It’s been over a year since our team here at APNEP went fully virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While we look forward to being back in-person once again, we’ve been so impressed by the adaptability of our partners during these times. From Shad in the Classroom’s interview series with diverse aquatic biologists to the Teacher Institute’s virtual summer programming, our partners throughout the watershed have found new and innovative ways to continue working towards protecting the Albemarle-Pamlico estuary in 2020 and 2021.

While we will all miss former NC Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Michael Regan’s leadership, we wish him all the best in his new position as EPA Administrator. We’re also excited to welcome Dionne Delli-Gatti as NC DEQ Secretary and look forward to continuing to collaborate with our host agency in future watershed protection efforts!

Sincerely,
Dr. Bill Crowell
APNEP Director
News Spreads of APNEP Seagrass Study Findings

Last month, APNEP's Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Team published a report discussing an observed decline in the extent of the estuary's high salinity seagrasses. Throughout March we were excited to see the word get out about these important findings through outlets such as Coastal Review Online, WUNC, and WITN. APNEP and our partners will be continuing to build on these data; another set of aerial flights to map seagrasses in the estuary is scheduled for later this spring and an APNEP-funded economic valuation study of submerged aquatic vegetation in the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system will be published in the next few months. Stay tuned!

Learn more about APNEP's efforts to protect SAV

APNEP-Sea Grant Fellow Featured in Coastwatch magazine
Albemarle Sound, has been featured in the latest issue of NC Sea Grant’s Coastwatch magazine. You can also catch Haley on March 31st as the speaker for the NC Office of Environmental Education’s Lunchtime Discovery Talk Series. Her talk, "Are Toxic Cyanobacteria in the Air We Breathe?", will be shared via livestream at 12pm on 3/31 as well as recorded for later viewing.

Read about Haley’s research in Coastwatch magazine

New National Estuary Program Video Released

Did you know that APNEP is part of the EPA’s National Estuary Program? The NEP has been protecting and restoring Congressionally-designated estuaries of national significance since it was created in 1987. Collectively, the 28 NEPs and local partners turn every $1 in federal funding into $19 of research, restoration, and environmental education to protect and improve coastal environments, communities, and economies. Check out this new video about the National Estuary Program, created by the Coastland & Heartland National Estuary Partnership, to learn more!

Watch the video

Meeting Summaries

• APNEP Leadership Council Meeting (March 11th) - At March's Leadership
Due to COVID-19, many of APNEP’s scheduled meetings have been rescheduled or moved online. Visit our website for up-to-date information.

Current Grant Opportunities
Grant details

**Partner Spotlight**

Coastal Studies Institute Launches New Video Series

The Coastal Studies Institute on the Outer Banks has launched a new video series, "Outer Banks Ecosystems", on their Youtube Channel! The first video is now online - check it to learn about the importance of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system and hear from local scientists.

Watch the video

**What We're Reading**

- Project to Remove Abandoned Boats Begins (Coastal Review Online)
- Seagrass is a Vital Weapon Against Climate Change, but We're Killing It (Huffington Post)
- Oyster Reef Construction Shows Huge Success (PBS North Carolina)
- Zebra Mussels Threaten NC Waterways (Carolina Public Press)