North Carolina Forever

2019 Legislative Agenda

Support Growth of North Carolina's Conservation Trust Funds

Each of North Carolina's conservation trust funds plays a critical but different role in protecting North Carolina's lands and waters. **Over the next four years, we would like to see funding for each of the trust funds increase to the following levels:**

- The Clean Water Management Trust Fund provides grant assistance to conservation nonprofits, local governments and state agencies for the protection of North Carolina's surface waters.

  Requested Increase over 4 Years: to $45 million per year
- The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund provides funding for State Parks capital projects, dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments for parks and recreation projects, and funding for public beach and coastal waterfront access.

  Requested Increase over 4 Years: to $45 million per year
- The Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund supports the purchase of agricultural conservation easements, funds programs that promote family farms, supports the continued vitality of the military network in North Carolina, and funds conservation easements on farm, forest, and horticulture lands.

  Requested Increase over 4 Years: to $10 million per year
- The RTI Study that NC Forever commissioned makes it clear that conservation trust funds are effective tools for land and water funding. NC Forever supports maintaining operational trust funds.

Support Voluntary Land and Water Conservation Initiatives for Private Landowners

- Support re-establishment of the N.C. Conservation Tax Credit within 4 years.
- Support increased funding for installation of riparian buffers under Community Assistance Conservation Program (CCAP).
  - **Requested Amount**: **$1.5 million**

Support Coastal Waters Initiatives

- Support recurring funding for FerryMon, a ferry-based water quality monitoring program for the Albermarle-Pamlico Estuarine System (APES).
    - **Requested Amount**: **$175,000 recurring (direct cost)**
- Support recurring funding for ModMon, a stationary water-quality monitoring program for the APES.
    - **Requested Amount: $160,000 recurring (direct cost)**
- Support establishing a recurring appropriation to fund a Shellfish Mariculture Grant Program, administered by North Carolina Sea Grant, that funds research projects aimed at informing an economically, ecologically, and socially beneficial shellfish mariculture industry.
    - **Requested Amount: $250,000**
- Support continued appropriations for cultch planting.
    - **Requested Amount: Maintain appropriation of $1.2 million**
- Support Jean Preston Oyster Sanctuary in Pamlico Sound to match federal NOAA funding - and seed Pamlico Sound oyster fishery as part of National Shellfish Initiative.
    - **Requested Amount: $1.5 million**
- Support full funding for DMF cultch planting to support NC wild oyster harvest.
    - **Requested Amount : $1.1 million**
- Maintain recurring funding in base budget for DMF OBX shellfish water quality testing laboratory, shellfish pathologist, UNCW research hatchery.
    - **Requested Amount : $125,000**