

Mayor's Conservation Program



As the mayor of a picturesque town on the coast, our community recognizes the significance of safeguarding and conserving our natural resources.

The Mayor's Conservation Program aims to educate and collaborate with residents and stakeholders to preserve our resources for the benefit of future generations.

Maintaining healthy and intact coastal ecosystems is crucial for protecting and increasing the resiliency of our community. These ecosystems serve as the first line of defense and help to reduce floodwaters while preventing shoreline erosion.

Healthy ecosystems are crucial to our economy as they promote recreation and tourism, which in turn creates employment opportunities.

Beaufort is making significant progress to becoming a North Carolina clean water coastal community by collaborating with local and state organizations. Several programs have been introduced to preserve our natural resources on land and water.

- [*2017 Watershed Restoration Plan*](#)
- [*Navigable Water Ordinance*](#)
- [*Resilient Beaufort*](#) (part of North Carolina Resilient Coastal Communities Program)

On Feb. 24, 2020, through a resolution, the Town of Beaufort endorsed the 2020-2025 North Carolina Marine Debris Action Plan ("Action Plan"). The Action Plan is meant to inspire strategic coordination, focus, and direction for the organizations and communities that address or will address marine debris over the next five years and into future generations. The action plan has five goals: Lead and Coordinate, Prevent, Remove, and Prevent and Remove Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADV's), and Research and Assessment.

The Mayor's Conservation Program aims to continue the momentum of the Action Plan by engaging our residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to protect and preserve our natural resources. Through the Mayors Conservation Program, the Mayor will work with our citizens and

other partners to help prevent marine debris by increasing awareness and inspiring behavior change. To kick off the Mayor Conservation Program, the Mayor will work with Plastic Free by the Sea. The goal will be to educate citizens, businesses, and visitors about the importance of reducing single-use plastics through workshops, educational materials, and outreach.

Let's keep Beaufort clean, green, and pristine! Our Future depends on it.

Mayor Sharon Harker

2023 Partnerships

Plastic Free By the Sea

- October 11, 2023 - Marine Debris Symposim Reception by Plastic Free by the Sea

Duke Marine Lab

- November 8, 2023 - Paint a Drain - Storm drain awareness at Louis Randolph Johnson Jr. Memorial Park in conjunction with Art in the Park
- December 13, 2023 - Paint a Drain - Storm drain awareness with ECHS students painting a mural next to a storm rain on the sidewalk at Louis Randolph Johnson Jr. Park.

Duke Marine Lab Community Science Initiative (CSI) was a part of the Town of Beaufort's "Art in the Park" event that happened Nov 8 at Louis Randolph Johnson Jr. Park. Duke CSI and Dr. Rachel Noble of UNC Institute of Marine Sciences brought undergraduate students to engage with the public and educate them on our Adopt-a-drain program. There were also various art activities where kids could do fish prints, color with chalk, or play storm hole (a storm drain themed version of corn hole) all while the East Carteret High School Art Society painted a drain mural to raise awareness on storm drain pollution. There was a great turnout, and it was wonderful to see people of all ages engaging with art and having fun together. Duke and UNC are excited to participate in more Beaufort events in the future.

Mayor Sharon Harker said, when asked about the drain mural, "I absolutely love it, I think it's great when we get our young people involved and our community. And doing it through art is a great way to express themselves, so I really appreciate them bringing their talents out here. Adopting a drain is a wonderful program, it really is, and I can't wait to adopt more drains. I just think it's absolutely beautiful and fits in with Beaufort. We're learning a whole lot about marine debris and the impact it has on our environment. We're a coastal town so we have to make sure that we treat our waterways with care."

Duke Marine Lab Community Science Initiative and UNC Institute of Marine Sciences

- November 2023 - ongoing - [Adopt a Drain](#)

<https://sites.duke.edu/communityscience/programs/water-quality/>

Become a citizen scientist and help us monitor plastics in local storm water! Click the link and [Adopt a Drain](#) near you.



[Navigable Waters Brochure & Ordinance](#)
[Watershed Restoration Plan - 2017](#)



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