

# COASTAL RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSE FINAL REPORT\*

**Grant Number:** Contract #7233

**Grant Title:** CRFL P064 Bicentennial Park Fishing Pier Swansboro

**Grant Award Period:** July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018; 90 day extension to September 30, 2018

**Project Costs:**

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
	\$ 131,325	\$ 124,074
TOTAL	\$ 131,325	\$ 124,074

**Final Project Summary:**

The Town of Swansboro was awarded funding in 2017 through the Coastal Recreation Fishing License program to replace the in-shore recreation fishing pier at Bicentennial Park that was deemed unsafe in 2016. The fishing pier has always been very popular and heavily used by local and visiting anglers; it is truly the centerpiece of the park. The new fishing pier was completed in July 2018 and incorporated many of the same features as the original with some modifications that would allow it to be more user friendly across all ages and abilities. The new fishing pier is larger, has alternating height railing to accommodate anglers in a wheel chair, or young children, and has a larger shade structure at the entrance to the pier.

The park and fishing pier are highly visible to traffic traveling along Highway 24 through Swansboro. There has been a significant increase in usage of the park and fishing pier since opening in July 2017. A fish cleaning station, raised benches and built in tables allow for a positive fishing experience for everyone. The construction of the fishing pier has not only provided a public fishing access to anglers but has allowed the Town to offer a wide range of environmental and fishing outreach and educational activities and to partner with Hammocks Beach State Park, NC Coastal Federation, and other private businesses. These activities include shellfish education workshops, seasonal fishing seminars, shelling cruises, fishing tournaments and boating safety classes.

Three main objectives were established for the fishing pier replacement project and were met within one month of the fishing pier being completed and opened for public use. 1.) Opportunities for recreational anglers in Swansboro, Onslow County, Carteret County and surrounding areas have been restored and improved by providing a free and accessible public inshore fishing pier. 2.) Opportunities have been enhanced for recreational anglers by enlarging the pier to serve a greater number of fishermen, including those with disabilities. 3.) An enhanced venue is now available for the Parks and Recreation department to offer public programming opportunities and increase awareness about the public waters, fishing, shell fishing and more.

The Town of Swansboro also received a grant from the Division of Coastal Management NC Public Beach and Waterfront Access Program to complete the fishing pier access and various high ground enhancements which include installation of a trellis with swings, replacement of picnic tables and benches, as well as landscaping.