



# Abandoned and Derelict Vessels in North Carolina: Lessons Learned and Recommendations for the Future

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# North Carolina Coastal Federation

## Non-profit 501(c)(3) Organization

- Three regional offices
- 36 staff and 30 board members
- Protect and restore the coast

## Goals

- Healthy **Water Quality**
- Promote **Living Shorelines**
- Restore **Oyster Habitat**
- Advocate for Responsible **Coastal Management**
- Reduce **Marine Debris**



# North Carolina Marine Debris Action Plan 2020 - 2025

## 5 Goals

- Leadership
- Prevention
- Removal
- Prevent and Remove ADVs
- Research and Assessment



*Since its establishment in 2020 approximately 76 % of actions outlined within the 5-year plan have been accomplished.*

[www.nccoast.org/project/north-carolina-marine-debris-strategy/](http://www.nccoast.org/project/north-carolina-marine-debris-strategy/)





# Threats Posed By Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADV's)

- Environmental
  - Hazardous materials
  - Critical Habitats
  - Entanglement
  - Debris
- Public safety and health
  - Navigation
  - Injury
  - Contamination
- Economic
  - Removal costs-public funding
  - Tourism
  - Recreation

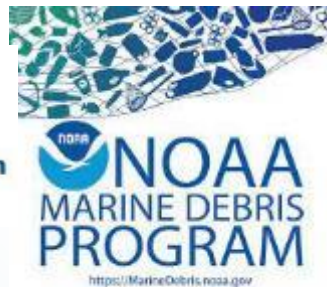


# ADV Removal Partners



## Local Governments

- Brunswick County
- Carteret County
- Dare County
- Hyde County
- Town of Beaufort
- City of Jacksonville
- Town of Surf City



# Hurricane Florence

## Hundreds of Derelict Boats in Storm's Wake

11/14/2018 by Jennifer Allen



### Emergency Support Function No. 10 (ESF-10)

#### Oil and Hazardous Materials Response

- Unified Command (USCG, NCWRC, NCDEQ-DCM)
- Flagged 383 vessels requiring assessment for hazardous materials response
- Beaufort, Craven, Hyde, Pamlico 197 vessels, 79 ESF 10 action
- Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, New Hanover, Onslow Pender 165 vessels, 41 ESF 10 action
- Does not provide for wreck removal or vessel disposal
- ESF-3: Public Works and Critical Transportation  
- *North Carolina not eligible due to current rules*





# ADV Authority

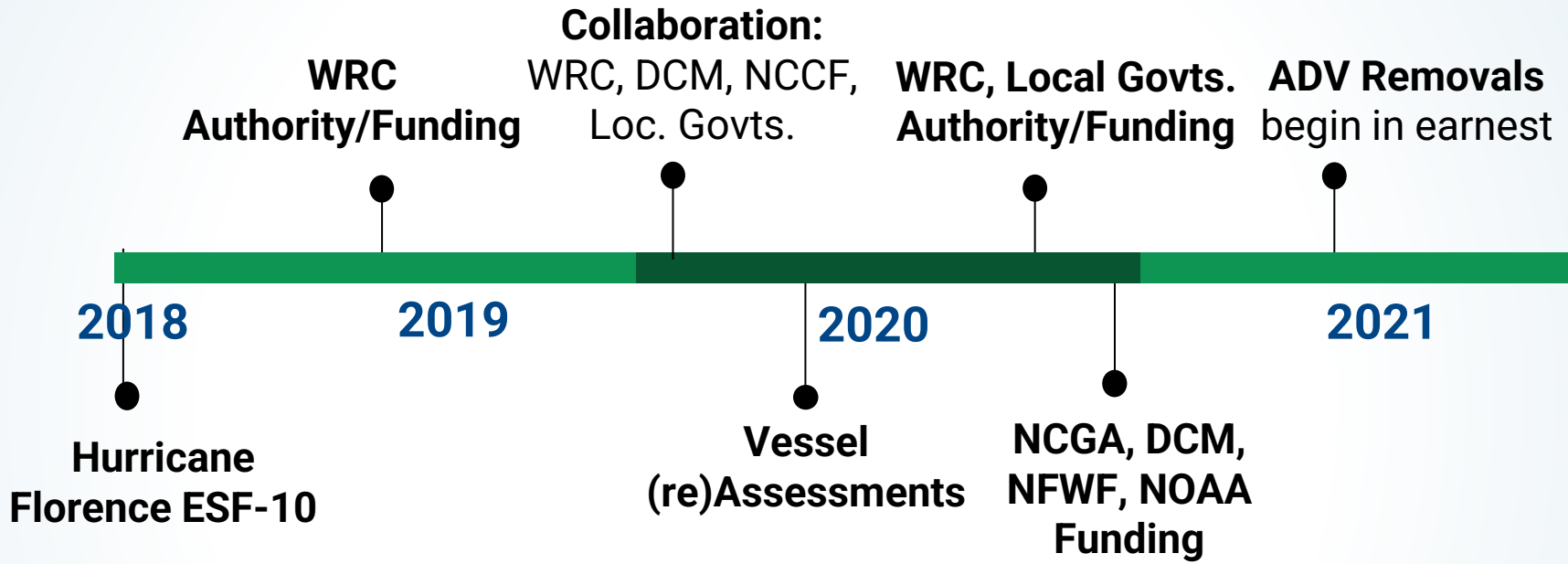
2015, G.S. 153A-132: Local governments may adopt ordinances to manage and remove vessels, amended in 2018 to include all 20 coastal counties

Session Law 2019-224 and 2020-74: NCWRC receives emergency authority and funding from the N.C. General Assembly to contact owners and remove vessels

Session Law 2023-27: Authority for cities and towns to develop and adopt ordinances to remove and dispose of abandoned vessels



# Putting the Pieces Together





# ADV Removal Process

- **Original Database-** USCG Hurricane Florence
  - Collaboration between NCWRC, DCM, NCCF
  - Prioritization, funding criteria, public trust
  - Public ADV reporting- NCWRC website
- **Current Database – WRC**
  - Limited access, keeping it updated
- **Authority**
  - **NCWRC:** investigation, owner notification, waiting period, legal review (60-120 days)
    - Stickers, Certified Letter
  - **Local jurisdictions and vessel ordinances**
- **Removal and Disposal**
  - Coordination with regulatory agencies
    - Federal funding = NEPA
  - DCM and NOAA's Best Management Practices
  - Landfill cooperation



# ADV Removals



North Carolina  
Coastal Federation  
*Working Together for a Healthy Coast*



# ADV Disposal

- Dependent on ADV condition, contractor, project timing/deadline
- Metal can be recycled, takes time, build into contract
- Landfill restrictions, fees
- Need lay down yard/break down sites
- Follow BMPs at haul out and demo sites





# Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADVs)



## WRC Mitigation of Abandoned and Derelict Vessels

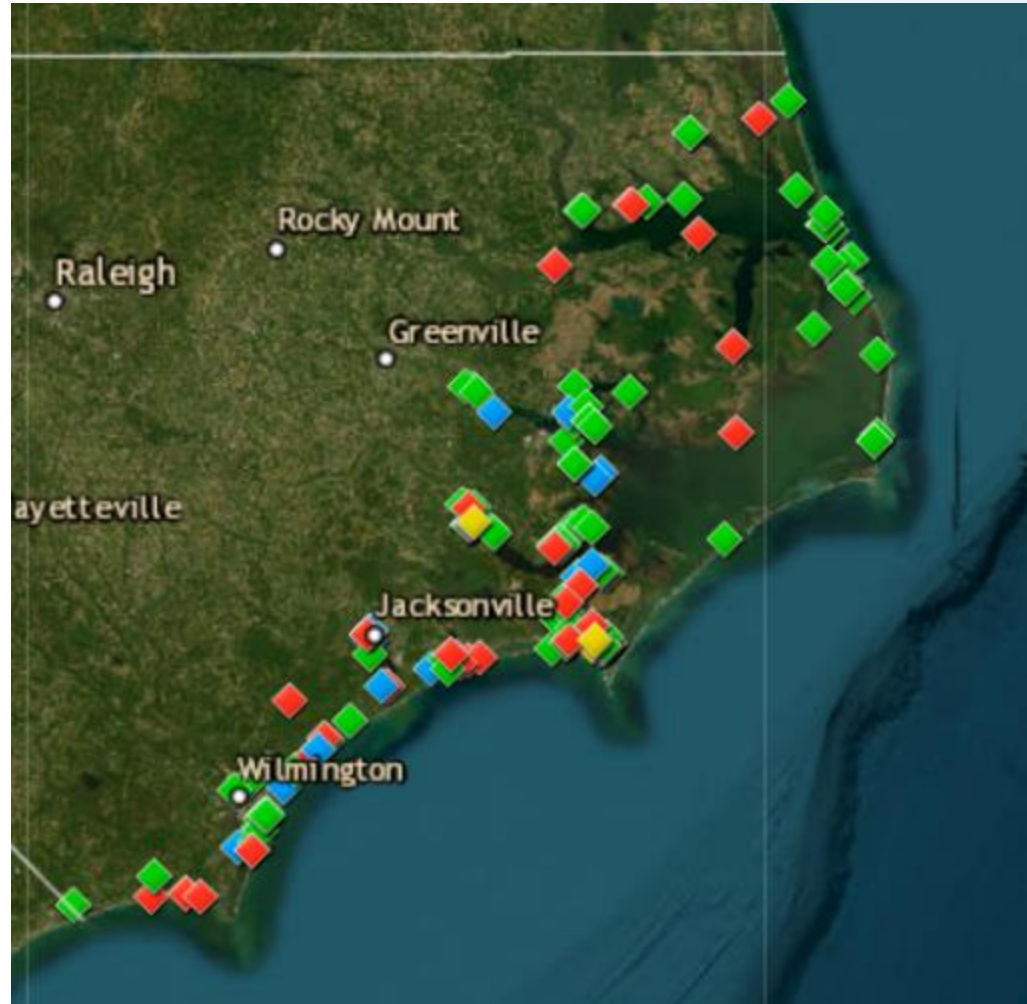
### ADVs Removed since 2020

- **NC WRC** - ~ 200 ADVs
- **NCCF** - 106 ADVs\*
- **DCM** - 2 ADVs
- **Local Governments** - ~40 ADVs
- **TOTAL** – ~ 350 ADVs  
**Removed**

\*106 ADVs totaling 469.3 tons or 938,600lbs

\* Removal costs: \$3,500 - \$90,000 (~\$450/lb)

\*Ranged in weight from 450 lbs. to 145,000 lbs.




<https://www.ncwildlife.org/Boating/Abandoned-and-Derelict-Vessel-Program>

# Hurricane Marine Debris Cleanup

Following Hurricane Florence in 2018, the North Carolina Coastal Federation worked with state and federal agencies to remove storm debris from public trust waters, marshes and islands.

- Over 60 crew members have been hired, primarily local fishermen and women, and together with volunteers have **removed 3,555,440 lbs.** of storm debris from Feb. 2019 to June 2023.
- Additionally, **106** Abandoned & Derelict Vessels (ADV)s totaling **938,600 lbs.** have been removed.

Total debris removed per county in tons. (1 ton= 2,000 lbs.)

 = Abandoned & Derelict Vessel (ADV)



## Types of Debris Collected:

Lumber (80%) | Dock floats (10%) | Trash (6%)  
 Lost fishing gear (2%) | Other (2%)

## FUNDING & SUPPORT

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Natural Resources Conservation Service, N.C. Division of Coastal Management, N.C. Division of Environmental Quality, N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, N.C. General Assembly, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

# Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Length of time from assessment to removal
- Contacting owners, ownership transfers, no bill of sale
- Vessel “dumping” – owners and/or marina operators
- Limited resources for enforcement, penalties
- Moving vessels between jurisdictions to avoid penalties and/or enforcement
- Shared, accessible vessel database
- Coordination with multiple local governments, agencies, military
- Dedicated ADV mooring or storage areas; regional haul out and demo yards





# 2019 NCWRC Commissioned ADV Study and Final Report

## Recommendations

- ADV Task Force: Set up taskforce to establish and maintain statewide ADV program
- Legislative Changes:
  - Clear authorities for ADV identification, notification, tracking, removal, and disposal
  - Designation of a lead state agency
- Funding: State agencies and local governments utilize/leverage federal funding sources to supplement state funding sources
- Outreach/Prevention: Implement a prevention program targeted to vessel owners, marine contractors, local governments, law enforcement and the general public
- Voluntary Measures: Vessel turn-in program



# Final Thoughts

- Establish, maintain and fund a permanent, state level, ADV prevention and removal program that will:
  - Utilize and capitalize public/private partnerships
  - Support local government ADV programs
  - Lay the groundwork for a proactive and storm ready program
- Incorporate voluntary measures, incentives along with fees, insurance requirements, penalties and fines
- Capitalize on public/private partnerships to support the program:
  - Work directly with state agencies to secure and leverage federal dollars, and to work expeditiously and efficiently with contractors to remove vessels
  - Generate support and guide legislative changes and appropriations to give agencies and local governments the authority and resources to deal with the problem of ADVs.





# North Carolina Coastal Federation

*Working Together for a Healthy Coast*

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