



2024 Climate Strategy Report

North Carolina Department of Public Safety

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Introduction

About North Carolina Department of Public Safety

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety (DPS) is the primary state agency affected by and responsible for addressing climate-related impacts to the public safety sector. The DPS mission is to safeguard and preserve the lives and property of the people of North Carolina through preparation, prevention, and protection with integrity and honor. Within DPS, North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) and the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR) direct statewide response and recovery from natural disasters exacerbated by climate change and to increase North Carolina's ability to adapt to future climate change impacts, including sea level rise.

DPS serves as the state's chief protector and defender of the public and is the statewide public safety and homeland security agency. In addition to NCEM and NCORR, it is home to Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE), Central Engineering (CE), Governor's Crime Commission (GCC), Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP), NC National Guard (NCNG), Samarcand Training Academy (Samarcand), State Capitol Police (SCP), and State Highway Patrol (SHP). DPS 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, and Criminal Justice Information Network.

DPS 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. DPS 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.

North Carolina 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 DPS 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 DPS's mission and services. Plans and protocols such as the North Carolina Emergency Operations 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, DPS is focused on helping communities and residents shift their focus from response to preparedness and adaptation planning to improve their abilities to withstand stronger hurricanes, lingering tropical storms, more intense heat waves, larger wildfires, and more.

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

DPS is making progress on the recommendations in the NC [2020 Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan](#) (Resilience Plan). Departmental divisions are fulfilling recommendations in Chapters 4 (“Climate & Environmental Justice”), 5 (“Vulnerability, Risk, and Resilience Strategies for Addressing Climate Related Hazards”) and 7 (“The Path Forward for a Climate Resilient North Carolina”) – the sections most relevant to the DPS mission – through planning processes, stakeholder engagement, partnership development, community capacity building, and interagency coordination. The bullets below describe many of the efforts currently underway in more detail.

- NCEM is helping local governments understand their vulnerabilities and identify resilience-building strategies through regional hazard mitigation plan updates, which also supports local eligibility for certain funding opportunities. As part of this process, NCEM encourages the adoption of nature-based solutions to address flooding by improving water infiltration.
- NCEM and NCORR are connecting local governments with climate data and risk information specific to their location. NCEM accomplishes this strategy through the regional hazard mitigation processes. NCORR is providing localized climate projections and hazard-specific vulnerability maps on the NC Resilience Exchange, a new website that hosts North Carolina-specific resilience data, maps, funding opportunities, success stories and more all in one online location. The design of this new website helps local leaders advance their resilience-building efforts.
- NCEM and NCORR are supporting local governments in stakeholder engagement with a focus on more meaningful inclusion of historically underrepresented residents. NCEM offers this guidance through its support of regional hazard mitigation plans, and NCORR will formally publish this guidance in a Resilient Communities Planning Guide in late 2024.
- NCORR and NCEM are increasing communities' ability to access funding for resilience projects, through direct grant writing, guiding grant application development, connections to external grant writers and grant administrators, and, in some cases, directly funding resilience planning projects through NCORR's administration of the federal Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funding.
- NCORR is developing and facilitating partnerships with universities, nonprofits and other entities to offer capacity to smaller and more rural communities. The NC Resilient Communities Program uses these partnerships to provide jurisdictions with planning, project identification, and project implementation assistance, with one arm of the program directly supporting North Carolina's Community Disaster Resilience Zones – census tracts identified by FEMA as among the most vulnerable in the country.
- NCORR's academic partnerships are also developing data that help communities with planning and project selection. For example, the State Climate Office (SCO) at North Carolina State University produced county-specific climate projections so local leaders can feel confident in the

investments they are making to protect their residents from costly and sometimes life-threatening climate impacts. In another example, NCORR's partnership with the Duke University Heat Policy Innovation Hub, the SCO, and the NC Department of Health and Human Services produced region-specific heat index thresholds to help communities understand the temperatures at which emergency room visits start to increase. These and other ongoing partnerships are helping local leaders make informed decisions on how to spend resources and protect their residents.

- Samarcand and the SHP have also launched efforts to protect employees and residents from extreme heat. Samarcand enforces extreme heat protocols to protect students and training attendees from health impacts. The SHP is educating employees on the health impacts of climate change and heat-related injuries.
- NCORR and NCEM are partnering with local governments to expand the number of stream gauges in flood-prone areas, providing real-time information to protect residents from the dangers of fast-moving water.
- NCORR is partnering with Councils of Governments and local emergency managers to assess the need and feasibility of installing energy backup systems in marginalized communities and critical facilities.
- NCORR published two key resources to help combat environmental injustices through educational resources. The NC Resilience Exchange allows users to overlay climate hazard maps with maps of communities with limited resources, enabling practitioners to identify neighborhoods that may need more assistance with disaster response. In addition, the Heat Action Plan Toolkit provides step-by-step instructions on how to identify neighborhoods with higher temperature and that may need extra assistance to withstand extreme heat. These neighborhoods are often home to residents of color and low-income communities.
- NCNG has partnered with local governments and land conservation trusts to protect 1,791 acres of natural and working lands surrounding Camp Butner Training Center (CBTC). This effort, funded through the federal Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program, has permanently protected critical habitat, clean drinking water sources, and agricultural land, while supporting flooding resilience.
- NCNG is using climate projection data to understand the vulnerability of its buildings, decide what properties can be retired, and prioritize new construction projects. The division also uses prescribed burning to minimize the risk of wildland fire to its facilities, personnel, and visitors.

As part of efforts to coordinate interagency communication and partnerships on building resilience, NCORR has developed a process to help all state agencies understand the strategies, actions, and recommendations in the Resilience Plan that are relevant to their mission, including within DPS. The process guides state agencies as they write and submit their annual Climate Resilience Strategy report to the Governor and the Interagency Climate Change Council.

Reducing Energy Use

In January 2022, DPS and the Department of Adult Correction (DAC) were split into two separate cabinet agencies. Since then, DPS has been without a dedicated Energy Manager or other energy use professional staff. Although the Governor's budget included an Energy Manager position, it was not included within the House or Senate budgets and thus does not currently exist, yet it is critical to ensure proper focus on climate matters. DPS Central Engineering is actively recruiting professional staff to provide technical services and oversee facility matters to cover this gap temporarily. Out of necessity and specifically due to the absence of a dedicated energy manager and energy management program, DPS has ended the 'opt out' program with the electrical utilities; consequently, this would otherwise have allowed DPS to utilize the Renewable Energy Portfolio Surcharge cost avoidance for installation of energy savings initiatives.

With the split, the bulk of institutional facilities referenced in prior DPS reports have since been removed from the DPS portfolio. While Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (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 administrative occupancies and two major law enforcement training centers.

Several DPS facilities and leased spaces are in process of being replaced with modern facilities that have a significantly lower EUI. These include the State Highway Patrol (SHP)/State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) Joint Armory, SHP Technical Services Unit, SHP Cadet Dorm, SHP Training Building, and the newly completed Rockingham County Youth Development Center. Many other facilities are undergoing renovations and upgrades to reduce EUI and maintenance burden, thus reducing energy use. These include: 1) Building automation upgrades at Cabarrus Youth Development Centers; 2) Major renovations to Richmond and Perquimans Youth Development Center; 3) Thermal envelope improvements at two cottages located at the CA Dillon Youth Development Center; 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. Repair and renovation funding for energy efficiency improvements will be utilized to retrofit more JJDP facilities with LED lighting over the next 36 months. Moreover, all new construction and major renovation-repairs are actively evaluated to lower EUI.

Addressing Environmental Injustices and Inequities

As required by Executive Order 246, DPS has named its environmental justice (EJ) lead. The DPS EJ lead coordinated a multi-division workgroup that included representatives from NCEM, NCORR, CE, Policy & Strategic Planning, and Communications to develop a proposed set of EJ goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were approved by DPS leadership and will be formally implemented in September 2024. Among the goals and objectives is the creation of an ongoing EJ workgroup. This workgroup will be tasked with the oversight and implementation of the entire set of goals and objectives. The DPS EJ

lead has attended numerous in-person EJ meetings around the state, including in Halifax County and Wayne County.

Public Participation Plan

The [2024 DPS Public Participation Plan](#) includes the commitment to:

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

DPS is committed to hosting public meetings that are open and accessible. Public meetings are an opportunity for the agency to engage communities whose opinions may have been overlooked in the past. DPS regularly reviews public meeting schedules for things like timing and location. For example, meetings for the Strategic Buyout Program, managed by NCORR, are regularly held in the impacted communities and are hosted in the evening hours to allow attendees to join after regular work hours.

DPS also continues to look for opportunities to improve community engagement and outreach efforts, especially in underserved communities. The NC S.A.F.E. (Securing All Firearms Effectively) awareness campaign travels throughout the state to engage directly with communities, sharing the importance of safely securing firearms. This campaign also provides free gun locks directly to citizens, as well as through trusted community partners including schools, places of worship, and medical providers.

Finally, DPS is committed to language transparency. DPS recently completed a project to fully translate the agency's website into Spanish, providing increased access and awareness.

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 2002-2003 levels

1.1.1 Reduce DPS greenhouse gas emissions by employing energy efficient practices.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ALE:

- As of July 2024, all ALE District Offices have been relocated to stand alone locations, which implement current environmental strategies including usage of LED lighting, energy efficient appliances, motion light switches, and heat and AC timers are all standard.

GCC:

- GCC has some office lights that turn off after a time with no motion.
- 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:

- 46% of Juvenile Justice light fixtures have been converted to LED. 100% of all fixtures at Lenoir Youth Development Center (YDC), Perquimans Juvenile Detention Center (JDC), and Dobbs Building 5 have been changed to LED. At Wake JDC, 25% of all light fixtures have been converted to LED, and at Cumberland JDC, 20% have been changed. Edgecombe YDC and Pitt and New Hanover JDCs are at 15% LED.
- Over the next 36 months, JJDP expects to complete LED retrofits of all Juvenile Justice facilities.
- The new Rockingham Youth Development Center has been completed. The new facility includes state-of-the art water control and building automation systems. The design capitalized on numerous energy reduction incentives through Duke Energy.

Samarcand:

- 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.
- 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 and heat pump units across campus and maintain gas refrigerant collection and containment programs.

- Samarca installed mini-split HVAC and heat pump units, which are more energy efficient than traditional units.
- Thermostat controlled processes are utilized to conserve energy.

SCP:

- Several SCP lights in the station are either on a timer or have sensor light switches that turn on the lights when no one is in the room. For those offices that do not have either, there is a directive that all office lights shall be turned off when not in use.

SHP:

- SHP will continue to retrofit facilities with LED lighting when feasible. As SHP expands the infrastructure with building and remodeling, the division will attempt to aggressively pursue funding to ensure all facilities are outfitted with energy efficient appliances to help maintain energy conservation measures. Over the next two years SHP will be expanding its Training Academy campus and building an energy efficient Technical Services building, as well as an armory and new dormitories for cadets (see bullets below for additional details).
- SHP has broken ground on an energy efficient Armory and Technical Services building, both located on the Highway Patrol Academy facility in Raleigh.
- Design for a new dormitory and training building at the Highway Patrol Training Academy will begin in October 2024. Both facilities will replace dilapidated and inefficient buildings.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through energy-efficient practices relates to environmental justice because it helps mitigate climate change impacts that disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities.

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

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: FY 26-27

- JJDP completed construction on two BMS upgrades at Lenoir and Edgecombe Youth Development Centers (YDCs).
- Perquimans and Rockingham BMS systems have been brought online in conformance to JJDP standards.
- Plans are being developed to upgrade Cabarrus and Chatham BMS systems and bring them into compliance with JJDP standards.
- JJDP will develop frameworks and standards to integrate all BMS under one platform. This will reduce local modifications, allow issues to be identified and resolved faster, and reduce maintenance burden. This will provide engineering and maintenance personnel a unified access to BMS for all facilities.

1.1.3 Reduce ABCC energy and water consumption.

Status: Multiple

Expected Completion Date: Multiple

- Replace all lighting in the ABCC Administration building and the warehouse with energy-efficient LED lighting:
Completed September 2023. In 2011, ABCC completed the AARA Energy Grant/Progress Energy/State Energy Office lighting upgrades/retrofit for complex (office and warehouse buildings) and all exterior lighting fixtures. Installation was completed and ABCC will continue using LED lighting throughout all operational facilities. The ABCC warehouse was converted to LED lighting in 2023.
- Implement measures to conserve energy and water:
Ongoing, expected to be completed June 30, 2025. ABCC staff will unplug electronics when not in use and use power strips, replace old water faucets with automatic ones in kitchen and bathroom facilities, install motion detector lights in breakrooms, bathrooms, and other rooms that are not continuously occupied, and utilize natural light whenever possible.
- Optimize mechanical efficiency (HVAC and other equipment):
Ongoing, expected to be completed June 30, 2025. The 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; research options for centralized temperature control with remote capability to help eliminate hot and cold pockets competing, allowing for greater energy efficiency with existing HVAC system; in early 2024, Waste Reduction Partners, an authorized state partner, conducted an energy efficiency study of the main ABCC office building and provided a report detailing areas for improvement. This report is under internal evaluation for feasibility and cost analysis before implementation. Have the Department of Administration install additional air returns in offices that don't have them to reduce strain and increase the efficiency of the existing HVAC system.

1.1.4 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 a 50,150 square-foot high performance and energy efficient building, 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 American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (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.

1.1.5 Incorporate building automation systems (BAS) at NCNG facilities.

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: 2027

NCNG is incorporating BAS to monitor, control, and troubleshoot facility Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems. Newly constructed and 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 have a BAS that is 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. Unified Front End is a computer system which receives the remote BAS system data to allow for data analysis on one centralized system.

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 \$5 million.

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

Over the next 12 Months, NCNG will continue to improve upon annual packet submission based on National Guard Bureau MILCON Hard Lock feedback.

1.1.7 Plan for 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 March 29, 2023. This 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.

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

DPS does not have initiatives to report under this item.

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

DPS does not have initiatives to report under this item.

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

1.4.1 Increase the number of ZEVs purchased and utilized at DPS.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ABCC: ABCC will consider purchasing a hybrid car to improve fuel efficiency and eliminate some of the air pollutants emitted from fossil fuel combustion, the primary cause of urban air pollution.

SCP: SCP currently has 3 electric vehicles and is exploring the possibility of adding 1-2 more, possibly an EV Ford Mustang (see below) and one other vehicle. SCP currently has 10 hybrid vehicles and may add 3-5 more, funding and availability of vehicles withstanding. SCP is attempting to obtain grant funding for the below items:

- Electric motorcycle
- 1 electric Ford Mustang
- 31 quick charging station to be erected at the SCP station

SHP: SHP will continue to monitor the electric vehicle market to upgrade its current infrastructure to support an EV fleet of patrol cruisers. SHP will send members to Fort Worth, Texas, on August 12th-16th, 2024, to the upcoming Police Fleet Vehicle Expo for EVs. SHP will continue to seek funding to allow its fleet to move towards cleaner energy vehicles in the coming years.

By lowering vehicle emissions, DPS can improve air quality, reduce health risks, and ensure that vulnerable populations, who are often more exposed to environmental hazards, benefit from a cleaner and healthier environment.

1.5 Initiate other initiatives to decarbonize the transportation sector

1.5.1 Implement DPS strategies to reduce vehicle miles traveled and vehicle idling.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ALE: ALE has established a robust training schedule to utilize web-based technology where appropriate to reduce or eliminate travel. The reduction in the need for run time on vehicles will save hundreds of hours of vehicle use, travel, and subsequent emission production.

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

SCP: SCP has an order for officers not let their vehicles idle, but to be more deliberate in how they operate around the complex to reduce carbon emissions. SCP also instructed officers in areas where they can get out of their vehicles and patrol on foot, to do so in an effort to reduce carbon emissions.

SHP: SHP was able to seek and secure \$13.5 million to purchase new WatchGuard cameras and body cameras for its members. This will fund the transfer of the WatchGuard servers to a cloud environment storage system, which will decrease the amount of time vehicles have to be left idling at offices while having to download. Transferring to a cloud storage system will allow videos to download continuously from the cradle point to cell towers and directly to a cloud system that will not require officers to travel lengthy distances for office downloads.

Reducing vehicle miles traveled and vehicle idling can help reduce DPS's vehicle emissions. Lower vehicle emissions can improve air quality, reduce health risks, and ensure that vulnerable populations, who are often more exposed to environmental hazards, benefit from a cleaner and healthier environment.

1.5.2 Integrate ZEV infrastructure requirements into NCNG planning.

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: 2027

NCNG must integrate the infrastructure requirements to support approximately 300 ZEVs 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 Readiness Center (RC) and the 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.

1.5.3 Reduce DPS staff commuting emissions.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ABCC: ABCC continues to offer flexible remote work options for employees, where feasible, to reduce energy consumption, fuel consumption, and emissions. Currently, the ABCC Product and Special Services sections operate on flexible remote schedules; all employees can request remote work options and flexible schedules based on their 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 staff live in other cities. 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: JJDP continues to implement four 10-hour day work weeks in Court Services districts as approved by chief court counselors, dependent upon staff vacancy rates and caseloads.

NCEM: NCEM continues to observe a telework policy where feasible, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by limiting staff commuting to office locations, reducing motor fuel usage, reducing power consumption in office locations, and taking advantage of virtual meeting technology where appropriate.

1.5.4 Increase accessibility to electric vehicle charging stations at DPS facilities.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

JJDP:

- Two charging stations are slated for installation as part of Richmond County Youth Development Center renovation.
- Two ZEV charging stations were installed at the Rockingham Youth Development Center (completed in May 2024).
- One ZEV charging station was installed as part of the Perquimans Juvenile Detention Center renovation (completed in April 2024).
- The new Juvenile Detention Center that will be constructed in eastern NC will be designed to have two ZEV stations.

SHP:

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

1.6 Initiate other projects aimed at reducing statewide greenhouse emissions

1.6.1 Incorporate energy efficiency and green building standards into all new and replaced residential buildings.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

To the extent feasible, NCORR uses green building materials and standards for residential new construction and rehabilitation projects through the Homeowner Recovery Program. For new construction, NCORR selects materials that meet standards outlined in ENERGY STAR, Enterprise Green Communities, LEED, ICC-700, EPA Indoor AirPlus or other equivalent comprehensive green building programs. For rehabilitation projects, NCORR requires subrecipients to follow the guidelines in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's [Community Planning and Development Green Building Retrofit Checklist](#). When older or obsolete products are replaced as part of the rehabilitation work, project managers are required to use ENERGY STAR-labeled, WaterSense-labeled or Federal Energy Management Program-designated products and appliances. NCORR applies these standards to single and multifamily housing projects, including affordable housing developments, funded with the State's Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Recovery and Mitigation (CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT).

NCORR included the commitment to using energy efficient and green building materials in the latest [Action Plan](#) updates for spending CDBG-DR and CDB-MIT funding.

1.6.2 Expand recycling programs within DPS divisions and sections.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

ALE: ALE seizes an abundance of alcohol containers each year as well as distillery equipment. These items are recycled as a matter of practice to keep them out of landfills across the state. Recycling helps reduce landfill waste, which releases greenhouse gas emissions. This practice will continue. ALE has implemented a process of delivering distillery parts to metal recycling businesses, as a means of salvaging those materials instead of placing them in the landfill.

GCC: 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 Reduce ABCC waste and paper consumption to help minimize the environmental effects of deforestation, energy use, water and air pollution, and waste accumulation in landfills.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: June 30, 2025

The state recycling program through the Department of Administration ended in 2021. Subsequently, the ABC Commission contracted with a private vendor to handle recycling. Recycling helps reduce landfill waste, which releases greenhouse gas emissions. Recycling and other waste reduction efforts underway at ABCC include:

- In response to the 2023 Climate Resiliency plan, ABCC has increased the number of recycling bins in the office.
- Create an SOP for recycling so employees know where to recycle various items, including glass, paper, cans, plastic, and cardboard.
- Include recycling initiatives in new employee orientations to foster awareness.
- With the addition of an extra recycling bin, the pickup frequency now matches the volume so that bins do not overflow.
- Research options for a cardboard box recycling receptacle. ABCC currently disposes of cardboard boxes in regular trash.
- In 2023, approximately 200 boxes of paper documents were scanned and shredded for recycling as part of an ongoing project to transition to an online filing system and reduce paper waste.
- Promote eliminating paper notebooks and Post-it notes using electric note-taking systems as alternatives.
- Avoid hardcopy handouts at meetings and register for paperless billing whenever possible.

1.6.4 Digitize ABCC operations.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: December 1, 2025

One of the ABC Commission's primary functions is issuing permits to the public. According to current legislation, the application process requires applicants to provide numerous hard copies of documents. Some ABCC documents will still be needed until legislation changes, though specific information is no longer necessary.

Understanding the efficiency of digital processes over paper processes, the ABCC Permits section has been working with the ABCC IT section to transition the permit-issuing process to a paperless, digital one.

ABCC is creating a new internal public permit 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 reduce paper waste and 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 with "on-premises" sales must have a recycling program in their application packet.

1.6.5 Modernize all ABC Stores and ABC Board facilities.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: June 30, 2025

ABC stores currently contribute to emission reduction efforts by using:

- Motion detectors and automatic faucets for back store offices
- LED lighting
- Recycling boxes and cases. Many stores have agreements with landlords for recycling.
- Contracts to recycle glass bottles. Last year, ABC stores recycled over 9 million glass cases in 6 bottles/case!!

Many ABC Boards have upgraded their facilities with energy-efficient appliances and LED lighting.

1.6.6 Implement new ALE Records Management System to improve energy efficiencies.

Status: Complete

Expected Completion Date: 2024

The utilization of a new Records Management System has allowed for the reduction of the staffing needed to complete annual evidence audits, and other routine audits throughout the year. Previously, numerous staff members were needed to complete audits, requiring travel from out of district personnel to the district where the audits were conducted. Currently, the tasks are completed by two (2) ALE personnel, allowing other district supervisors to stay in their respective districts, complete localized tasks, and save the agency fuel and vehicle maintenance costs. We have also utilized these new systems to replace paper copies in a variety of areas and reduce duplication of record keeping.

2.0. Increase statewide resilience to the impacts of climate change

2.1 Evaluate the impacts of climate change on North Carolina Department of Public Safety'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.

2.1.2 Implement hazard mitigation programs to increase statewide resilience efforts.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCEM is a national leader in the pursuit and implementation of FEMA mitigation dollars through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and through the nationally competitive Flood Mitigation Assistance Program and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program.

All programs prioritize projects that address climate change impacts on natural hazards and incorporate nature-based solutions.

NCEM maintains the Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan's risk assessment examines the impact of climate change on all identified natural hazards. The plan's mitigation goals and measures identify nature-based strategies and solutions, and resilience planning designed to reduce the impact of a variety of hazards on people and property in the state.

NCEM assists local governments in the maintenance of Regional Hazard Mitigation Plans covering all 100 counties and more than 500 municipalities using a risk assessment approach consistent with the Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan with an emphasis on identifying underserved communities and addressing the local impacts of climate-related natural hazards with consideration of nature-based solutions and community resilience.

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

2.2.1 Implement climate safety protocols at Samarcand facilities.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

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

The implementation of heat risk protocols for students and disaster response training for first responders relates to environmental justice by addressing climate-related health risks and emergency preparedness. As an end goal, these measures aim to protect vulnerable populations and improve equitable response to environmental hazards.

2.2.2 Implement NCNG Wildland Fire Management Program for Camp Butner.

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: 2026

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 2,000 - 2,500 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.

2.2.3 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 state agencies including the Departments of Environmental Quality, Transportation, Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Natural and Cultural Resources; local government representatives; and nongovernmental stakeholders such as nonprofits and business community members. NCORR submits reports to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Fiscal Research Division regarding the findings and recommendations of the working group.

The working group has identified several challenges, including the need to restrict new residential development in the floodplain and expand the requirements for floodproofing. The working group submitted a public comment to the North Carolina Real Estate Commission in support of requiring disclosure of flood history, flood risk and flood insurance requirements during residential real estate transactions. Earlier this year, the Commission approved these new disclosure requirements.

The working group will continue to meet and submit reports to the state legislature on challenges identified and recommendations made to address them.

2.2.4 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 met to update members on ongoing resilience efforts across state agencies, including a presentation on the NC Resilience Exchange (formerly referred to as the Climate Resilience Clearinghouse) by NCORR staff and storm modeling under climate scenarios by the State Climate Office.

The SDRTF will meet as needed to address the unmet needs of North Carolina communities and residents during disaster recovery and to help build the state's resilience to future disasters and climate change. The Environmental Preservation RSF continues to meet on a quarterly basis.

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

2.3.1 Continue administering FEMA non-disaster competitive resiliency funding.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

In 2020, the federal government released its FEMA pre-disaster mitigation program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC). NCEM launched BRIC, which aims to shift the focus away from reactive disaster spending and toward research-supported, proactive investment in community resilience. In the first four years of the program, North Carolina led the nation in number of projects selected competitively with FEMA and other states applauding the grant webinars produced by NCEM Hazard Mitigation (HM) to assist local governments in developing winning applications.

BRIC Program: To date, over \$219 million in federal funds are in various phases of the award process through annual BRIC selections among 83 local projects. For BRIC-2023, North Carolina had the most projects with 8 selected for further review totaling \$32 million.

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA): Local NC governments have been challenged to gather the homeowner participation documents needed to apply for the \$800 million now available annually under FMA, which targets projects specifically mitigating flood risk to repetitive loss properties under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In 2022, NCEM developed and was selected to receive \$900,000 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 \$105 million in FMA-eligible residential and infrastructure projects. Through MOU's between NCEM and the four coastal-serving councils of government (COG's), those positions were filled in the Spring of 2024 and leadership is tracking their progress with weekly meetings and training.

It's worth noting that FEMA has expanded the FMA Swift Current program which reports to move residential elevation and acquisition projects from application to funding obligation within a 12-month time frame. NCEM will be eligible to apply for this fast-track program upon the declaration of a new disaster.

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, NCEM has fully-developed a \$2.2 million project for Wake Forest and a \$6.6 million project for Wilson. There were no L-PDM appropriations for North Carolina in the most recent fiscal year.

Environmental Justice and Equity: Both BRIC and 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. NCEM spearheads an aggressive outreach program targeting these communities, assists them in gathering supportive data (such as their social vulnerability index score) and offers extensive guidance in developing their sub applications. Similar advantages and an increased federal cost share are now available to projects benefiting Community Disaster Resilience Zones (CDRZ). In a concerted coordination effort, NCEM works directly with NCORR's Resilience Office to leverage grant-funded assistance to these communities with all of North Carolina's CDRZ communities engaged in the discussions.

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

Status: Complete

Completion Date: May 2024

In May 2024, NCORR launched the [NC Resilience Exchange](#) on behalf of all state agencies. The new site organizes state and federal resources, as well as solution guides, funding opportunities and grant writing assistance from nonprofits and academic institutions. The Exchange helps users understand their exposure to climate change impacts, see how other communities are managing nature-based emergencies, find grants and support for accessing funding and more.

The NC Resilience Exchange incorporates equity and environmental justice into its resource offerings. The Vulnerability Maps feature layers displaying a social vulnerability index, a rural capacity index, and layers from the American Community Survey displaying where there are high percentages of people living in poverty, without a vehicle, with a disability and more. In addition, all success stories written by NCORR have a “Spotlight on Equity” section. Furthermore, the site’s resource databases enable users to sort success stories, funding, tools, experts and actions for those focused on equity and justice.

NCORR will continue adding resources to the site and has already begun working one-on-one with community leaders to help them find the right resources to address their climate change risks.

This action fulfills initiatives listed in the 2020 North Carolina Climate Risk Assessment and Resilience Plan and in the 2020 North Carolina Natural and Working Lands Action Plan.

2.3.3 Provide disaster response assistance at Samarcand.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Samarcand facilities will continue to serve as housing options for law enforcement, first responders, and public safety professionals that are responding during disasters.

Environmental justice communities often see more severe impacts from disaster related events. Providing shelter for public safety professionals indirectly supports the EJ community in times of disaster crisis.

2.3.4 Purchase properties threatened with flooding.

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: October 2026

NCORR administers the ReBuild NC Strategic Buyout Program, a voluntary program opened in January 2020 that purchases at-risk properties for flooding and transfers them to municipalities as deed-restricted greenspace. The Strategic Buyout Program engages closely with local governments and communities to identify areas that meet strategic objectives. For individual homeowners, the program offers financial incentives to encourage applicants to move out of flood-prone locations. Properties are also identified by local governments that will be used to facilitate nature-based flood control measures and utility access to support the wider community.

The program has 192 active applications with approximately 100 additional under review. The program purchased its first properties in 2023. A majority of the active files are in title closing processes or have moved into the final clearing of parcels. For the upcoming year, the program will finalize its cooperation with several cities and counties, as well as coordinating with NC Emergency Management.

2.3.5 Repair and elevate storm-damaged homes.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR manages the Homeowner Recovery Program (HRP), North Carolina's long-term disaster recovery program that repairs, reconstructs and elevates storm-damaged structures. From July to December 2023, HRP completions increased 328% for a total of 374 construction projects. From January to June 2024, completions increased 158% for a total of 651 construction projects with May 2024 being the highest number of completions in program history with 124. These projects consisted of manufactured housing replacements, reconstruction of single-family residences and rehabilitation of single-family residences. Of the 1,025 projects, 144 required total replacement and elevation.

The HRP 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 their priority climate resilience projects.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Over the past year, NCORR has continued to support nine regions in the eastern part of the state with their priority climate resilience projects through the Regions Innovating for Strong Economies and Environment (RISE) program. Many of these projects help build resilience for the populations most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. For example, NCORR helped the Mid-Carolina Council of Government identify funding to complete a feasibility assessment for installing energy backup systems at critical facilities located in marginalized communities. Since the RISE program and nine Councils of Governments published their [Portfolios of Priority Projects](#) in Spring 2023, NCORR and its partners have secured funding to support 34 projects with over \$2.3 million in funding. Additional projects identified through RISE are nature-based solutions selected to build resilience.

The RISE program supports local capacity building for long-term disaster recovery and resilience planning and implementation. The program has funding to continue working in the eastern half of the state beyond the next 12 months. NCORR continues to look for funding to expand RISE to North Carolina's western communities.

2.3.7 Pilot a flood insurance program.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

The NCORR has developed and begun operating a Flood Insurance Pilot Program. The program is akin the Flood Insurance Assistance Program funded by the Community Development Block Grant—Disaster Recovery. NCORR is currently funding up to \$2,000 or two years of insurance premiums, whichever comes first. The coverage is to the lesser of the total project cost or the maximum National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) coverage amount of \$250,000.

In December 2023, licensed NCORR staff began writing the first flood insurance policies in the agency's history. By June 30, 2024, 48 insurance policies for a total combined premium of \$49,804 have been written according to NCORR's agreement with "NFIP Direct." Another 38 premiums for \$35,862.27 total have been reimbursed to policy holders directly. The program is active and ongoing.

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

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: 2028

The NCORR Infrastructure Program is currently developing community infrastructure projects in Bladen, Duplin, Hyde and Robeson Counties, in 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. This summer, the Infrastructure Program celebrated the one-year anniversary of the City of Fayetteville's Community Resource Center constructed with Community Development Block Grant–Mitigation grant dollars awarded by NCORR.

In an exciting development during the past year, construction began on the Princeville Levee and Floodgate Project, which will restore the functionality of the four floodgates in the current levee protecting the town of Princeville. This project has become even more important following the Army Corps of Engineers' announcement that they would be unable to construct a new levee to prevent future flooding in Princeville. Additional progress with infrastructure investment in the town this year was the successful bidding out of water infrastructure contracting for the 53-acre site proposed as the future home of municipal facilities, public housing and retail shops.

Other projects that reached completion include the Bladen County stormwater study showing conditions and recommendations for future flooding across seven communities and the restoration of access to public facilities in the town of Magnolia through demolition of a hazardous building.

Over the next year, NCORR expects to complete repair and protection of the envelope of a pre-integration school-turned-community center in Hyde County's Engelhard. Additionally, the repair of an essential wastewater treatment facility in Fairmont should be nearing completion. NCORR also expects significant progress on a new water tower intended to serve emergency facilities housing first responders and a correctional facility in Robeson County. The program continues to monitor project progress and proactively advise local government partners on next steps to produce successfully completed projects.

2.3.9 Develop a climate resilience planning guide for local leaders.

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Fall 2024

NCORR is developing a *Resilient Communities Planning Guide* for local governments and those assisting local governments. The guide is designed to empower local and regional leaders to understand their climate vulnerabilities and develop priorities for action through a community-engaged process. The guide has two volumes: a Playbook (Volume 1) and an Idea Book (Volume 2).

The Playbook will provide a framework to guide users through the process of building a team, analyzing vulnerabilities and assets, conducting community engagement, prioritizing actions and identifying implementation steps. The document will also help communities develop an inclusive and equitable community engagement process and a stakeholder committee to support the planning process. Additional parts of the Playbook will provide instructions on identifying and assessing physical and social vulnerabilities for a more holistic risk assessment.

The Idea Book will provide examples of projects, programs and policies that improve resilience across social, economic and environmental domains. The Idea Book also contains a section on equity and justice to help users understand the topic's connection to resilience and strategies for addressing equity and justice through resilience initiatives.

Following the anticipated release in fall 2024, NCORR plans to conduct outreach and engagement on the Guide, including training for its users.

The project is supported by funding from the Economic Development Administration and Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funding.

2.4 Help complete initiatives in the Natural and Working Lands Action Plan and Executive Order 305, An Order to Protect and Restore North Carolina's Critical Natural and Working Lands

2.4.1 Improve land conservation and preservation efforts at Samarcand.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Through collaboration with the National Heritage Program, the groups identified an approximately 55-acre section of Samarcand Training Academy in the Drowning Creek Lumber River watershed suitable for dedication under a conservation agreement. Samarcand will seek out additional opportunities to promote Natural and Working land initiatives.

2.4.2 Conserve natural and working lands surrounding the NCNG's Camp Butner Training Center

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

The NCNG's Camp Butner Training Center (CBTC) contains 98% of the North Carolina Army National Guard (NCARNG)'s field training acreage and all of its small arms ranges. CBTC also supports training for the North Carolina Air National Guard, US Army Reserve, Reserve Officer Training Corps, and active units from Fort Liberty and Camp LeJeune. Located about 15 miles north of two of North Carolina's largest and fastest-growing cities, Raleigh and Durham, and in the heart of those cities' watersheds, CBTC is at risk of having its training capabilities limited due to looming encroachment challenges.

Through the US Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) CBTC seeks to protect 80% of the land within a 1-mile radius of the installation. Together with its partners--the Tar River Land Conservancy, Triangle Land Conservancy, NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, City of Raleigh (Watershed Protection Program), Durham County, Granville County, and the Durham Soil and Water Conservation District--the NCNG has supported the creation of a conservation buffer surrounding CBTC. By limiting development in this area, CBTC can continue its operations without disturbing its neighbors-- currently rural agricultural and low-density residential. CBTC's location within the watersheds of Raleigh and Durham, and those cities' interest in permanently protecting their clean water sources, have forged a partnership to benefit everyone. By cooperating to preserve the natural and working lands within a mile of CBTC's boundary, CBTC maintains its training capabilities while the local governments protect over 10,000 acres of prime watershed, an increasingly critical resource for both drinking water quality and flooding resilience.

Thus far, the Department of Defense's REPI program has provided \$7.5 million in funding to support 15 conservation easements protecting 1,791 acres of land surrounding CBTC.

2.4.3 Implement NCNG climate resiliency and integrated natural resources management planning update for Camp Butner.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: 2024

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: 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, US Fish and Wildlife Service, federally recognized tribes, other agencies as needed.

In addition to the initiatives listed above, DPS contributes to the fulfillment of the Natural and Working Lands Action Plan and Executive Order 305 with the following initiatives, described under other sections of this report, as noted below.

- NCNG uses prescribed burning to minimize the risk of wildland fire to its facilities, personnel and visitors. (2.2.2)
- NCORR released the NC Resilience Exchange, an online toolbox that features resources for natural and working lands. (2.3.2)
- NCORR's Strategic Buyout Program purchases at-risk properties for flooding and transfers them to municipalities as deed-restricted greenspace. (2.3.4)
- NCEM and NCORR support the nature-based solutions through project identification programs. (2.1.2, 2.3.6, 2.5.1, 2.5.2)
- NCORR and NCEM are helping local governments integrate resilience-building efforts into their planning documents. (2.1.2, 2.3.6, 4.3.1)

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

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

Status: Complete

Completion Date: January 2024

Executive Order 266, which Governor Cooper signed in July 2022, directed the Department of Administration (DOA) to update the state's requirements for construction on state land subject to flooding. The Executive Order was a direct outgrowth of NCORR's work with the Interagency Resilience Team. NCORR staff 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. The update was completed by DOA in January 2024.

NCORR plans to continue to support DOA's work in implementing the new requirements and is currently planning a webinar and training regarding the use of nature-based solutions in stormwater management and flooding resilience.

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 (DEQ), the Department of Transportation, and the State Climate Office and the Coastal Dynamics Design Lab at North Carolina State University to support these important efforts.

As part of this effort, NCORR staff serves on the advisory board for DEQ's Division of Mitigation Services work to develop natural infrastructure for flood mitigation. These efforts are ongoing, and over the next year, NCORR will continue to partner with these state entities to monitor progress on these efforts.

2.5.3 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, Executive Order 246 and – new this year – Executive Order 305.

NCORR's Climate Strategy Report guidelines include a recommendation that agencies include information about how each action addresses equity, as required through Executive Order 246.

2.5.4 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. In late 2023, the IRT participated in an equity workshop to identify ways each agency could contribute to the growth of equitable and just climate resilience programs. Over the next 12 months, the IRT will continue to convene monthly.

2.5.5 Initiate a monthly climate resilience newsletter to communicate climate resilience resources to local governments, state agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

In April 2024, NCORR launched the [Spotlight on Resilience](#), an email newsletter focused on climate resilience resources. Through the newsletter, NCORR shares information about its own tools, like the NC Resilience Exchange and the Heat Action Plan Toolkit, as well as resources developed by other organizations, funding opportunities, successful resilience projects and resilience-related training and events. In its first three months, subscriptions increased 42% and the newsletter reached local government staff in 123 NC municipalities and 61 counties. Each issue includes resources focused on integrating equity into planning and implementation processes. In the next 12 months, NCORR plans to release 12 more issues of the newsletter, each with a timely resilience focus, including seasonal hazards, new resources and forthcoming funding opportunities. NCORR will also survey subscribers to determine how the newsletter can best be tailored to their needs and goals.

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 Educate SHP employees on health impacts of climate change and heat-related injuries.

Status: Planned

Expected Completion Date: 2025

SHP will produce a video and/or PowerPoint to educate employees about the health impacts of climate change and heat-related injuries. Providing awareness to all employees will hopefully help reduce future climate related health impacts and injuries.

This education campaign relates to environmental justice as SHP Troopers routinely engage with the public. Increasing awareness about the health impacts of climate change and heat-related injury amongst SHP staff can have external positive impacts for the communities SHP serves.

3.1.2 Help local governments address risks from extreme heat.

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

In partnership with the State Climate Office of North Carolina, the NC Department of Health and Human Services and the Duke University Heat Policy Innovation Hub, NCORR released a [Heat Action Plan Toolkit](#) for local governments in our state. The toolkit includes a template heat action plan with recommended actions and background information on the importance of helping residents withstand extreme heat. The Toolkit also includes guidance on how to identify groups most at risk from extreme heat, sample messaging and graphics for communicating with residents and sample checklists and protocols for cooling centers. The resource also contains [region-specific heat thresholds](#) so that communities know the heat index at which residents need to be concerned about their health. Over the next 12 months, NCORR plans to announce a program to support local governments' use of the Heat Action Plan Toolkit.

3.2 Advance health equity

3.2.1 Award GCC public safety grants for communities impacted by climate change.

Status: Proposed

Expected Completion Date: TBD

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 events made worse by climate change. Stress and strain caused by these incidents can cause an increase in violence. A grant could provide more resources or provide equipment lost due to the climate change incident. GCC will develop a policy and plan for different climate change grant opportunities that is used when an incident occurs.

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: Complete

Completion Date: 2024

NCORR has completed its work with the UNC Development Finance Initiative to build a strategy for the development and preservation of affordable 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.

NCORR shared the completed planning documents with local governments in the counties of interest to permit optimized investment in future affordable housing development. NCORR's Affordable Housing Development Fund Round 3 project awards incorporated county-level data into the project evaluation process, which is expected to improve the effectiveness of the resulting housing projects.

4.1.2 Provide additional funding opportunities for safe and resilient affordable housing.

Status: Underway

Expected Completion Date: December 2027

Last October, NCORR awarded the remaining \$47.2 million of funding in the Affordable Housing Development Fund. Of the 16 applications received, 10 were from projects in counties designated as Most Impacted and Distressed (MID). These counties had yet to be awarded Community Development housing dollars, enabling NCORR to invest in the recovery and resiliency of all but one of the counties deemed most in need by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Awarded projects include both homeownership and new affordable rental development projects expected to result in 30 single family for-sale homes and 164 rental units affordable to low- and moderate-income households. NCORR will work with the Lumbee Tribal Government as well as local governments in Beulaville, Maysville, Pamlico County and Scotland County. Construction on awarded projects is expected to begin in 2025.

Haywood County Affordable Housing Development Fund has awarded \$6 million to fund 84 units of affordable rental and 18-23 affordable single family detached homeownership units scheduled to begin construction in the second half of 2025.

NCORR will assist the county in offering the \$4 million remaining balance in a second round of funding targeting awards in early 2025. In addition, Haywood County is currently offering \$1 million for down payment and closing cost assistance to first time homebuyers, residents displaced by the storm, first responders and teachers. The first home purchase funded by the program is expected before the end of 2024.

4.1.3 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 its 2021 commitment, NCORR has distributed approximately \$65.9 million of the state’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)–Disaster Recovery funds to partner with housing agencies across counties designated as Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) to increase safe, affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income households. NCORR and the NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) have been 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. In the past year, NCORR and its partners hosted ribbon-cuttings at seven new housing developments contributing 582 new affordable rental units to communities in six counties hardest hit by the storms. Columbus, Edgecombe (two projects), New Hanover, Onslow, Pitt and Robeson have all celebrated the addition of safe, quality and attractive housing affordable to families making, on average, no more than 60% of the area median income. Over the next 12 months, NCORR expects significant progress on the remaining six developments in five counties in eastern North Carolina designated as MID jurisdictions.

Over the past year, the Public Housing Restoration Fund Program continued to assist projects serving some of the most economically disadvantaged residents of our state. The new Eatmon Townhomes project hosted by the Wilson Housing Authority completed its first year of full occupancy, and the Housing Authority of the City of Lumberton (HACL) moved into the rehabilitated administrative and maintenance facilities funded with CDBG-Mitigation dollars.

NCORR anticipates more Public Housing Restoration Fund Program projects will make progress in the coming year, including the \$18 million replacement of 72 of the units HACL lost to Hurricanes Matthew and Florence. NCORR expects grant funding will cover approximately one third of the capital cost. In addition, both Wilmington Housing Authority and Fayetteville Metro Housing Authority are using over \$3 million in grant funding to remediate and repair the effects of mold on their properties. Over the longer term, NCORR expects both HACL and the Princeville Housing Authority to use CDBG-Mitigation awards to construct replacement housing for their communities. Altogether, the Public Housing Restoration Fund continues to invest \$19.2 million in constructing or rehabilitating housing and other facilities serving tenants earning, on average, 30% of the median income in the area.

Additional projects are also supporting NCORR's goal increase affordable housing in areas hit by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence. Seeing a need within the local government and tax credit development communities for gap funding on approved 4% tax credit projects, NCORR awarded \$22.3 million through a competitive application process to three local governments. These entities committed to constructing 626 affordable apartments by December 2026. In addition, a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the 180 units in Greenville earlier this year was among those projects adding much needed affordable rental housing to current supply. Furthermore, construction has already begun on projects in Wilmington and Morehead City, with significant progress expected over the next 12 months. As with all grant activity cited in this section, the resulting housing will be more resilient to the effects of climate change and potentially devastating storms like those that precipitated the awarding of federal grants currently being deployed.

4.2 Create jobs and economic growth

DPS does not have initiatives to report under this item.

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 on how to improve their climate resilience.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCORR received grant funding from the Geos Institute to implement the Climate Ready America Southeast Navigator Network Program in North Carolina. The goal of the program is to connect the Federal Emergency Management Agency-designated Community Disaster Resilience Zone (CDRZ) communities to training, funding, capacity building and technical support resources to advance their resilience initiatives. The eighteen CDRZs jurisdictions are located in ten counties within the eastern part of North Carolina.

In the first year of the program, the team focused on building relationships with each community through listening sessions, identification of community-led resilience initiatives, development of cooperative agreements, educating and collaborating with partner organizations, and identification of resources to plan, design and implement local resilience building projects.

In the second year of the program, the team continues to work on implementation of the identified short-term resilience plans and projects. More importantly, the team is beginning to coordinate long-term transformative initiatives to build comprehensive disaster and climate resilience through the integration of future conditions in planning processes, building administrative capacity for local governments and developing comprehensive and design-based solutions with a 30-year vision to the future.

4.4 Initiate other projects aimed at investing in underserved communities

4.4.1 Invest in historically underserved communities.

Status: Ongoing

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

NCEM works with local governments during the update of Hazard Mitigation Plans and during development of hazard mitigation project proposals to increase outreach to historically underserved communities including state-recognized tribal communities, communities with higher concentrations of citizens with English as a second language, high unemployment rates, limited access to public services, transportation limits, and other factors contributing to reduced access to government assistance.

NCEM prioritizes assistance to FEMA-identified Community Disaster Resilience Zones (communities exhibiting high social vulnerability or increased exposure to natural hazard impacts) and economically disadvantaged rural communities.

NCEM is a national leader in identification of viable Capability and Capacity Building grant proposals designed to provide technical and financial assistance to underserved communities in the development of feasible and cost-effective mitigation measures designed to reduce impacts from natural hazards.