditions and significantly reducing the potential for an uncontrolled wildfire emergency. Contractor support will enable NCNG to plan, lead, and assist in implementing prescribed burn operations on 2000-2500 acres by the end of 2025.

Progress in the last 12 months: In planning process

Next 24 months: The NCNG will award the contract for prescribed burning at Camp Butner over the next 2.5 years.

2.2.5 NCNG climate resiliency and integrated natural resources management planning update for Camp Butner

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: 2024

The NCNG manages natural resources with best available science while addressing vulnerabilities, extreme weather events, climate change, and adaptation planning. Natural resources planning is integrated with other installation planning processes, including but not limited to: the built environment, infrastructure, training area and range management, wildland fire, emergency services, pest management, and cultural resources.

Progress in the last 12 Months: In Planning Process

Next 12 months: The NCNG will update the existing Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan with Climate Resiliency as a major topic throughout the plan for Camp Butner with consultation with NC Department of Environmental Quality, NCDEQ, USFWS, federally recognized tribes, and other agencies as needed.

2.2.6 Implement climate safety protocols at Samarcand facilities

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

- Campus protocols in place for reducing excessive heat risk of injury to students when conducting outside training.
- Support training operations for law enforcement, first responders, and public safety professionals that may be involved in responding to disaster areas.

2.3 Assist the communities served by NC Department of Public Safety to implement climate change adaptation practices and resiliency planning

2.3.1 Conduct flood mitigation studies

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

In 2020, EM initiated new flood mitigation studies for the Northeast Cape Fear River, Cape Fear River, Little River, and Cashier River Basins. EM completed flood mitigation alternatives analyses and final reports for the project late Fall of 2022. Final reports will be publicly shared on the Rebuild NC website (<https://www.rebuild.nc.gov/flood-mitigation-studies>) Winter 2023.

As part of the flood mitigation studies, EM is:

- Completing statewide flood studies to evaluate flood risk and building level mitigation strategies for areas outside of the regulatory special flood hazard area by 2029.
- Encouraging communities to utilize the flood studies data for floodplain management and land use planning through adoption under their Flood Damage Prevention Ordinances.
- Collecting Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) elevation data yearly (1/5 of the state each year) to support mitigation projects and change detection projects.

2.3.2 Administer the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

In 2020, the federal government released its pre-disaster mitigation program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC). EM launched BRIC, which aims to shift the focus away from reactive disaster spending and toward research-supported, proactive investment in community resilience. In the 2020 BRIC application, 32 projects were submitted for the competitive evaluation by FEMA and 5 were selected for an award worth approximately \$30M. For the 2021 BRIC application, 49 projects totaling approximately \$167M were submitted and 10 were selected in the competitive process with another 7 planning efforts supported by the state's \$2M Capability & Capacity Building (C&CB) allocation. Total pending 2021 awards surpassed \$58M.

Selections for the 2022 round are expected in late August 2023. EM Hazard Mitigation developed and submitted 36 infrastructure projects with a fed-share request topping \$178M and another 12 for C&CB allocation funding.

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA): Local NC governments have been challenged to gather the homeowner participation documents needed to apply for the \$800M now available annually under FMA, which targets projects specifically mitigating flood risk to repetitive loss properties under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). This year, EM developed and was selected to receive \$900K to place four Regional Project Development Specialists along the coastal counties to assist local governments in gathering homeowner volunteers for this program. Over the next three funding rounds, the effort aims to develop \$105M in FMA-eligible residential and infrastructure projects.

Legislative Pre-Disaster Mitigation (L-PDM): This program is used to develop the legislative appropriations for select pre-disaster mitigation projects into awardable and HMA-compliant projects through FEMA. To date, we have developed a \$2.2M project for Wake Forest and a \$6.6M project for Wilson. Neither have been fully awarded, as of this report.

Environmental Justice & Equity: Both BRIC & FMA offer significant advantages to communities who qualify as economically disadvantaged rural communities (EDRC) or make a compelling case for one of the many factors identified in the Biden Administration's Justice40 initiative. EM spearheads an aggressive outreach program focusing on these communities, assists them in gathering supportive data (such as their social vulnerability index score) and offers extensive guidance in developing their sub-applications.

2.3.3 Develop an online resilience resource center for local governments and community leaders

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: January 2024

NCORR, in partnership with the Departments of Environmental Quality and Information Technology, is developing an online climate resilience clearinghouse for local governments and community leaders. The tool is called for in the 2020 North Carolina Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan (2020 Plan) and in the North Carolina Natural and Working Lands Action Plan. The resource will “point users to relevant climate data and best practices for building resilience in an equitable way” (p. 7-15, 2020 Plan). The site will center equity in its resources.

2.3.4 Purchase homes in the floodplain

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: April 2026

NCORR administers the ReBuild NC Strategic Buyout Program, which is a voluntary program that purchases properties that are at-risk for flooding and turns them into deed-restricted greenspace. The Strategic Buyout Program engages closely with local governments and communities to identify contiguous areas that are good fits for the program, and the program offers generous financial incentives to encourage applicants to move to places that are less at-risk for flooding. The program has received 255 applications since the program opened in January 2020.

The program has hired six Buyout Program Specialists and one Buyout Program Manager in the last year and has moved the majority of program files into the final inspection steps. The program purchased its first properties in 2023. For the next 12 months, the program expects to continue its efforts expanding the program into new areas, and to close out a significant portion of its active applications.

2.3.5 Repair and elevate storm-damaged homes

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR administers the ReBuild NC Homeowner Recovery Program, North Carolina’s long-term disaster recovery program, to repair and elevate storm-damaged homes. From August to December 2023, NCORR completed 114 construction projects, and from January to August 2023, NCORR completed 412 construction projects. These projects consisted of manufactured housing replacements, reconstruction of single-family residences and rehabilitation of single-family residences. Of the total 412 projects, 83 required total replacement and elevation.

ReBuild NC is made possible through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery and Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funding.

2.3.6 Support nine regions in the eastern half of the state to complete climate vulnerability assessments and develop implementation pathways for 5-10 priority projects

Status: Planning Phase Complete; Implementation Support Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR, in partnership with NC Rural Center, worked with technical consultants and diverse local stakeholder partnerships to develop a vulnerability assessment and a portfolio of regional resilience projects in nine multi-county regions in the eastern half of North Carolina. Additionally, in early 2023, the Duke Energy Foundation allocated \$600,000 to fund 10 priority projects developed under the RISE Regional Resilience Portfolios. The project is part of the Regions Innovating for Strong Economies and Environment (RISE) program, which aims to address the need for local capacity building around long-term disaster recovery and resilience planning and implementation. RISE is part of the North Carolina Resilience Communities program, run in partnership with the Department of Environmental Quality. Funding from the Economic Development Administration and US Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Mitigation Funds (CDBG-MIT) supported this 2020-2022 project. This first iteration of the RISE program focused on 49 NC counties in the eastern half of the state, of which more than 50% were Tier 1 and greater than 35% were Tier 2 counties. RISE community engagement actively sought to include typically underrepresented groups and individuals in the decision-making region stakeholder partnerships.

As part of this effort, NCORR hosted the first North Carolina Resilient Communities Funding Forum, which took place February 28, 2023, at the Greenville Convention Center. The Funding Forum aimed to address the challenge faced by local communities in securing funding for resilience efforts by introducing community leaders, policymakers and other stakeholders to federal, state and nonprofit funding opportunities for resilience-related projects. The free, one-day event allowed attendees to engage with potential funders, who provided presentations and answered project-specific questions during break-out sessions. Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in a grant writing session to take their project one step closer to reality.

This event was cohosted by the Resilient Communities Program, Regions Innovating for Strong Economies and Environment (RISE) and Resilient Coastal Communities Program, and their respective divisions in NCORR and the Division of Coastal Management.

Although this first iteration of the RISE program is complete, NCORR staff continues to facilitate project implementation with a number of stakeholders and local governments.

2.3.7 Work with local governments impacted by Hurricane Matthew to restore damaged critical infrastructure

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: August 2024

NCORR's Infrastructure Program is currently developing community infrastructure projects in Bladen, Duplin, Hyde, and Robeson Counties, the City of Lumberton, and in the Towns of St. Paul's and Princeville. These projects include a range of critical infrastructure and technical assistance for subrecipient projects as varied as drainage studies, stormwater drainage, development of potable water sources, sewer improvements, demolition of dangerous building ruins, and rehabilitation of buildings to be used for critical community services. Additionally, the Infrastructure Program is lending assistance in the construction of infrastructure to build flood-safe communities, most notably in the Town of Princeville, and this summer celebrated with the City of Fayetteville the opening of the Day Resource Center where Community Development Block Grant Mitigation dollars funded construction enabling wrap-around services to the local unhoused population.

During the past year, the program has overseen the completion of the Fayetteville facility, assisted subrecipients in the compliant procurement of resources needed to complete their projects, advised local governments on optimizing available funding and undertaken six Environmental Assessments to satisfy National Environmental Policy Act requirements for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development projects.

Over the next 12 months, the following NCORR-funded projects should also be completed: publication of a Bladen County stormwater study to examine conditions across seven communities and develop recommendations taking into account the interactivity among these communities in order to produce more effective and comprehensive results; the restoration of access to public facilities in the Town of Magnolia through demolition of a hazardous building repair of a levee and floodgate system protecting Princeville repair and protection of a pre-integration school-turned-community center in Hyde County's Engelhard; and repair of an essential wastewater treatment facility in Fairmont. The program continues to monitor project progress and proactively advise local government partners on next steps to produce successfully completed projects.

2.3.8 Develop a climate resilience planning guide for local leaders

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Fall 2023

NCORR is developing a resilient communities planning guide for North Carolina's local governments. The guide will empower local and regional leaders to understand their climate vulnerabilities and develop shared priorities for action. The guide will have two components: a playbook and an idea book. The playbook will guide users through the process of building a team, analyzing vulnerabilities and assets, brainstorming, prioritizing actions, and identifying implementation steps. The idea book will provide examples of projects, programs, and policies that improve resilience across social, economic, and environmental domains. The idea book contains a section on equity and justice to help users understand the topic's connection to resilience and to suggest strategies for addressing equity and justice through resilience initiatives. The guide is supported by funding from the Economic Development Administration and Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funding. It is being developed as a component of RISE in conjunction with the North Carolina Resilience Communities program, run in partnership with the Department of Environmental Quality.

The playbook and the Idea book contain resources on how to incorporate equity into resilience-building activities.

2.3.9 Account for climate change in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan

Status: Complete

Expected Completion Date: Complete

The Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan includes an emphasis on addressing the projected impacts of climate change and on protecting, communicating with, and serving marginalized populations.

EM has integrated climate change and the North Carolina Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan (Resilience Plan) into the Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan update to the extent feasible. New FEMA guidance came into play in April of 2023 that includes specific considerations for climate change in the risk analysis as well as an expansion of outreach to underserved populations. Although the new Plan was completed and approved before the new guidance came into play, EM did, at the suggestion of the Resilience Plan, begin to address some specific impacts of climate change in the hazard analysis, specifically in regard to heat and flooding, addressing anticipated changes in frequency/intensity of drought and flood conditions and the impacts of same on wildfire and landslide hazards.

The next revision of this plan is expected in 2027.

2.3.10 Host a funding forum for communities in the eastern half of North Carolina

Status: Complete

Expected Completion Date: Complete

In February 2023, NCORR hosted a one-day event in partnership with NC Department of Environmental Quality to bring together federal, state and nonprofit funders with local leaders wanting to build resilience. More than 200 individuals attended. This free, one-day event allowed attendees to engage with potential funders, who provided presentations and answered project-specific questions during break-out sessions. Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in a grant writing session to take their project one step closer to reality. The event offered live translation for Spanish-speaking attendees. NCORR posted all event content, including presentations, on its website in English and Spanish.

NCORR intends to host similar events in other parts of the state, depending on funding availability.

2.3.11 Host a flood resilience symposium for mountain communities in North Carolina

Status: Complete

Expected Completion Date: Complete

In April 2023, NCORR partnered with The Pew Charitable Trusts to co-host a one-day symposium for participants to discuss flood resilience needs and accomplishments in the mountainous part of the state. The event, held in Asheville, was free to participants. Using what staff heard from attendees, NCORR hopes to design and launch a program to support community and regional resilience planning needs in the western part of the state, depending on funding availability.

2.3.12 Disaster response assistance at Samarcand

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Samarcand facilities will continue to assist as an evacuation shelter for housing, and food for law enforcement, first responders, and public safety professionals in times of an activation of a disaster related event.

2.3.13 Pilot a flood insurance program

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR is currently piloting a flood insurance program. Selected NCORR staff have become licensed insurance producers since Fall 2022. The initiative has been integrated into the existing ReBuild NC Homeowner Recovery Program supporting communities significantly impacted by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence.

As of Fall 2023, applicants will have the option to select flood insurance annual premium reimbursement for active flood insurance policies or have an NCORR licensed insurance agent complete the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) application and issue a flood insurance policy, if accepted. The issuing and facilitation of flood insurance policies by NCORR licensed insurance agents through The National Flood Insurance Program is currently pending as of September 2023. Once finalized by the end of Fall 2023, NCORR licensed insurance agents will be able to complete the NFIP application on behalf of eligible applicants, troubleshoot any underwriting issues, and pay the annual flood insurance premium. The current pilot program is on-going and will follow all deadlines related to the closeout of the CBDG-DR grants related to Hurricanes Mathew and Florence.

2.4 Help complete initiatives in the Natural and Working Lands Action Plan

2.4.1 Samarcand in collaboration with the Natural Heritage Program (NHP) will improve land conservation/protection efforts

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Through collaboration with NHP, identified an approximately 55-acre section of Samarcand Training Academy in the Drowning Creek/Lumber River watershed suitable for dedication under a conservation agreement.

Will seek out additional opportunities to promote Natural and Working land initiatives.

2.5 Initiate other projects aimed at increasing statewide resilience to the impacts of climate change

2.5.1 Conduct a dam breach analysis on intermediate and high hazard dams

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Fall 2023

In 2020, EM began conducting dam breach analyses on the remaining 859 intermediate and high hazard dams in North Carolina that currently do not have dam failure inundation boundaries or building and road risk information. EM is also developing rainfall runoff hydrological modeling for 287 dams; installing and leveraging existing gauges to monitor for dam failure at 130 critical state and locally owned dams; and integrating all data into a secure monitoring, alert, and warning system.

EM has completed dam breach analysis of all intermediate and high hazard dams and this information was loaded into the State Emergency Response Application (SERA) and the dam warning and alert application. EM has also completed rainfall runoff modeling for 287 dams and has loaded this data into the dam alert and monitoring software. Finally, NC Department of Environmental Quality Dam Safety has secured long-term funding for annual software fees to continue the dam alert and warning application.

EM completed installation of 32 of 34 ultrasonic water level sensors and will complete installation Summer 2023. EM completed installing all remaining pressure transducer water level sensors and this task is complete. After completion of installation of all remaining gauges, gauge data will be integrated into the dam alert and monitoring application.

2.5.2 Support the update and modeling of NC climate impacts, local capacity building, and planning for nature-based solutions to flooding impacts

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Through its administration of the Community Development Block Grant - Mitigation program, NCORR is funding several planning efforts by other state agencies that increase statewide resilience to climate change impacts. These projects update the state's data and modeling of climate impacts including rainfall and drought, build local capacity to design solutions to climate vulnerabilities, develop a natural infrastructure flood mitigation program, and support flood resilience planning in vulnerable communities. NCORR has entered into funding agreements with the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Transportation, and the State Climate Office and the Coastal Dynamics Design Lab at NC State University to support these important efforts.

Over the next year, NCORR will continue to partner with these state entities to monitor progress on these efforts.

2.2.7 Coordinate state agencies' annual Climate Strategy Reports

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Annually: Every October

NCORR facilitates an annual process for cabinet agencies to submit their resilience and greenhouse gas mitigation accomplishments to the Governor's Office, the NC Climate Change Interagency Council, and the public. These Climate Strategy Reports provide a mechanism for cabinet agencies to report on their contributions to the fulfillment of the 2020 Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan, Executive Order 80, and Executive Order 246.

NCORR updated the 2023 reporting guidelines with the recommendation that each agency include information about how each action addresses equity, as required through Executive Order 246.

2.2.8 Facilitate interagency communication on resilience topics projects

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR facilitates the Interagency Resilience Team (IRT), as called for in Chapter 7 of the 2020 Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan, to provide a structure for state staff to coordinate resilience projects and to support the development of annual Climate Strategy Reports. The IRT includes at least one resilience lead from each state cabinet agency, as well as the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs and the Wildlife Resources Commission. This team meets monthly.

In the next 12 months, the IRT will participate in an equity workshop to identify ways each agency can contribute to the growth of equitable and just climate resilience programs offered by state agencies.

3.0. Address the public health impacts of climate change

3.1 Increase understanding and awareness of the health impacts of climate change

3.1.1 Increase the awareness of the health impacts of climate change at SHP

Status: Planned

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Met with all Troop and Unit Commanders throughout the state to discuss climate change awareness and over the next 12 months the SHP will produce a video/PowerPoint educating all its employees about the health impacts of climate change. Providing awareness to all employees will hopefully help reduce future climate related health impacts.

3.1.2 GCC will implement climate change violence prevention efforts

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

GCC is funding community violence intervention efforts to help those impacted by a culture of violence. These have a public health component to the work and many are in hospitals.

Over the next 12 months GCC will help the Office of Violence Prevention identify and offer grant opportunities in this area

3.1.3 Release a Heat Action Plan Toolkit for Local Governments

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: May 2024

NCORR has contracted with the State Climate Office (SCO) of North Carolina, based at North Carolina State University, to develop a North Carolina Heat Action Plan Toolkit, which will include a template heat wave action plan. This plan template will include: information on the appropriate forecasted temperature and humidity thresholds to activate a protocol for each county in North Carolina; short-term and long-term heat management actions; messaging templates in English and Spanish; and accompanying instructional documents. The project will include identifying thresholds for heat alerts for different risk cohorts (e.g., general public, student athletes, outdoor workers, people age 65+, people with chronic illnesses, pregnant women). The project is in partnership with the NC Department of Health and Human Services, EM, and the Duke University Heat Policy Innovation Lab.

In early heat season 2024, NCORR and its partners will release the Heat Action Plan Toolkit along with a state-issued set of recommendations for local health departments to declare local heat emergencies.

3.2 Advance health equity

3.2.1 GCC climate change incident public safety grants

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

GCC will develop a policy to offer support and off cycle public safety grants to communities impacted by a climate change event such as a hurricane, flood, or other climate change triggered event. Stress and strain caused by these incidents can cause an increase in violence. A grant could be to provide more resources or provide equipment lost due to the climate change incident.

Over the next 12 months GCC will develop a policy and plan for different climate change grant opportunities that is used when an incident occurs.

3.3 Initiate other projects aimed at addressing the public health impacts of climate change

All NCDPS initiatives that address the public health impacts of climate change are included above.

4.0. Invest in historically underserved communities

4.1 Increase affordability for low- and moderate-income households

4.1.1 Create an affordable housing strategy in partnership with the UNC Development Finance Initiative

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR has leveraged the experience of the UNC Development Finance Initiative to build a strategy for the development and preservation of rental housing in the 24 counties most impacted and distressed (MID) by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence and Tropical Storm Fred.

The planning study has identified the types of affordable and resilient housing, including multi-family dwellings, single family homes, and other housing types most needed by those counties. Further, the study evaluates the availability of suitable properties, the development community's capacity, and the financial feasibility of the housing types needed.

The plan is intended to inform the allocation of recovery funds through NCORR's affordable housing programs serving MID counties to create new affordable housing that is safer, more resilient, and better matched with the needs of each impacted area.

Findings of the research have been shared with local and state government partners and helped inform affordable housing recommendations to the Governor's budget process earlier this year. Data-driven decisions will continue to improve project awards in upcoming funding rounds over the next 12 months.

4.1.2 Fund more than 1,800 new affordable housing units in regions hit by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: December 2026

To address this commitment made by NCORR in 2021, approximately \$65.9 million of the state's Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery funds are being used to partner with housing agencies across the most impacted and distressed counties to increase safe, affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income households. Currently, NCORR and the NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) are using \$40 million through Round 1 of the Affordable Housing Development Fund to assist with tax credit funding during a time of unprecedented construction cost increases. All of these projects have now received environmental clearance and are proceeding with pre- and early construction activities which will result in 758 new apartments affordable to households earning an average of 60% of area median income in 13 developments across nine MID counties in eastern NC. NCORR and NCHFA are also using \$28.6 million for the predecessor program to the Affordable Housing Development Fund, the Multifamily Development Fund, on three projects that include 194 units. Two of the projects, in Robeson and Wayne counties, are underway and will serve the needs of low-moderate income seniors for affordable rental housing, and the third, McArthur Park in Cumberland County, has completed its first year of full occupancy.

The Public Housing Restoration Fund Program continues to assist projects with the Wilson Housing Authority and the Housing Authority of the City of Lumberton with \$9.6 million in funding. In addition, \$14.5 million has been awarded to public housing authorities in Wilmington, Fayetteville, Lumberton, and Princeville. Altogether the Public Housing Restoration Fund is constructing or rehabilitating 231 rental units affordable to the most economically vulnerable in these communities, with apartments affordable to tenants earning on average 30% of the median income in the area. In the case of Princeville, it will permit the town to offer public housing for the first time since Hurricane Matthew left all their public housing units uninhabitable in 2016. In addition, NCORR is funding replacement administrative offices and maintenance facilities lost to the storms in support of Public Housing Authority (PHA) operation and tenant support functions and remediating mold and restoring access to the community center in one of Fayetteville's PHA developments after the storm rendered it unusable. Giving PHA residents access to resources and services at the Community Center is an important element supporting better quality of life for families that need the most financial support.

Seeing a need within the local government and tax credit development community for gap funding on approved 4% tax credit projects, NCORR awarded \$22.3 million through a competitive application process to three local government subrecipients for the construction of 626 affordable apartments scheduled for completion by December 2026. Construction has already begun on Greenville's project, with construction expected to start in Wilmington and Morehead City no later than December of 2024.

4.1.3 Provide additional funding opportunities for safe and resilient affordable housing

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: December 2026

NCORR launched Round 3 of the Affordable Housing Development Fund in May of 2023 to award the remaining \$47.2 million in Community Development funds from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Disaster Recovery (DR) grants awarded our state for long term recovery from the effects of Hurricane Florence. NCORR has held multiple online information sessions for prospective applicants and has received 27 Letters of Interest from all 16 most impacted and distressed (MID) counties, including at least one from each of the six counties that have yet to receive CDBG housing dollars. Applications are due August 25, 2023, and an evaluation panel will complete review of proposals and make awards in October 2023. Eligible projects may include both new construction and rehabilitation, both multifamily and single family, and both homeownership and rental. Such flexibility is designed to allow local governments to structure their proposals to best meet their community housing needs. Construction on awarded projects is expected to begin late 2024 or 2025.

Haywood County Affordable Housing Development Fund will use the Florence program as a template for soliciting competitive proposals to fund \$9.5 million in projects with CDBG-DR grants awarded the state for long term recovery from the effects of Tropical Storm Fred. NCORR is working closely with county officials to prepare for program launch, expected in the first half of 2024. In addition, Haywood County will provide \$1 million for down payment and closing cost assistance to first time homebuyers, residents displaced by the storm, first responders, and teachers.

4.2 Create jobs and economic growth

This section is not applicable to the mission of NCDPS

4.3 Alert residents and businesses, particularly those in underserved communities, of state and federal grant opportunities

4.3.1 Guide communities with census tracts designed by FEMA as Community Disaster Resilience Zones (CDRZ) on how to improve their climate resilience

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: TBD

Congress passed the Community Disaster Resilience Zone (CDRZ) Act in December 2022. The Act directs the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to designate the nation's most at-risk census tracts based on high risk of natural hazard and high social vulnerability. In September 2023, FEMA designated 15 census tracts in North Carolina as CDRZ.

NCORR submitted a grant proposal in partnership with outside organizations to work directly with NC local governments with CDRZ designations to help them navigate the resources available that would support their climate resilience efforts.

4.4 Initiate other projects aimed at investing in underserved communities

4.4.1 Recruit and fund culturally specific programs for historically marginalized populations

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

GCC funds culturally specific grants that are run by those who they serve. Over the next 12 months, GCC will create a team to look at better ways to recruit and fund culturally specific programs to marginalized populations.