
VII. Stakeholder Process

Stakeholders are persons or organizations that have an interest in the content or in the dissemination and evaluation of a program. One of the goals of the BIMP was to foster stakeholder involvement in the development process. A broad range of stakeholders has the knowledge, experiences and expertise that can contribute to the BIMP development and program success. More than that, the involvement of stakeholders allows for the incorporation of highly localized and historical expertise.

Stakeholders were involved in development of the BIMP in two ways – through advisory groups and public information/input meetings. The goals were to engage key stakeholders early on and seek input as the plan was being developed, as opposed to merely providing a summary at the end. The involvement of stakeholders proved to be a valuable source of information and an excellent forum for vetting preliminary strategies and ideas.

The stakeholders included legislators; federal, state, and local government representatives; non-government organizations; business and property owners; and the general citizens of North Carolina. These individuals offered important insight into each phase of the BIMP, including data collection, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Stakeholders provided insight into the various needs of the plan, and shared their expertise and expectations of the BIMP and visions for its future.

Stakeholders were involved in various ways, in multiple roles, and at various functions. Formal advisory groups, informal presentations, and public presentations were conducted to provide information; solicit initial ideas, feedback, data, and historical local practices; and to present the BIMP at its various stages of development.

A. The Advisory Committee and NCDENR Technical Working Group

Input into the process from government agencies and local interests were crucial to help avoid duplication of functions, share data, and develop a coordinated plan that could obtain the broadest possible support and benefit.

Two advisory groups were organized for the BIMP. The first was an internal Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources technical working group consisting of members of various DENR divisions. The second group, an advisory committee, consisted of local interests, organizations and federal agencies. The membership and meeting minutes of the working and advisory groups is provided in Appendix G.

The BIMP/DENR Technical Work Group was an intradepartmental working group established to share data, identify data needs and gaps, and facilitate collaboration. The Divisions of Water Resources, Coastal Management, Marine Fisheries, Water Quality, Land Resources (including the N.C. Geological Survey), Parks and Recreation, and the Wildlife Resources Commission were represented.

The BIMP Advisory Committee was established to provide external input on what the plan should include. It was comprised of representatives of state and federal agencies as well as other stakeholder groups. Affiliations of committee members include USACE, USFWS, NMF, N.C. Sea Grant, N.C. State University, N.C. DOT, N.C. Coastal Federation, NOAA, Environmental Defense Fund, U.S. Coast Guard, and various coastal towns, counties, and beach commissions.

The advisory groups met formally for half-day sessions on three occasions during the 18-month development of the BIMP. The general meeting format included an update on BIMP development followed by discussion and information sharing.

The first full formal meetings were held on November 27, 2008 in Raleigh with both the DENR Technical Working Group and the Advisory Committee meeting. During the meetings the work plan and schedule of the BIMP, coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and dataset acquisition were discussed.

On September 11, 2008 a second set of meetings was held at the N.C. State University McKimmon Center in Raleigh. The meeting consisted of a presentation by the BIMP team and as well as one by the USACE on their Regional Sediment Management (RSM) program. The purpose of this meeting was to review and discuss the data collection effort and the delineation of preliminary BIMP regions and sub-regions. The next steps in the development of preliminary strategies, and public stakeholder meetings were also discussed.

The third meeting of the DENR Technical Working Group and Advisory Group was held in Raleigh on February 23, 2009. During both meetings, the work completed to that date was reviewed along with the draft management strategies and methodologies, the annual volumes and costs required to maintain the current beaches and inlets, economics, vulnerability and prioritization, and potential funding options. The format of the final plan and discussion of some of the proposed recommendations was also discussed.

B. Other Stakeholder Groups

In addition to the formally organized advisory groups and public input meetings, other presentations and meetings were held with additional existing groups within the state that had interests in common with the BIMP.

1. Meetings and Presentations

Existing groups in North Carolina that focus on coastal issues served as an excellent resource to augment the gathering of information and to offer input about the BIMP. These groups included the North Carolina Beach, Inlet, and Waterway Association (NCBIWA), the North Carolina Coastal Federation, and others.

NCBIWA's mission is to represent North Carolina coastal interests in a unified way. The association holds regular meetings and conferences that provided opportunities to review BIMP outlines and status updates, and host panel discussions. During the course of the BIMP development, members of the BIMP team attended these meetings, made presentations on the BIMP, answered questions, and, at the local government meeting in March 2009, held an open panel discussion on the proposed recommendations and implementation considerations for a new long-term strategy.

Presentations on the progress of the BIMP were also given by members of the BIMP team to the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission during its regular meetings, as well as the Brunswick County Beach Consortium, the Carteret County Beach Commission, the Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Commission, and other organizations.

2. The CRC Science Panel

The Coastal Resources Commission's Science Panel on Coastal Hazards provides the commission with scientific data and recommendations pertaining to coastal hazards. They represent varied areas of specialization and backgrounds ranging from coastal geology to engineering and biological disciplines. Much of the data and input provided by the Science Panel is reflected in various parts of the BIMP. A list of Science Panel members is provided in Appendix G.

Consultation visits with Science Panel members were conducted by members of the BIMP development team. In addition to these meetings, a presentation updating the panel on the BIMP progress was also made during one of the Science Panel's regularly scheduled meetings during the plan development.

From discussions with the Science Panel members, it is clear there are many dedicated scientists and engineers who have great professional and personal interest in the beaches and inlets of North Carolina. They share a common commitment to the value and importance of the coastal area but also have differing opinions on some of the science, and more significantly, on what they believe the consequences and resulting policy should be from that science. Comments from the panel ranged from concern that greater time and financial resources should have been dedicated to collecting additional scientific

data prior to developing a plan, to concerns that the 18-month timeframe and budget to develop the BIMP was considerably smaller than similar planning efforts elsewhere, such as the multi-year, multi-million dollar efforts completed by the USACE Mobile District for its beaches. Even given the range of concerns, the general consensus was still positive that an effort was being made to develop a BIMP, and that the panel hoped it would serve as a common reference for improving wider understanding of coastal issues and aiding future discussion and development.

All members of the Science Panel agreed that beach and inlet management planning should be based on the best science available. There exists a large body of scientific study along the North Carolina coast and inlets, but there also are significant gaps in the scientific knowledge and data given the size, variety and complexity of the state's coastal zone. Much information is still being collected and analyzed by academics in the state and is awaiting publication. As with any large data gathering or research project, the science continues to evolve and new data is continually collected.

C. The Public

Ultimately, the successful management of the beaches and inlets will require the cooperation of the federal, state, and local governments as well as the citizens who live at or visit the coast. The public can be a great source of support or opposition to any plan and can play a significant role in promoting the successful development of the BIMP.

Information was provided to the public through press releases, meetings, presentations, and a project website throughout the development of the BIMP. Comments were solicited through meetings, presentations, email, and questionnaires.

1. The Website

The website www.ncbimp.net (Figure VII-1) provided a means to inform the public about the project, post past presentations and information sheets, and to provide an email address for comments on an ongoing basis.

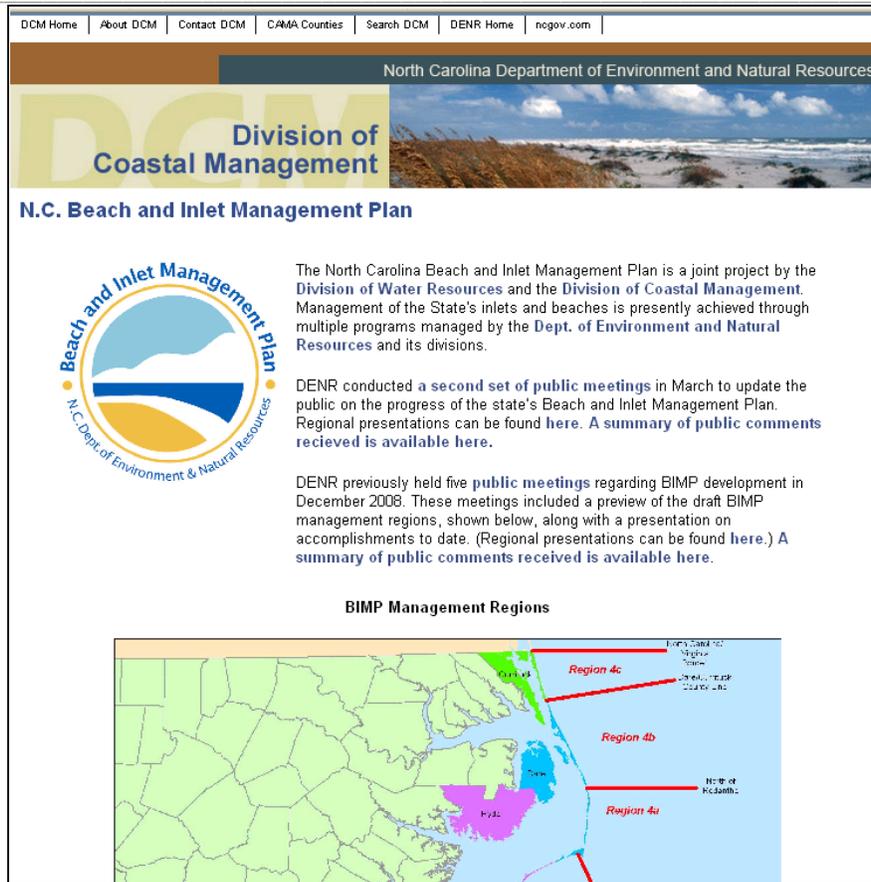


Figure VII-1. BIMP Project Website (www.ncbimp.net)

2. Regional Public Information and Input Meetings

Two sets of five public information and input meetings were held at various locations along the coast and in Raleigh. The meetings provided opportunities for the public and coastal communities to hear about the BIMP and were forums for public comments.

The public input meetings consisted of two main parts. The first part was a presentation on the BIMP and the second involved interactive breakout sessions where maps and flip charts were available to document comments, questions, and concerns during the session (Figure VII-2).

The first set of public input meetings was held December 2-11, 2008 to outline the ongoing development of the BIMP. The collection of available relevant data, discussion of existing management strategies, and delineation of the management regions and sub-regions was covered during these meetings. Statewide information was presented as well as local data for the specific region. These meetings provided opportunities for members of the public and communities to be informed of the progress to date and to provide valuable input and comments. The meetings were held at the locations and times given in Table VII-1.

Table VII-1. First Set of Public Meetings

Region	Location	Date (2008)	Time	Approx. # Attendees
1	Supply, N.C. - Brunswick Electric, 795 Ocean Highway West	Wednesday, December 3	6-8 p.m.	15
2a, 2b	Wilmington, N.C. - Northeast Branch, New Hanover Co. Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Rd.	Tuesday, December 2	5-7 p.m.	34
2c, 3a	Beaufort, N.C. - East Carteret High School, 3263 Highway 70 East	Thursday, December 4	6-8 p.m.	13
3b, 4a, 4b, 4c	Manteo, N.C. - N.C. Aquarium, 374 Airport Rd.	Tuesday, December 9	6-8 p.m.	41
All Regions	Raleigh, N.C. - NCSU M ^c Kimmon Center, 1101 Gorman St.	Thursday, December 11	6-8 p.m.	12

More than 100 people attended the first set of meetings, with the largest numbers in Wilmington and Manteo.



Figure VII-2. Photos Documenting First Round of Public Information and Input Meetings

A second set of five regional meetings was held March 3-12, 2009 to outline the ongoing development of the BIMP (Figure VII-3). These meetings provided opportunities for stakeholders to be informed of the progress to date and to provide input and comments.

While the initial set of meetings in December focused on the overall plan, data collection, and the development of management regions, the second set of meetings focused on strategies, costs, valuation, funding approaches, and preliminary draft plan recommendations.

The meetings were held at the locations and times given in Table VII-2.

Table VII-2. Second Set of Public Meetings

Region	Location	Date (2009)	Time	Approx. # Attendees
1	Supply, N.C. - Brunswick Electric, 795 Ocean Highway West	Tuesday, March 3	6-8 p.m.	13
2a, 2b	Wilmington, N.C. - Northeast Branch, New Hanover Co. Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Rd.	Wednesday, March 4	5-7 p.m.	19
2c, 3a	Pine Knoll Shores, N.C. - N.C. Aquarium, 1 Roosevelt Blvd.	Thursday, March 5	6-8 p.m.	5
3b, 4a, 4b, 4c	Manteo, N.C. - N.C. Aquarium, 374 Airport Rd.	Monday, March 9	6-8 p.m.	15
All Regions	Raleigh, N.C. - NCSU M ^c Kimmon Center, 1101 Gorman St.	Thursday, March 12	6-8 p.m.	3

Fewer people attended the second set of public input meetings despite a stronger information campaign by DCM through press releases and the website. It is interesting to note that many of those attending the second set of meetings were different from those at the first set. Nonetheless, the attendees provided extensive input and discussions focused on strategies and funding of the BIMP.



Figure VII-3. Photos Documenting Second Set of Public Meetings

Questionnaires were provided at the public meetings to help facilitate discussion and to allow the public to comment individually if desired either by submitting the questionnaire at the end of the meeting or by email at a later date. Examples of the questionnaires, the BIMP Information Sheet, and public comments received are provided in Appendix G.

Comments included the types of strategies that should be allowed for managing the beaches and inlets, existing data gaps and improvements needed for current datasets, the intricacies of the regulatory process, ideas of potential funding streams and prioritization criteria.