

Environment: Coastal Resilience

FCNCL 2020 Stewardship Legislative Priority:

We urge greater attention to environmental protection measures, led by the Quaker testimonies of Stewardship and Equality/Social Justice and in support of the Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting Minute on Climate Change and our FCNCL Minute on Anti-racism.

The North Carolina Legislature needs to enact protections to North Carolina's coastal communities because the state faces increasing risk to state wetlands and coastal areas at a time when the federal government is seeking to roll back water quality regulation.

Climate change, decreased federal regulation of development and mining, installation of natural gas pipelines, and proposed oil and gas exploration in coastal areas work together to put the coastal areas of our state at risk for:

- Increased flooding
- Saltwater intrusion onto agricultural land and groundwater
- Beach erosion
- Waterborne disease outbreaks
- More resources needed for post-storm reconstruction
- More economic hardship for some of the poorest areas of our state
- Harm to native wildlife and birds
- Oil spill impacts on coastal waters and beaches
- Downstream and local pollution from hog farms in flood plain areas
- Decreased income from tourism to beach and natural areas

Historically, the economic and social consequences of these risks have disproportionately affected low-income communities and people of color. The coastal communities that depend on sensibly managed natural environments will face irreparable harm if we don't take action.

Legislative Action Needed:

- Authorize NCDEQ to enact regulations protecting North Carolina's coast, regardless of federal protection rollbacks
- Uphold ban on terminal groin construction funded by taxpayer money (<https://www.nccoast.org/protect-the-coast/advocate/terminal-groins/>)
- Support legislation and measures to increase North Carolina's natural coastal resilience through protection of wetlands and stronger regulation of coastal development, especially in high-risk, flood-prone areas
- Support responsible agricultural waste disposal
- Work to prevent drilling off the NC coast

- Promote economic benefits to landowners in the coastal plain from leasing farmland for responsibly sited wind and solar installation

Coastal Resilience Center of Excellence, <https://coastalresiliencecenter.unc.edu>
North Carolina Coastal Federation, <https://www.nccoast.org/coastal-resiliency-initiative/>

October 2020