



# Water Quality: Actions & Resources

Fact Sheet



Taking steps to protect and improve your critical coastal waters starts with identifying the value of waterways to your community. Waterways provide drainage benefits and also may provide recreation, drinking water, fisheries, cultural heritage, visual and aesthetic enjoyment, tourism and increased property values.

## Avenues for Action

Local governments can consider the following avenues for taking actions to maintain the benefits provided by healthy aquatic environments:

- watershed plans
- forest protection
- riparian buffer ordinances
- tree preservation ordinances
- local environmental programs
- transportation planning
- education
- flexible zoning
- local land-use plans
- farm protection
- subdivision ordinances
- stormwater ordinances
- floodplain management
- erosion and sediment control programs
- government building sites
- reforestation plans
- water and sewer infrastructure planning

## Resources

The following resources provide information, tools and training for local governments seeking to protect and enhance local water quality:



**North Carolina NEMO**  
(Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials)  
[www.ncsu.edu/nemo](http://www.ncsu.edu/nemo)

NC NEMO is an educational program that targets counties and municipalities, addressing needs by focusing on the link between land use and water quality and encouraging local governments to think at a watershed level.



**North Carolina Sea Grant**  
[www.ncseagrants.org](http://www.ncseagrants.org)

Sea Grant extension specialists help local officials understand links between land use, runoff and water quality through research-based education. Staff members also assist with policy development related to water quality, as well as one-on-one assistance for coastal counties and localities.

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**North Carolina National Estuarine Research Reserve (NCNERR)**  
**N.C. Coastal Training Program**  
[www.nccoastaltraining.net](http://www.nccoastaltraining.net)

The N.C. Coastal Training Program provides science-based information, training and access to new technology to help local officials make informed decisions regarding coastal resources. The program offers workshops, seminars, distance learning, technology applications and demonstrations.



**Watershed Education for Communities and Officials (WECO)**  
[www.ces.ncsu.edu/weco](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/weco)

WECO is an N.C. Cooperative Extension program that facilitates partnerships between watershed stakeholders in North Carolina to accomplish collaborative solutions to water resources issues. WECO's site features successful local

projects, information on public involvement, watershed education and plans and technical tools.



Center for Watershed Protection

[www.cwp.org](http://www.cwp.org)

This center works to protect watersheds and create viable solutions and partnerships for community land and water management. It also provides training and resources. Use site search engine to find:

- *A handbook for changing development rules in your community*
- *Codes and ordinances worksheet; conserving and planting trees at development sites*
- *Watershed and wetland protection information tool kit for county officials*



EPA Low Impact Development Center

[www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid)

This site has a collection of resources on stormwater and low-impact development (LID). Of particular interest:

- Streaming video program on LID, *Reining in the storm - One building at a time*
- *Using rainwater to grow livable communities*
- *Stormwater manager's resource center*
- *Rooftops to Rivers Fact Sheet: Green strategies for controlling stormwater and combined sewer overflows*



Green Values Toolbox

<http://greenvalues.cnt.org>

This site is hosted by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), an organization that develops tools and methods for sustainable economic development. CNT also carries out public policy research, advocacy and coalition building, with an interest in the intersection between transportation, land use and water quality.

- *Stormwater Calculator*: calculates the differences in stormwater discharge and costs for specific scenarios that incorporate "green" stormwater interventions
- *Water: From trouble to treasure*

## Southeast Watershed Assistance Network

[www.watershed-assistance.net](http://www.watershed-assistance.net)

This site provides "a clearinghouse of land and water protection resources," including links to codes and ordinances; information on land and resource conservation and management of wetlands, watersheds and stormwater; and community training for local officials. The site also has a community resource mapper tool.



National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
Coastal Services Center

[www.csc.noaa.gov/training](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/training)

NOAA's Coastal Services Center provides training for coastal resource managers in the areas of geospatial technology, coastal management and building process skills. Training is offered at their training facility in Charleston, S.C., or at your organization. Some courses are available online.

The Center also offers tools, technical assistance and publications that focus on learning from your peers.



Your link to  
**research and resources**  
for a healthier coast

**North Carolina Sea Grant**

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UNC-SG-09-04E

Spring 2009

This document was developed with funding from the N.C. Fisheries Resource Grant Program and the N.C. Blue Crab and Shellfish Research Program. Printing was funded by the NOAA Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program under Grant NA06NOS4190149.