SC NEMO is an educational program that provides information and resources to help local decision-makers understand:

- The impacts of nonpoint source pollution on water resources
- The link between those impacts and land use
- Some innovative strategies to manage for those impacts.

SC Coastal Community Initiative

To further SC NEMO program efforts, coastal communities are invited annually to submit proposals to the SC Coastal Community Initiative (SCCCI) mini grant program requesting assistance to develop and implement land management policies and practices to reduce polluted stormwater runoff, protect local natural resources, and encourage sustainable development. To date, seven coastal communities have received SCCCI grants ranging from $2500 to $5000, and since the inception of the SCCCI more than $60,000 has been leveraged by participating communities. The recipients of the 2007-2008 cycle of this grant award were Horry County and Beaufort County.

- Horry County embarked on Phase II of the county-wide open space inventory project using grant funds to develop and print a brochure for community officials and the public highlighting the importance of open space protection and including the information compiled from the county’s earlier open space inventory project (Phase I).
- Beaufort County implemented a storm drain marker project as part of a stormwater education campaign for pollution source control and stormwater management. Beaufort County Public Works with the help of volunteers from a nonprofit organization and local high schools identified and installed more than 1,000 storm drain markers in the county, instructing residents and visitors to emphasize the impacts to coastal waters and ecosystems from storm drain dumping. These markers were installed primarily in highly-trafficked pedestrian areas. During marker installation, the marked inlets, local outfalls, and associated structural stormwater management practices were documented with a GPS to field verify and/or update the county’s infrastructure mapping to help with future inspections for potential illicit discharge investigation, repair, and maintenance.

Program Focus Areas

SCNEMO has been implemented in watersheds throughout the state, with the objective of devising a useful and workable way to assist municipalities in addressing the impacts of polluted runoff and water resource protection.

Project Partners

The program, initially developed through a series of EPA §319 grants, has evolved through collaborative partnerships among:

- S.C. Sea Grant Consortium
- Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments
- Clemson University and Clemson’s Caroline Clear
- Coastal Carolina University Waccamaw Watershed Academy
- Friends of the Rivers
- LowCountry Institute
- NOAA Coastal Services Center
- North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- SCDEH Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management
- Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments

CRI - S.C. Pilot Project

The SCNEMO program, in collaboration with the University of Connecticut and other NEMO Network members, were selected as recipients of a UNH NOAA Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology (CICEET) grant.

- An innovative web-enabled mapping tool, the Community Resource Inventory (CRI) is being developed to be deployed as a pilot in the coastal communities of Georgetown County to enhance the ability of local land-use decision makers to factor natural resource protection into community land-use planning.

SCNEMO Watersheds

- Beaufort
- Colleton
- Colleton
- Saluda
- SC Coastal
- Seneca
- Pee Dee
- Waccamaw
- Cooper-Wando
- Columbus
- Bluffton

South Carolina

Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials

SC Regional Stormwater Education Consortia

Carolina Clear has become Clemson Extension’s answer to increasing stormwater education and public involvement needs across the state. Carolina Clear (Extension agents, faculty, staff) are partnering with grassroots organizations, environmental educators, state agencies, universities, schools and MS4s to collectively fulfill regional education needs.

- Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium
- Ashley Cooper Stormwater Education Consortium
- Lexington Countywide Stormwater Consortium
- Pickens County and the communities of Pickens, Easley and Liberty
- Richland County and the communities of Forest Acres/Arcadia Lakes
- Florence and Darlington Counties
- Surry County and City of Surry

Ongoing Carolina Clear activities include 4H2O pontoon-based classroom programs, “Buggin Out with Ben,” rain garden and rain barrel demonstration projects, outdoor classroom development at a large coastal fair, technical audience demonstrations and workshops, Certified Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control courses, internal stormwater awareness training, and many more activities.

Jasper County Natural Resource Conservation Plan

To assist Jasper County with the ever-increasing pressures of growth and development, a countywide conservation planning effort was initiated. The purpose of creating this Plan was to inventory the county’s natural resources to provide decision-makers with recommendations on how to update their comprehensive growth plan in a way that would allow them to grow sustainably and preserve the heritage and quality of life of Jasper County.

The planning effort included five basic steps: 1) assess the natural resources and conservation needs in the county; 2) set community conservation goals; 3) develop a countywide conservation plan; 4) integrate the plan into the comprehensive growth plan; and 5) measure success. More than 100 stakeholders were involved in developing the Plan and the project was completed by an all-volunteer committee. In 2007 the Plan was submitted to the county for incorporation into the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and was distributed to all municipalities within Jasper County. The Plan now serves as an informational guidebook for county residents and local developers, a tool for natural resource educators and planners, and most importantly, an inventory of biological data and innovative solutions of how to protect the many fragile ecosystems and species in the region. This project is easily transferable to other communities, presently serving as a model for two coastal South Carolina communities that have requested assistance with similar projects.