

ALBEMARLE RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



Wisely Conserving Natural Resources and Creating Opportunities for
Positive Economic & Community Development



Number 14, June 2009

New Wetlands Help Protect Water Quality in Chowan County

Millions of dollars have been spent over the past 30+ years to improve the water quality in the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds by controlling the chemicals that flow into and accumulate in these bodies of water. The multi-faceted approach to water quality improvement has included a focus on the practices of commercial enterprises and private landowners who routinely apply nitrogen, phosphorous and other chemicals to the land. Stormwater run-off from these properties carry high concentrations of chemicals into the Sounds, and contribute to the algal blooms, putrid water smells and fish kills in the area.

The Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study, completed in the 1980s, identified golf courses as one of many commercial contributors to water pollution since golf courses traditionally apply significant amounts of chemicals and fertilizers to maintain fairways and greens. The golf course in Edenton was no exception. Created on land that was originally part of a military complex that occupied several miles of waterfront, natural water storage and filtration systems had been destroyed by earlier development efforts, and direct run-off to the Sound intensified ongoing water quality problems in the Albemarle area.

Funded by a \$414,000 grant from the *Clean Water Management Trust Fund*, the drainage system at Chowan Golf and Country Club (CGCC) has been redesigned to create a series of wetlands and buffers which can store more than three inches of rainfall and absorb nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment before the "filtered" water flows into the Sound. Permanent easements were created next to all areas converted to wetlands and over 18,000 wetland plants and trees have been added to create riparian buffers. In addition, a nutrient management plan and a chemical handling facility have been established to ensure appropriate application and storage of all chemicals used by CGCC. The overall result of this project, initiated in 2003, will be the significant reduction of stormwater pollution entering the Sound from chemicals and fertilizers used to maintain the golf course.

This project was endorsed by the Chowan County Commissioners and Manager. Project collaborators included Albemarle RC&D Council, Chowan Soil & Water Conservation



About 15 acres of wetlands were constructed during the first and second phases of the project.



In the second phase of the project, portions of three deep ponds were converted to wetlands (photos above).

District, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, NCSU– Department of Bio-Agriculture Engineering, NC Dept of Agriculture, Chowan County Extension Service, and CGCC members, board of directors and professional staff.

New Skate Park, Recreational Ball Fields and Playgrounds in Perquimans County



With a \$431,125 grant from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), Perquimans County is set to construct later this year a T-ball field, softball field, concession stand, public restroom, and two playgrounds at the Perquimans Community Center. A skate park has been completed (photo above). The Albemarle RC&D Council provided grant-writing and technical support.

Legislative Update

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture included level funding (\$50.7M) in the 2010 Budget for the RC&D program. The Senate will consider the language over the next few weeks. Please contact your senators to ask for their continued support of RC&D. Use the RC&D County Fact Sheets on our website (www.albemarlecd.org/publications) to provide data that reinforces your requests for support. If you have any questions about how or where to send your request for support, Linda Peterson would be glad to clarify the process. Contact her via e-mail at albemarlercandd@yahoo.com or by calling 252-482-7437.

RC&D Calendar

July 9th, 2009

Albemarle RC&D Executive Committee Meeting, 9:00 am
730 N. Granville Street, Suite B, Edenton

August 11th, 2009

Albemarle RC&D Quarterly Council Meeting, 7:00 pm
730 N. Granville Street, Suite B, Edenton

August 30th to September 2nd, 2009

NC Annual RC&D Meeting
Location: Grove Park Inn Asheville, NC
Sponsored by Carolina Land & Lakes RC&D
For information, call 828-464-5559

October 8th, 2009

Albemarle RC&D Executive Committee Meeting, 9:00 am
730 N. Granville Street, Suite B, Edenton

New Boardwalk/Nature Trail in the Dismal Swamp State Park in Camden County

The Dismal Swamp State Park has completed a second 400 foot section of a 2,400 foot boardwalk/nature trail in the park. This is the first time that an area within the interior of the 14,344-acre park is being made accessible to the public; all pre-existing trails are around the periphery, mainly former logging trails. The boardwalk/nature trail is adjacent to the multi-purpose Visitor Center with auditorium, exhibit hall and classroom, and within easy walking distance of the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center/Rest Area. It is estimated that over 100,000 visitors will visit the park annually, of which at least 50% are expected to use the trail.

The boardwalk/nature trail will connect with 16.7 miles of hiking and mountain biking trails within the park. It is adjacent to the Dismal Swamp Canal, which connects with the Pasquotank River and the Albemarle Sound. Locally, it connects to biking trails leading to Merchants Millpond State Park and to a recently developed system of 5.5 miles of multi-use trail by the Camden County Parks and Recreation leading to South Mills, NC, and with plans to connect to the City of Chesapeake's 20 mile multi-use trail.

Park personnel are already providing environmental education programs annually to an average of 8,000 public school students.

When complete, the boardwalk will make it possible for visitors, both adults and children,



The 2,400 foot boardwalk/nature trail will form a loop through the interior of the Great Dismal Swamp.

to experience the swamp forest, and to view first-hand a wide variety of wildlife native to an interior wetland.

This project is being implemented with a \$50,000 grant from the North Carolina Recreational Trails Program and matching funds from the Dismal Swamp State Park and the Friends of the Dismal Swamp State Park. The Albemarle RC&D Council is providing administrative and technical support.

On-Going Projects

Camden County

- Treasure Point Community Park
- Dismal Swamp State Park Boardwalk and Nature Trail

Chowan County

- Chowan County Nature Tourism
- Cape Colony Neighborhood Access
- Chowan County Water Quality & Water Management Study
- Cowan County Water Quality Improvement Project

Currituck County

- Whalehead Club Shoreline Protection and Water Quality Improvement

Dare County

- Roanoke Island Festival Park Canoe/Kayak Access and Maritime Forest Trail
- Manteo High School Constructed Wetlands and Outdoor Environmental Education Classroom

Hyde County

- Ocracoke Resource Development
- Englehard Park Lighting
- Hyde County Water Management Study

Pasquotank County

- Shadneck Public Boat Access
- River Road Middle School Constructed Wetlands
- Regional Baseball Heritage
- Upper Little River Watershed Protection

Perquimans County

- Commerce Park Shoreline Stabilization and Constructed Wetlands
- Perquimans County Nature Tourism Development
- Perquimans County Community Center Phase II
- Perquimans County Community Center Fishing Pier and Canoe/Kayak Access
- Water Quality Improvement and Water Management Study
- Perquimans River Riparian Forest Conservation
- Hertford Kayak Launches

Tyrrell County

- Alligator & Goatneck Community House Lifting and Septic Tank Repair

Washington County

- Plymouth Riverfront Renovation
- Pungo River Drainage District Water Management

The Albemarle RC&D Council is a 501(C)(3) private non-profit organization that serves the people of Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell & Washington Counties

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All programs and services of the Albemarle RC&D Council are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, disability or political beliefs.

Questions or Comments? Contact albemarlercandd@yahoo.com
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