

N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Wilmington Regional Office Profile

Wilmington Region - 7 county territory
Estimated Population Per 2010 - 723,099
Population Projection by 2030 – 1. 03 million
Total Area of the Region – 5,628
Total Stream Miles - 2,666
Total Freshwater Lake Acres - 10,206
Total Saltwater Acres – 401,158
Total Coastline Miles - 197



Major Cities

- Wilmington – New Hanover County
- Jacksonville – Onslow County
- Morehead City – Carteret County

Natural Resources

- Four River Basins – Fisheries, Recreational and Wildlife Resources
 - Cape Fear
 - Lumber
 - Neuse
 - White Oak
- **National Parks**
 - Cape Lookout National Seashore
 - Fort Fisher National Historic Site
 - Croatan National Forest
 - Moore’s Creek Bridge National Historic Site
- **State Parks**
 - Carolina Beach
 - Fort Macon
 - Hammocks Beach
 - Lake Waccamaw
 - Brunswick Town State Historic Site
- **Attractions**
 - NC State Forestry Museum
 - NC State Aquariums- Fort Fisher and Pine Knoll Shores
 - Battleship USS NC
 - Topsail Sea Turtle Hospital

Major Industry

- PPD – New Hanover County
- International Paper – New Hanover/Columbus counties
- Progress Energy – Brunswick/New Hanover counties
- N.C. State Ports Authority – New Hanover County
- General Electric – New Hanover County
- Wilmington International Airport
- Martin Marietta – Brunswick/New Hanover/Onslow/Pender counties
- Agriculture
 - Crops
 - Trees
 - Swine

Minor Industry:

- Murphy Farms – Duplin County
- Elementis Chromium – New Hanover County

Special Interest

- U.S. Marine Corps Base-Camp Lejeune – Onslow County
- UNC-Wilmington
- Cape Fear Community College

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Division of Air Quality (DAQ)

DAQ's 13-person Wilmington Regional Office staff ensures that a wide range of core goals and objectives of the DAQ are met. Most priorities stem from the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments in conjunction with other related federal air quality rules and regulations, with a primary focus of protecting North Carolina's citizens from air pollution so that they can live healthy, prosperous lives. The basic duties performed include, but are not limited to, the issuance of air permits, investigation of citizen complaints, inspection of industrial facilities, and operation and maintenance of a network of sophisticated air monitors. Staff also provides daily compliance assistance to business and industry. DAQ provides same-day service for priority complaints and ambient monitors with problems.

Number of nonattainment or maintenance counties:

- 2010 SO₂ standard – The monitor in New Hanover County is currently in violation. It is expected that EPA in 2012 will officially designate New Hanover and possibly part/all of Brunswick County as nonattainment.
- 2008 ozone standard – No counties are currently violating this standard.

Class I Areas: None

Relevant WIRO Statistics: *all averages based on data from the five previous fiscal years (7/2006-6/2011)*

- DAQ currently has 173 permitted facilities in WIRO; 31 Title V; 43 Synthetic minor; 99 Small.
- DAQ WIRO issues an average of 54 small and synthetic minor permits to facilities each year with an average time to process and issue each permit of 57 days, with many permits issued in much less time.
- DAQ WIRO provides an average of 42 reviews each year for permit revocations, tax certifications, environmental assessments, and mining permits.
- DAQ WIRO issues an average of 24 written permit applicability determinations each year, plus at least that many via telephone.
- DAQ WIRO performs technical reviews and provides comments to the Permits Section staff in central office on an average of 24 Title V permit applications each year.
- DAQ WIRO conducts an average of 217 compliance inspections each year, providing on-site customer assistance with each inspection (including stack test observations, risk management plan inspections, and disaster response).
- DAQ WIRO investigates an average of 80 complaints each year, serving at least two customers with each complaint investigation.
- WIRO does not have any assistance from a local air quality program and oversees a large diverse area. Inspections are assigned differently than in some regions. Title V facilities are assigned an Engineer who serves as the facility's personal contact/customer service representative for all questions and issues. Synthetic Minor and Small facilities inspections are shared between one Chemist and three Environmental Specialists. The remaining two monitoring staff conduct small inspections on a limited basis (approximately 10 percent of their time).
- All DAQ WIRO staff members provide continuing customer service throughout the year for all permitted and non-permitted facilities. The universe of non-permitted facilities – much larger than the universe of permitted facilities – requires periodic compliance assistance in interpreting federal and state air quality regulations.
- Each of DAQ's 8-12 ambient monitors at the WIRO, located at five different monitoring sites, requires personal visits for servicing on at least a weekly basis. Due to the proximity to the N.C. State Port, the WIRO operates a Toxics monitor as part of special monitoring study funded by EPA.
- The WIRO observes an average of nine source tests each year.

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Division of Coastal Management (DCM)

The N.C. Division of Coastal Management works to protect, conserve and manage North Carolina's coastal resources through an integrated program of planning, permitting, education and research. DCM carries out the state's Coastal Area Management Act, the Dredge and Fill Law and the federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 in the 20 coastal counties, using rules and policies of the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission.

The eight staff members in DCM's Wilmington Regional Office serve Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender counties, and Onslow County south of the New River. The DCM representatives are responsible for permitting and enforcement of coastal development activities in the CAMA counties located in this region. The Wilmington district planner provides assistance to local governments developing land-use plans and applying for beach and water access grants.

Number of Active/completed Access Projects	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total
Active	20	22	7	2	3	54
Completed	5	11	11	6	2	35
Active and completed Planning Projects	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total
In Process LUP updates	14	8	7	4	3	36
Certification of LUP	6	6	2	3	1	18
LUP Amendments	0	1	4	2	2	9
Other Plan Project	1	0	0	0	0	1

CAMA permits/violations issued: (average FY2006-07 – FY2010-11)

Permit Type	Description	Number Issued
Minor Permits	Minor permits are required for projects, such as single-family houses, that don't require major permits or general permits.	26
General Permits	General permits are used for routine projects that usually pose little or no threat to the environment.	462.2
Major Permits	Major permits are necessary for activities that require other state or federal permits, for projects that cover more than 20 acres or for construction covering more than 60,000 square feet. Applications for major permits are reviewed by 10 state and four federal agencies before a decision is made.	75.8
Violations	Violation notices issued for violations of the Coastal Area Management Act, CRC rules and the N.C. Dredge and Fill Law.	56.4

Many coastal local governments handle CAMA minor permits through an agreement with the Division of Coastal Management. Locally adopted Implementation and Enforcement Plans allow local governments to process CAMA minor permits in-house, with assistance from DCM staff, giving local governments an active role in the management of the coastal resources within their jurisdictions. Wilmington District DCM staff work with 19 local governments to process CAMA minor permits; these local governments issue an average of 360 minor permits annually.

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Division of Land Resources (DLR)

DLR's mission is to promote the wise use and protection of North Carolina's land and geologic resources. The division is comprised of the following three sections:

- **Land Quality:** Implements the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973, Mining Act of 1971 and Dam Safety Law of 1967. Primary duties of these three environmental regulatory programs include advance plan or permit approval, routine onsite inspections of mines, dams and construction sites, and compliance activities as necessary.
- **Geological Survey (non-regulatory):** Examines, describes and maps the geology and mineral resources of the state, and publishes reports and maps. Administers cooperative geologic and topographic map agreements with federal, state and local agencies.
- **Geodetic Survey (non-regulatory):** Uses state-of-the-art methods of precise positioning and advanced geodetic techniques to establish and maintain the state's official survey base. Supports mapping of county and state boundaries, floodplains, boundary determination, property delineation, infrastructure development, resources evaluation surveys and scientific applications. Establishes, maintains and monitors a network of global positioning system (GPS) Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS).

DLR's Land Quality Section has nine positions located in the Wilmington Regional Office, two of which are vacant. These positions consist of one engineering supervisor, two engineers, three environmental senior specialists and three environmental specialists.

Land Quality Section Activity Measures (FY06-07 through FY10-11 five year averages)

	Statewide	WIRO
New Acres Approved to be Disturbed:	26,918	3,894 (based on last four fiscal years; FY 06-07 by region not available)
New Sediment Projects:	2,657	419
Sediment Inspections: (avg. 8,000 open projects statewide)	18,756	3,048
Mining Inspections: (avg. 900 permitted mines statewide)	925	170
Dam Safety Inspections: (avg. 1,000 high hazard dams statewide)	1,892	20
Complaints Investigated (Sediment and Mining):	1,072	129
No. of Delegated Sediment Local Programs:	51	2
Delegated Sediment Local Program Assistance Hours:	695	27

Unique Issues

The following areas currently have delegated local sediment programs in the WIRO: Jacksonville and New Hanover County. Other unique issues in the WIRO include riparian buffer rules, public projects/construction (government and universities), military facilities, coastal stormwater rules, and Coastal Area Management Act requirements.

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Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF)

The Division of Marine Fisheries is dedicated to ensuring sustainable marine and estuarine fisheries and habitats for the benefit and health of the people of North Carolina. Responsibilities cover Brunswick, New Hanover, Pender, Onslow, Columbus, Bladen and Duplin counties. Core objectives for the 42 DMF staff at WIRO (19 Marine Patrol, 11 Fisheries Management, five License and Statistics, six Shellfish Sanitation and one Habitat Protection) include:

- Manage coastal fisheries and associated habitats to maintain and enhance their quality, diversity and availability of fishery resources.
- License fishermen, obtain accurate and timely data on fishery catch and effort, its socioeconomic importance, and analyze and distribute these data for use in Fishery Management Plans.
- Review permit applications to prevent and minimize impacts to coastal habitats and to improve coordination in habitat and water quality protection among environmental agencies.
- Monitor coastal water quality to ensure that shellfish and recreational water quality meet federal and state standards for shellfish consumption and bodily contact.
- Enforce coastal fisheries statutes and regulations.

Section/Program Overview and Functions (5 year average)

Most of the following programs are localized portions of larger statewide initiatives, and it is the completion of the total statewide program that is meaningful in terms of performance measures (fish stocks must be assessed and managed throughout their range).

Fishery Management (FM) Programs: Fishery analysis and management includes activities concerned with maintenance/improvement of fisheries stocks, including habitat. Data are collected, stored, analyzed, interpreted and management actions taken in three main functional areas: Fisheries Management (analysis and management strategies), fishery dependent sampling (data provided from the industry), and fishery independent sampling (data surveys conducted by DMF staff). **Dependent Samples:** 546; **Independent Samples:** 928; **FM Public Input Meetings:** 6; **# of Species/Program Lead Analysts:** 12

License and Statistics (L&S) Programs: Three separate License and Statistics work units: 1) License Sales, 2) Trip Ticket Program (TTP) and 3) Coastal Angler Program (CAP) are conducted in the WIRO. The License program sells commercial and recreational fishing licenses, vessel registrations and permits. The TTP obtains, processes, edits and analyzes catch and effort from commercial fisheries. The CAP provides recreational fisheries statistical data of harvest, discards and fishing effort. **DMF licenses issued:** 4,915; **WRC licenses issued:** 1,412; **Phone calls:** 2,753; **Customers assisted:** 3,705; **Fish house dealers supported:** 217; **Trip tickets processed:** 23,833; **Angler interviews collected:** 2,787; **Biological data (fish lengths) collected:** 6,796; **Telephone surveys conducted:** 1,265

Habitat Program: The Habitat Protection Section is responsible for development of the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan; administration of the Public Trust/Submerged Lands Program; and coordinating division comments on habitat alteration permit applications. **Habitat Alteration Reviews:** 372

Marine Patrol: Ensures compliance with conservation regulations and protects the state's fisheries and habitat resources by inspecting commercial and recreational fishermen and fish houses. **Commercial license and dealer checks:** 5,200; **Recreational license checks:** 29,510; **Boating safety, endangered species monitoring, closed shellfish area patrol hours:** 4,225

Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality Program: This program protects public health by monitoring and classifying coastal waters for shellfish harvesting, inspecting and certifying shellfish and crustacean processing plants, testing coastal recreational swimming waters and notifying the public when bacteria levels exceed state and federal standards, surveying potential sources of shoreline pollution and reviewing and commenting on coastal development permits. **Processing plant inspections:** 394; **Shoreline surveys:** 1,568; **Recreational water quality samples:** 1,926; **Shellfish growing area samples:** 1,607.

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Division of Waste Management (DWM)

The mission of the Division of Waste Management is to prevent the harmful release of waste to the environment and to clean up existing contamination. The division is organized by type of waste managed, in a manner consistent with federal organization of programs delegated or approved by EPA for state implementation. The division has four sections: solid waste, hazardous waste, superfund and underground storage tanks. A state brownfields program operates across sections.

Regional activities primarily focus on inspections, complaint investigations, contaminant clean-up oversight, technical assistance, permit assistance and compliance and enforcement. This is intended to be a general overview of averaged data.

Solid Waste Section Staff:	1.89 FTE	Underground Storage Tank Section staff:	7.03 FTE
Hazardous Waste Section Staff:	.65 FTE	Brownfields Program Staff:	2.00 FTE
Superfund Section Staff:	1.40 FTE		

NOTE: FTEs represent home-based staff combined with regional office staff. In some cases, regional office FTEs provide services in more than one region. FTEs were allocated to regions. In most cases, DWM program regions are different from DENR regional office areas.

Primary Waste Management Facilities with Regional Oversight

Permitted Solid Waste Facilities:	147	Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites:	149
Notified Solid Waste Facilities:	147	Active Petroleum Releases:	946
Permitted Hazardous Waste Facilities:	4	Permitted Soil Remediation Sites:	3
Hazardous Waste Generators:	490	Permitted Underground Storage Tank Facilities:	534
Regulated Dry-cleaning facilities:	82	Sites Seeking Brownfield Agreements:	8

(Other facilities such as EPA National Priorities List Sites, Department of Defense Sites, sites with dry-cleaning releases, pre-regulatory landfills, and sites with no viable responsible party are handled by central office staff.)

Regional Data Elements Annual Average *(Data does not reflect central office staff functions that are performed in regions.)*

Compliance Inspections Conducted:	341
Complaints Investigated:	34
Permits Issued (only soil remediation permits are issued regionally):	4
<i>Permit Reviews are done in the Central Office for this regional office location.</i>	
Petroleum Releases Under Review:	495
Petroleum Releases Closed:	106
Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites Under Review:	12
Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites Closed (during FY 10-11):	
Review of Local Government/Private Sector Solid Waste Reports/Plans:	27 facility reports/73 LG reports/ 7 LG plans
Notices of Violations (NOVs) issued:	15
Emergency Response Technical Assistance Events:	12*
Facility Assistance Visits and Training/Presentations Provided:	63**
Brownfields Agreements Issued:	2 annually, 5 total
Brownfield Land Use Restriction Evaluations:	16

*Emergency Response Technical Assistance Events are not tracked by UST Section.

**Facility Assistance Visits and Training/Presentations Provided are not tracked by UST Section.

Future data will be reported by DWM regions as it is currently tracked. DWM data for this report was presented in a manner that correlates with the seven DENR regions. In many cases, functions performed by regional office staff may also be performed by central office staff for particular regions.

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Division of Water Quality (DWQ)

This region is located primarily in the southern coastal plain with high density populations and heavy tourism creating seasonal wastewater flow variabilities. In addition, these heavily populated areas near the beaches do not have central sewer systems, which results in specialized inspections and compliance oversight to protect the adjacent sensitive estuarine and coastal ecosystems.

Characteristics of Wilmington Regional Office

- Many outstanding resource waters and high quality waters with increased regulatory protection
- Rapid population growth (coastal area) results in stressed infrastructure and increased permitting demand
- Heavy tourism/water recreation: fishing, kayaking, swimming
- Large military bases pose unique environmental challenges
- High density of swine farms require specialized inspection and compliance oversight
- Timber/logging industries present runoff and erosion issues
- High number of second home developments results in seasonal wastewater flow issues
- Hurricane/flood response area require preparations for and response to emergencies
- Salt water intrusion/depleting aquifers impacts quality and quantity of water resources
- Shallow water table is more easily impacted and is highly interconnected with surface water

Statistics for Wilmington Regional Office

- Number of Regional Office Staff: 24
- Total High Quality/Outstanding Resource Watershed Square Miles: 813
- Water Supply Watershed Square Miles: 24
- Monitored Impaired Streams/Rivers: 29 percent
- Monitored Impaired Lakes/Reservoirs: 0 percent
- Monitored Impaired Saltwater Acres: 31 percent
- Monitored Impaired Coastline Miles: 5 percent
- Number of Water Quality Monitoring Sites: 51
- Coalition Partnerships (number of monitoring sites): Lower Cape Fear Basin Association (26)
- Population Relying on Groundwater for Drinking Water: 79 percent
- Population Relying on Surface Water for Drinking Water: 21 percent

Regional Data Elements Annual Averages

- Active Facilities: 8,323
- Permit Applications Reviewed with Permits Issued by Regional Offices: 1,150
- Permit applications Reviewed in Regional Offices with Permits Issued in Central Office: 128
- Compliance Inspections Conducted: 1,622
- Notices of Violations Sent: 298
- Civil Penalties Assessed: 88
- Water Samples Collected: 553
- Complaints, Incidents, Emergency Response Calls: 250

Permitted Facilities

- # Permitted Wastewater Treatment Plants: 220
- # Permitted NPDES Stormwater Facilities: 329
- # Permitted State Stormwater Facilities: 6,968
- # Permitted Single-Family Residences: 170
- Residuals Fields Acres: 8,281
- Reuse Irrigation Acres: 1,495
- Surface Irrigation Wastewater Acres: 5,167
- # Permitted Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations: 675

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Division of Water Resources (DWR)

The PWS Section regional office staff ensures the safety of North Carolina's public drinking water by implementing the requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the North Carolina Drinking Water Act. These requirements are primarily federal rules that North Carolina has adopted by reference. The regional office staff works directly with public water supply system owners and operators on a daily basis to ensure that the drinking water supplied to the state's citizens is safe and healthy.

Wilmington Regional Office PWS Section staff consists of 6.5 full-time employees.

Regulated Public Water Systems

The following table presents the number, types and population served by the public water systems in the Wilmington region.

	Community (e.g., city, town, mobile home park)	Non-transient Non-community (e.g., workplace, school)	Transient (e.g., rest area, church)	Adjacent*	Total
Very Small (<= 500)	70	29	250	30	379
Small (501-3,300)	38	10	10	0	58
Medium (3,301-10,000)	19	0	0	0	19
Large (10,001- 100,000)	12	0	0	0	12
Very Large (>100,000)	2	0	0	0	2
Total	141	39	260	30	470

* Two or more adjacent water systems, owned by the same supplier of water, that in combination serve 15 or more service connections or 25 or more persons.

Regional Office Staff Activity Measures: *annual average for last five years*

- Sanitary Surveys (Inspections) Completed: 242
- Technical/Regulatory Assistance On-Site Visits: 320
- New Development On-Site Assistance: 5
- Well Site Investigations for New Systems: 1
- Training Contact Hours: 353

Unique Characteristics

Extreme variations in daily water usage and peak flows due to seasonal population present significant operational challenges for public water systems serving coastal communities. Infrastructure capacity needed to meet demand during the summer can result in excessive water age during the winter months.

Ground water and surface water sources have experienced salt water intrusion impacting source quantity and water quality.

Utilized treatment processes include nano-filtration, reverse osmosis, ozone, chlorine dioxide and lime-softening clarifier technologies.

Cape Fear Public Utility Authority (Wilmington and New Hanover County) is currently constructing facilities for an Aquifer Storage and Recovery system.

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Division of Environmental Assistance and Outreach
One-Stop Environmental Assistance Coordinator – Wilmington Regional Office

Purpose

The primary responsibility of the non-regulatory One-Stop Environmental Assistance Coordinator staff is to assist businesses, local governments and citizens identify, understand and comply with all of the state's environmental requirements.

There are six (6) coordinators located across the state and represent each regional office. This staff is part of the Division of Environmental Assistance and Outreach (a division formed as part of the 2010 budget process by combining the Customer Service Center, Office of the Small Business Ombudsman and Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance).

Statutory Authority

The One-Stop Permit Assistance and Coordination Program was authorized by S.L. 2000-67 to provide a single point of contact in the regional offices for comprehensive environmental permit information. It was authorized as a pilot in two regions and then expanded statewide to assist citizens in North Carolina as well as out-of-state customers seeking to relocate their businesses or to create a new development in North Carolina. The coordinator's role is an integral part of the new Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environmental Assistance Center, serving as a single point of contact for DENR customers and as a liaison between the customer and the regulatory agencies to improve customer satisfaction.

Primary services provided by the coordinators include: permit and compliance assistance, outreach and education, customer service and technical assistance geared toward understanding environmental requirements and meeting them in a pragmatic, cost effective manner. The coordinators focus on the needs of those customers who are frequently affected by environmental rules but lack the expertise and money needed to hire someone to guide them through the regulatory, permitting and compliance processes. As a result, the coordinators provide the following services:

Key coordinator duties and responsibilities include:

- Serving as a point of contact to address the customer's issues, complaints and information requests
- Providing hands-on compliance assistance and developing customized permit information for proposed projects, including small and large businesses
- Working closely with the NC Department of Commerce to identify environmental requirements and address environmental issues for new and expanding businesses
- Developing permit directory and department- wide resources to provide factual, timely and comprehensive permit assistance
- Coordinating meetings with DENR permitting agencies and the customer to outline potential permitting requirements, fees and timelines
- Scheduling and facilitating pre-application meetings with owners, applicants and permit staff for express permit projects
- Guiding applicants through the permitting processes and providing tracking assistance once the application has been received
- Assisting DENR Divisions with educational training workshops for or related to regulations and rule changes
- Assisting with inquiries from the general public on environmental questions or problems in which they do not know which Division should be contacted
- Serving on work groups dedicated to permit and regulatory reform and customer service

The coordinators provide on-site consultation and a coordinated permit review and tracking process important for new economic development projects—all at no additional costs. This service has been cited as a competitive advantage by companies when comparing North Carolina with other states. Over the last year, the coordinators have assisted and provided customer service for the following tasks.

- Developed over 150 permit lists,
- Served as a single point of contact for over 7000 customer to address their issues, complaints and information inquiries and request by telephone and electronic mailing
- Coordinated and facilitated over 177 meetings with DENR permitting agencies and the customer to outline potential permitting requirements
- Coordinated over 330 express permitting meeting

They have been involved in alternative energy workgroups, have marketed and coordinated express permitting, have met on-site with economic developers, provided project management and assisted in problem resolution for small businesses, citizen groups and job-creation projects. They continue to be an important resource to ensure that environmental compliance and economic development are compatible.

Case Studies

Wilmington is home to the USS North Carolina Battleship Memorial that was put in place in 1961 and dedicated the next year as the state's memorial to WWII veterans and those that died during the war. While the Battleship has become one of the most visited tourism sites in NC, it has been affected by significant corrosion of the hull from interaction with the sediments and water in its permanent berth. The Environmental Assistance Coordinator arranged a scoping meeting with state agencies that oversee environmental permitting for the necessary work on the structure and those in charge of the Battleship

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Memorial. Interestingly, this meeting was held on the ship in an interior room that had been a galley so that the group could experience the ship and gain an appreciation of the scope of work involved. All attendees were briefed on the ways that the Battleship could be repaired with the least impact to the environment and the ship structure. An innovative, moveable system was presented to minimize the impacts by only working within a small restricted area that can be moved along the ship as each area is repaired and staging the repairs with a well-planned sequence of events. This work is currently in process.

More efficient fuels that reduce pollution are in demand and North Carolina power companies are working to switch their power supplies to cleaner fuels. One of these efforts pursued by Progress Energy involves de-commissioning the coal-fired Sutton Steam Plant and building a new natural gas-supplied turbine system in Wilmington NC. This effort involves not only the construction of a new facility on the Progress Energy property, but also the routing and construction of a new natural gas supply line from the west, along existing right-of-ways when possible. Overall environmental impacts are minimized wherever possible. The Environmental Assistance Coordinator worked closely with the consulting firms overseeing the project and Progress Energy to ensure that lines of communication remained open during the initial scoping of the project and ensured that the proper agencies were involved in the project.

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