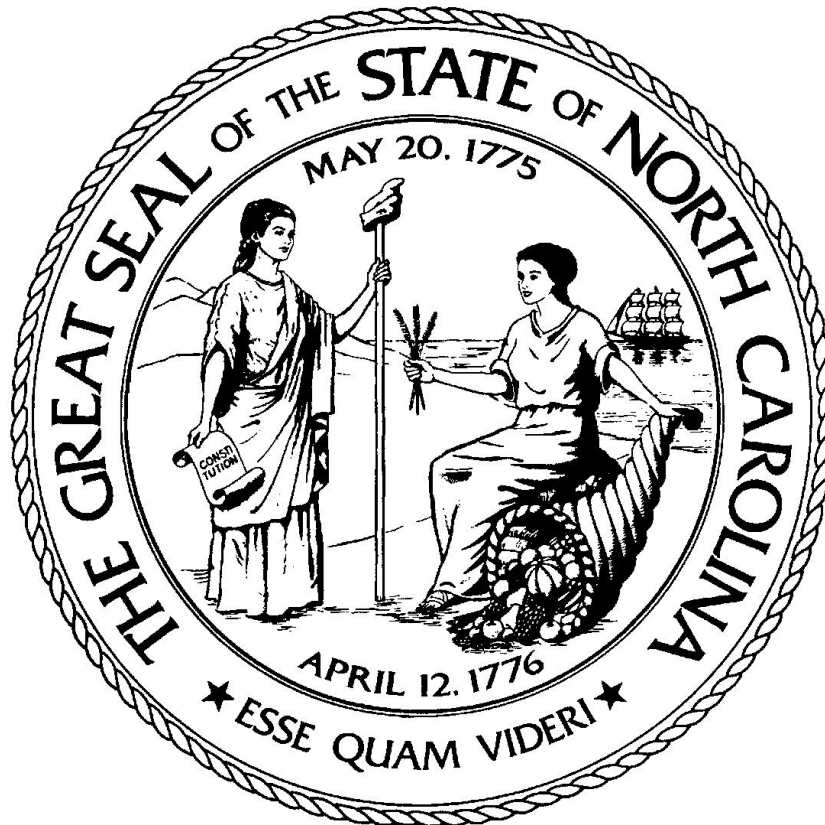


Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Biennial Report

G.S. § 125-2

2019 – 2021



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1. Executive Summary

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) manages, promotes, and enhances the things that people love in North Carolina – its diverse arts and culture, rich history, spectacular natural areas.

With 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 39 state parks and recreation areas, the N.C. Zoo, the nation's first state-supported Symphony, the State Library, the State Archives, the N.C. Arts Council, the African American Heritage Commission, State Preservation Office, Office of State Archaeology, and Division of Land and Water Stewardship, DNCR manages the treasures of the state. These things unite North Carolinians, create a shared identity, and provide common ground.

DNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in North Carolina by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries, and nature by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

DNCR's vision is to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. Every day, DNCR's places, programs, and ideas strengthen education, improve public health, enhance quality of life, and support robust economic growth across North Carolina.

DNCR anchors its strategic goals around Governor Cooper's priorities:

- Positioning North Carolina to create new jobs and grow middle class paychecks
- Making North Carolina a top ten state in education
- Promoting healthier and safer communities
- Ensuring an effective, accountable, well-run state government

DNCR's goals for the next biennium include:

- Goal 1 - Expand educational opportunities for children and families by increasing access to the state's innovative, interactive, and inspirational natural and cultural sites, programs, and services.
- Goal 2 - Boost economic growth through the "Hometown Strong" initiative to support rural communities, and other efforts.
- Goal 3 - Preserve, enhance, and expand North Carolina's natural and cultural resources in an effective, efficient, collaborative, and customer-friendly manner.
- Goal 4 - Promote diversity and cultural inclusion in departmental programs, recruitment, administration, and community engagement.

DNCR's key objectives are to: increase on-site visitation to DNCR sites; create new exhibits and expand traveling exhibits to reach more communities; boost distance learning and other online engagement with North Carolina residents; expand broadband in rural areas through the State Library; partner with

more schools on programs like A+ Schools and Park Learning Days; help small towns develop economically through the SmART initiative, parks and trails, capacity building assistance, and grants; recruit and build a more diverse workforce through HBCU internships and the NC Youth Conservation Corps; launch “A Park for Every Child” initiative to connect each child in North Carolina with a nearby park, trail, or greenway; expand protected natural areas; reduce the substantial maintenance backlog at State Historic Sites and other locations; involve more diverse communities and perspectives in the department’s materials and programs; enhance security; complete capital projects; help flood-prone communities become more resilient to future catastrophic weather events; and increase engagement with the public through social media.

Taken together, these goals and objectives will place the department at the forefront in providing high quality non-formal education programs, boosting workforce development and rural economies, building communities’ resiliency to natural disasters, strengthening public health, and improving quality of life. Across the department, staff will pursue these goals and objectives through creative collaborative partnerships that efficiently leverage state resources with those from federal and local governments, nonprofits, and private entities.

2. Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission Statement

Our mission is to improve quality of life in North Carolina by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North Carolina by

- stimulating learning
- inspiring creativity
- preserving the state's history
- conserving the state's natural heritage
- encouraging recreation and cultural heritage tourism
- promoting economic development

Vision Statement

Our vision is to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina.

Organizational Values

Accountability

Accepts full responsibility for oneself and for one's contribution as a team member; displays honesty and truthfulness; confronts problems quickly; displays a strong commitment to organizational success and inspires others to commit to goals; demonstrates a commitment to delivering on his/her public duty and presenting oneself as a credible representative of the agency and state, to maintain the public's trust.

Innovation & Creativity

Applies creative problem-solving skills to his/her work to develop solutions to problems; recognizes and demonstrates the value in taking calculated risks and learning from mistakes; develops multiple alternatives and understands the feasibility of each; effectively shares and implements his/her ideas. Continually seeks imaginative, innovative, and efficient solutions to business problems, both old and new.

Quality

Consistently delivers high-quality products, services, processes, programs, and projects. Regularly and proactively seeks ways to improve outcomes and results. Produces work that is accurate, efficient, and timely.

Customer Service

Consistently demonstrates a strong commitment to providing value-added services to external and internal customers; Proactively identifies customer needs and requirements, delivers quality service, and continuously improves performance of self and others. Develops, implements, and evaluates work processes which are both efficient and effective from the customers' perspectives.

Diversity & Inclusion

Demonstrates an open-minded approach to understanding people, regardless of their gender, age, race, national origin, religion, ethnicity, disability status, or other characteristics; treats all people fairly and consistently and with dignity and respect; effectively builds an inclusive work environment, composed of people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse perspectives, where everyone feels welcomed and valued and is allowed the opportunity to use his/her skills, abilities, and knowledge to succeed.

Safety & Health

Consistently demonstrates a strong commitment to providing state employees with a safe and healthy workplace; proactively identifies and reduces, or takes action to reduce, risks and hazards and abides by regulatory requirements; understands the importance of safe work practices and personal protective equipment, enables assigned employees to do the same, and acts to correct unsafe conditions, not waiting for others to correct issues; develops, implements, and evaluates work processes (utilizes Hazard Recognition practices) that address immediate risk and also improves systems to address future risk. Complies with all state and agency safety requirements for the position, including training, medical clearance, use of personal protective equipment, injuries/illness reporting requirements, and medical treatment for work-related injuries/illness.

Teamwork & Collaboration

Cooperates with others to accomplish common goals; works with external constituents and other employees to achieve shared goals; treats others with dignity and respect; maintains a friendly demeanor; values the contributions of others; communicates confidently and clearly using visual, written, and verbal methods; understands, respects, and responds nonjudgmentally to those different from him-/herself; builds effective teamwork; uses negotiation and persuasion to mobilize others to work toward a common goal.

3. Highlights and Opportunities

Agency Highlights and Best Practices

Department-wide - Hometown Strong Initiative

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources helped create and has supported Governor Cooper's Hometown Strong initiative. In addition to Secretary Hamilton's service as chair of the interagency steering committee, DNCR has increased its presence and programming in every designated Hometown Strong county. Department staff members have participated in visits to each of the six pilot counties and will continue to participate as additional counties are incorporated into the program. Initial visits have yielded increased collaboration between the department and local communities. Successes include technical assistance and grant funding to support trail system development in Burke County, two new schools taking the initial steps to join the A+ Schools program in Pasquotank County, and close coordination with the Lumbee tribe to save precious cultural artifacts in the wake of Hurricane Florence in Robeson County.

Aquariums

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card Reduced Admission

To increase low-income families' access to the state's three aquariums, the Aquarium Division launched a reduced admission program based upon the presentation of an EBT card. With an EBT card, 2 adults and 2 children are given admission at \$3 and \$2 respectively, rather than full price admission. The NC Department of Health and Human Services has provided information about the program to families with EBT cards.

Aquarium Scholars Program

The Aquarium Division launched the Aquarium Scholars program. Under this program, the Aquarium Society raises private funds, for which Title I schools can apply to 1) cover costs associated with classes visiting the Aquariums or Jennette's Pier, 2) receive an outreach educational program from the Aquariums or the Pier, or 3) receive a distance learning program.

Arts Council

Facilitated the appointment of Jaki Shelton Green as North Carolina's ninth Poet Laureate, and the state's first African American Poet Laureate.

The Americans for the Arts' *Arts and Economic Prosperity Study* was released, showing that the state's nonprofit arts and cultural sector generates \$2.12 billion in total economic activity, supports 71,977 full time equivalent jobs, and delivers \$201.5 million in local and state government revenue.

The Durham SmART Initiative completed its first project, an artist-designed wrap for the Corcoran Street parking garage. The artwork is a colorful interpretation of architectural and iconic elements of the city. Durham was ranked #7 in the National Center for Arts Research's top 10 most arts vibrant communities index and the SmART Initiative was cited as a factor.

2018 was the busiest year yet for A+ Schools of North Carolina. Seven new schools from Cumberland, Alamance, Rowan, Cabarrus and Wake Counties joined the A+ network; in total, A+ Schools of North Carolina currently includes 61 preK-12 schools in all regions of the state, involving over 30,000 students and 2,000 teachers and administrators. Since A+ Schools moved to the North Carolina Arts Council in 2010, 33 new schools have joined the network.

With recurring funds from the legislature, the Arts Council designed and implemented a Military and Veterans Arts Program that serves North Carolina's military service men and women, veterans, and their families. Military and Veterans Healing Arts grants support model arts programs, training, and peer networking. In FY2017-18, a total of 4 grants were awarded totaling \$75,000; in FY2018-19, a total of 10 grants were awarded totaling \$100,000.

Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

State parks experienced record visitation in 2017, with 19.4 million visitors, a strong indication of how much North Carolinians and visitors value our outstanding parks system. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund distributed 28 grants to local governments for park, trail, and greenway projects in FY2018-19, totaling \$6.8 million, and also allocated \$13.5 million to state parks for 20 land acquisition and capital improvement projects, plus numerous repairs and renovations.

Historical Resources

Launched in 2011, the State Historic Preservation Office's (HPO) GIS mapping service, called HPOWEB, displays the location of more than 105,000 historic resources and is acknowledged as one of the best preservation-data-based mapping services in the nation in terms of sophistication, comprehensiveness, and ease of use; it is viewable online as HPOWEB (<http://gis.ncdcr.gov/hpoweb>). Virtually all properties and districts with some sort of official historic designation (National Register, Study List, Determined Eligible, or Local Landmark/District designation) have been mapped. In addition, most of the state's rural surveys have been mapped. Mapping of urban surveys, including individual properties within National Register districts, is in progress. An internal layer for archaeological information is available to staff, and plans are underway to make it password-protected available to consultants for environmental review purposes. The HPO engineered this service in-house and has saved the state at least \$500,000 in consulting costs. The site is widely used by environmental review consultants, NCDOT, investors in historic properties, researchers, genealogists, and scholars.

Land and Water Stewardship

The Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) continues a 21-year legacy of protecting and enhancing the state's natural and cultural resources of North Carolina. During that time, over \$1 billion has been awarded to state agencies, local governments, and nonprofit land conservation organizations, leveraging over \$1.7 billion and protecting over a half-million acres and 2,500 miles of stream. In FY2018-19 the CWMTF board funded 52 projects totaling \$20.2 million. Administratively, CWMTF focuses on accountability and transparency, boasting one of the most open grant funding processes of any agency.

The Natural Heritage Program is nationally recognized, providing comprehensive biodiversity information and making it available in a variety of formats, tailored to the both economic development interests as well as land conservation groups. During the past year, the program has responded to requests for project support from the Department of Defense, Duke Energy, NC Department of Transportation, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, US Forest Service, and more than 2,400 online requests for natural heritage reports.

Museum of History

The Museum has moved toward multi-media exhibits that create an experience for the visitor. In the World War I exhibit, the museum built simulated trenches and audio video concepts to tell the stories of North Carolinians who served. The World War I exhibit contributed to record-breaking visitation at the Museum.

The Museum is creating events through festivals, like Pirate Fest and the upcoming One Giant Leap space festival, the African American Cultural Celebration, and the American Indian Heritage Celebration to draw more visitors for a family experience.

The Distinguished Lecture Series has brought in speakers like Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein as well as historians like David McCullough and Doris Kearns Goodwin, creating a new audience for the Museum.

Museum of Natural Sciences

The Museum continued to be the state's top destination attraction and is a recognized model of a nature-focused museum. Highlights include: the Museum's scientific researchers have national and international reputations; the Museum distributed grants totaling \$2.4M in FY2018-19 to 55 local science museums and nature centers; the Museum is an international leader in the field of citizen science and is expanding its "Candid Critter" program in conjunction with libraries and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and the "Race: Are We So Different?" exhibit attracted diverse audiences to learn about scientific aspects of race, namely that regardless of race or ethnicity, all human beings share 99% of genetic makeup.

North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA)

Visitor donations have increased by 259% over the previous year by instituting a staff greeter, tracking donation habits, and initiating a first-time visitors protocol.

The Museum has incorporated bilingual (Spanish) communications where feasible and is working to expand and develop a process to translate events for web, promotional, and event collateral.

The Museum has a partnership with NC State to collect visitor data in the Museum Park; currently, the data reflect 12 visitors per minute on average during daylight hours. This partnership continues and thrives on student projects that are designed and completed with park data collection at their core.

This fiscal year, the Museum developed a formal process to collect visitor data and gather feedback from over 12,000 visitors for exhibitions and programs. The Museum is now working to refine the processes by which it will use this data to inform both short-term and long-term decisions that support current visitors and inform recruitment of non-visitors.

The Museum has secured support from the city on a new Visitors' Center by developing a relationship with the City of Raleigh; securing the city's financial support for Museum Park restrooms and snack bar as well as two 2019 bus stop installations and a bike-sharing project.

NC Symphony

- The Symphony brought 22,000 first-time Symphony-goers to performances (a 3% increase) and experienced a 16% increase in first-time Annual Fund donors.
- More than 300 millennials and Gen X-ers have attended special Young Professionals events diversifying the support for the Symphony.
- NCS videos were viewed for a total of 121,300 minutes, and the NCS had 24,727 followers on NCS social media channels—and counting!
- Ninety-one counties are engaged by NCS performances with 70,000 students touched by NCS education programming.
- Free concerts and events are offered in more than 30 communities. With 17 excellent concert reviews in statewide publications, 96% of audience members surveyed would recommend NCS to a friend. The Symphony sold out 18 concerts.
- *Residencies in Cherokee and Sampson County – prototype for the future!* Beyond the education programs that NCS presents for students throughout the state, special residency projects allow NCS to create even deeper relationships within a community. In the 2017/18 season, NCS continued to build a frequent and immersive presence in Cherokee (supported by the Cherokee Preservation Foundation) and in Sampson County (supported by the Simple Gifts Foundation). The Symphony's residency in Cherokee, which began in the spring of 2017, has engaged every Cherokee student, pre-K through high school, with music education programs. In October 2018, the multi-year collaboration culminated in eight statewide performances of composer William Britton's *Si Otsedoha- (We're Still Here)*—a work through which Cherokee choral students reflected on their self-identity and spread awareness for their culture. The Symphony's three-year residency in Sampson County has served the

community with more music education opportunities than ever before. Programs have included free community concerts, a music and literacy initiative for pre-K students, professional development workshops for music educators, master classes through which young instrumentalists have one-on-one learning opportunities with NCS musicians, and more. In the spring, a woodwind quintet of NCS musicians presented a Spanish-language performance of *Peter and the Wolf (Pedro y el Lobo)* at the Episcopal Farmworkers Ministry.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Department takes seriously its commitment to engage and reflect the state's diverse demographic makeup. DNCR created and filled a new position, Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Cultural Inclusion, and reconstituted a department-wide Diversity and Inclusion Committee to coordinate efforts across divisions. DNCR also created a new internship program for students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (in addition to other existing internship programs) and hired 20 interns during the 2018 summer. The African American Heritage Commission was also constituted as a division within the department.

State Library

- The State Library is partnering with NC Department of Information Technology Broadband Infrastructure Office (BIO) on a project to promote broadband adoption to address the “homework gap,” which occurs when students are assigned homework that requires internet access, but they do not have any access at home. A recent pilot study conducted by the BIO found that 10 percent of surveyed K-12 households do not have internet access in their homes, but as of this year all textbooks in NC schools are now digital. The project focuses on Tier 1 counties to provide wifi hotspots for students and digital literacy training for students and their caregivers. The initial pilot phase is a collaboration with the Robeson County Public Library and Fairgrove Middle School; the project will expand to include up to four additional counties in year two. The NC Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is developing a partnership with State Parks whereby library staff serve as a resource to help promote accessibility to parks for special populations

Zoo

Attendance has increased from 741,000 in 2011 to over 825,000 the past two years. As a result, generated revenue has grown from \$6,638,092 in 2011 to \$9,250,000 in 2018, or an increase of 39%. The Zoo now generates over 46% of its annual operating budget as compared to less than 37% in 2011.

The growth in attendance and revenue can be attributed to a new awareness of the Zoo across the state, the Zoo's award-winning animal welfare and conservation programs, and many added opportunities for visitors to interact with nature through exciting recreational attractions. These attractions include the Zoofari open bus ride through the heart of the Zoo's 40-acre African Plains exhibit (home to over 100

African antelope and nine rhinos), paddleboats on which visitors can explore one of the Zoo's lakes, the Airhike ropes course that gives guests a high adventure in the treetops, the opportunity to feed giraffes at eye-level, and a live bird show that allows visitors to witness a wide variety of exotic birds in free-flights.

The birth of two baby rhinos after many years of effort as well as chimpanzee, gorilla, and multiple antelope births has certainly provided "aaaaah" moments and compelling experiences that have been widely shared by Zoo visitors on social media and that have appeared in numerous stories in the press. Not so well known is the tremendous amount of work with animals in the wild, using science to help secure the future of African vultures, black rhinos, African elephants, Cross River gorillas and lions, as well as local wildlife such as the hellbender (giant salamander), the gopher and Pine Barrens tree frogs, and the American red wolf.

The Zoo's comprehensive sustainability program continues to grow. The Zoo has added two charging stations for electric vehicles, it continues to be a Department of Environmental Quality "Environmental Steward" and maintains its Environmental Management System (EMS) certification – ISO14001, and it has worked with its food services partner to reduce the use of single-use plastics. Through the Piedmont Land Conservancy and the Zoo's partners at the NC Zoological Society, the Zoo has added land holdings (currently over 2,200 acres) to its portfolio, increasing trail opportunities to and through the Uwharrie National Forrest as well as the network of hiking trails in and around the Zoo.

The Zoo continues its partnership with the local public school hosting a Zoo School on site and offering free admission to all schools in North Carolina for field trips, hosting an average of 100,000 school children per year.

The Zoo is currently working on over 100 significant repair and renovation projects to keep its good standing with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. In addition, the Zoo has almost completed the schematic design and planning for the construction of the new Asia expansion of the Zoo through the Connect NC bond.

Marketing

In 2018, DNCR developed and launched an impressive digital production team with the expertise to create compelling and timely online content, including video, audio, and written content for web and social media platforms. With this team, the Division of Marketing is developing educational content for distribution into schools across the state, especially in rural communities where complementary curriculum content is not as readily available as in larger markets. DNCR is developing integrated campaigns that can be effectively implemented and promoted across the division and has seen strong gains in website and social media reach. The number of visitors on the DNCR website has increased 161% to date over this past year with social media growth tripling in size for the same time period.

Potential Initiatives

Marketing

The Marketing Division will develop, launch, and support DNCR-wide campaigns that can be integrated and cross-promoted to drive efficiencies and effectiveness across all DNCR divisions. The division will reach new audiences and diversify marketing programs and efforts for greater inclusion and representation of NC's population across all 100 counties, to increase attendance and engagement with DNCR sites, programs, and online resources (website, social media and email lists). The Year of NC Music will take place in 2019, an all-inclusive initiative to capture and promote authentic and compelling stories in NC (both past and present) as a cultural asset to residents and visitors.

The division will develop, implement, and measure social media policy across DNCR and lead efforts across state government. The social media policy will support each location within DNCR with training, editorial planning and publishing best practices. Within NC state government, DNCR has the most social media sites and managers, and DNCR aspires to be the policy leader for responsible and effective social media usage.

Museum of Natural Sciences

The Museum of Natural Sciences will realize international benefits of the Dueling Dinosaurs lab and exhibit, "America's Most Spectacular Fossils" (Smithsonian magazine). The Museum also plans to purchase, update, and put on permanent display the successful 2017 "Race: Are We So Different?" exhibit, increase societal relevance through added focus on conservation and digital collections, and expand the regional network of grant recipients and satellite branches of the Museum.

North Carolina Symphony

The North Carolina Symphony conducted a beta-test of a music education program that will allow the Symphony to reach distant-county 4th and 5th graders who might not otherwise attend its concerts (due to lack of local venue or distance challenges). The test was overseen in a Proof of Concept model that was led by leadership from Met Life (Cary) and guided by future funding partners. All participants of the beta test, including the classroom teacher and her students, were encouraged by the possibility and the Proof of Concept was deemed a success. The Symphony is now seeking technology partners to assist in rolling this program out to additional counties.

The Symphony's three-year residency in Sampson County has served the community with more music education opportunities than ever before. Programs have included free community concerts, a music and literacy initiative for pre-K students, professional development workshops for music educators, master classes through which young instrumentalists have one-on-one learning opportunities with NCS musicians, and more. In the spring, a woodwind quintet of NCS musicians presented a Spanish-language

performance of Peter and the Wolf (Pedro y el Lobo) at the Episcopal Farmworkers Ministry. The Symphony is expanding this residency to Jones County in 2019-20.

The Symphony's residency in Cherokee, which began in the spring of 2017, has engaged every Cherokee student, pre-k through high school, with music education programs. In October 2018, the multi-year collaboration culminated in eight statewide performances of composer William Brittelle's *Si Otsedoha* (We're Still Here)—a work through which Cherokee choral students reflected on their self-identity and spread awareness for their culture.

In February 2019, the North Carolina Symphony is presenting a Sensory Friendly concert in an effort to increase the accessibility of its concerts. The concert is an inclusive experience open to patrons of all ages and abilities, with flexible seating options available with general admission seating. "Sensory Seekers" are welcome to get close to the stage and/or musicians, and clapping, singing, vocalizing, moving, and dancing are welcome at any time. A designated quiet space is available to take breaks from the concert, as needed, and lights remain at a low level. The plan is to continue the Sensory Friendly concerts in future seasons. in the Sensory Friendly concerts in future seasons.

Parks and Recreation

The division is researching and planning a multi-faceted initiative, "A Park for Every Child," which would attempt to connect every child to a state or local park, trail, or greenway. Parks are especially important for children – numerous studies have found that experiences in nature improve kids' physical health, mental well-being, and ability to learn.

However, most children do not regularly experience the outdoors. They are increasingly connected to electronics and there are not as many open spaces nearby to play; childhood obesity, stress, depression, and attention deficit disorder are rapidly rising, along with related health care costs.

A key element is a parks educational program for students to provide every 4th grader and every 8th grader a meaningful experience in a park, to support North Carolina curriculum objectives and to foster lifelong appreciation for nature and history. The intention is to initiate a pilot program and expand each year to reach every North Carolina 4th and 8th grade student. DPR plans to collaborate with local school districts and local parks departments to develop a teacher training and student field trip program that can be replicated statewide.

WiFi in the Parks: DPR is working with Viasat to develop a pilot "Proof of Concept" proposal to provide WiFi to park campers at a reasonable cost.

State Historic Sites

Historic Sites has begun work on an interpretive and programmatic concept called "True Inclusion." True Inclusion supports telling an expansive narrative at all historic sites, reaching out to diverse audiences, growing accessibility with a particular focus on visitors who are living with disabilities, and broadening stakeholder communities for more feedback and advisement. The priority interpretive theme for the

launch of "True Inclusion" is American Indian history. Sites such as Historic Halifax, Fort Fisher, and Fort Dobbs have begun to grow relationships, capacity, professional development, and/or research around best practices and archival resources related to the Haliwa-Saponi, Lumbee and Cherokee Tribes, respectively.

State Library

The State Library's NC Cardinal project is a growing consortium of public libraries throughout the state that aims to make the combined resources of North Carolina's public libraries available to all people of the state through a shared catalog. The effort is currently supported largely with federal Library Services and Technology Act federal (LSTA) funding: local libraries presently contribute approximately 18% of the budget. The State Library is working to transition to a new funding model with the goal of sustainability and less reliance on federal funds. A more sustainable financial model would enable more libraries to support the program and equalize access to resources across the state.

Zoo

To improve the people-moving experience and reduce labor and equipment costs, the Zoo is exploring adding chair lifts and/or trains. Neither are inexpensive, but each requires minimal human resources, and both offer an exciting way to get from point to point.

While the Zoo offers many educational opportunities for children who visit, it is looking to expand current offerings to include experiences on Zoo property that create "living outdoor laboratories" that take advantage of the vast outdoor space it manages. This can give children who do not have opportunities to experience the great outdoors, a first-hand up-close adventure into the natural world.

Environmental and Energy Performance

DNCR is committed to reducing its environmental "footprint," and established an Environmental and Energy Performance committee. The committee will review current practices concerning both systemic issues (i.e. procurement, repair and renovation, capital projects) and factors under individual control in the workplace (i.e. recycling, turning off lights, commuting). The goals are to protect our air, water, land, and climate, and save the department significant money in the process. Several DNCR divisions are already implementing best practices to protect the environment and save energy, and the committee will share and promote all of the conservation, sustainability, and environmentally friendly efforts across the divisions. The committee will also help educate the public and increase awareness of the many successful programs the department has in place, and how individuals can do their part.

Collaborative Opportunities

Arts Council

- Many of the NC Arts Council's SmART projects require a close working relationship with NCDOT staff. An excellent opportunity for expanding collaborations is the potential incorporation of public art into future roadway and bridge construction projects across the state.
- An excellent opportunity exists to bring together local arts councils and local service providers for veterans. The NC Department of Military and Veteran Affairs trains and certifies individuals in each county who serve as field staff in support of veterans. This network should be introduced to staff at local arts councils so that collaborative programming for veterans can be planned and implemented.
- A+ Schools of North Carolina intends to partner with the NC Museum of Art's (NCMA) education team to create posters that combine images of artwork on display at the museum with lesson plans and teaching ideas. The objective is to integrate those works into the NC State Standards for a variety of grade levels. The poster sets will be made available for educators at all A+ Schools and utilized in education programs held at the NCMA.

Land and Water Stewardship

An opportunity exists to work with the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to evaluate ecosystems in floodplain areas most susceptible to disasters such as hurricanes and sea level rise. Identifying which floodplains provide the most benefits such as flood protection, wildlife habitat, protection of water quality, and climate resilience can help conservation groups and local governments strategically purchase lands that will provide the most protection for human communities and economic assets into the future. Collaboration with private industry groups will be supported by new fees for access to Natural Heritage Program data and field surveys, including partnerships with Duke Energy and voluntary participants in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Increased efficiency could be gained from additional collaboration with extension staff and field biologists within state agencies, especially the Wildlife Resources Commission, NC Forest Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA)

The Museum has proposed a museum and historic sites committee that works to identify and execute collaborative opportunities across sites and the state in an effort to reach as many North Carolinians as possible with a universal message and site-specific experiences. This committee would explore and capitalize on opportunities, such as the Year of the Woman, by creating shared thematic content that could be universally marketed to target all North Carolinians through site-specific exhibition and audience engagement experiences. This collaborative brainstorming and planning would also lend itself to the strengthening of best practice across organizations and to the reduction of overlap through the potential sharing of resources.

North Carolina Symphony

In April 2019, the North Carolina Symphony will collaborate with the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. The Symphony's concert, featuring music inspired by the sea will be complemented by imagery of North Carolina seascapes and waterfalls, captured by the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences.

Parks and Recreation

The "Park for Every Child" initiative will focus on collaborations with the NC Department of Health and Human Services, NC Department of Transportation, the NC Youth Conservation Corps, AmeriCorps, Friends of State Parks and other support groups, the outdoor recreation industry, and land conservation organizations, among many others.

DPR will explore the potential for using the State Parks Warehouse operation to assist State Historic sites with storing and distributing supplies.

Zoo

The Zoo is working with State Parks to obtain advice and counsel in establishing "Base Camp" and "Junior Ranger" initiatives. These programs will provide an opportunity to further develop its partnerships with the Zoo's "Zoo School." The Asheboro High School (AHS) Zoo School can house up to 125 students who attend one to two classes at their main campus and then travel to a classroom and lab facility at the Zoo for the remainder of their classes in science, mathematics, social studies and agri-science. Students are actively involved in their learning through problem-solving methods, group-based projects, technology-based projects and the use of the 1,500-acre, world-class, North Carolina Zoo as their classroom.