

<https://coastalreview.org/2023/11/state-awards-2-8m-to-improve-public-beach-water-accesses/>

State awards \$2.8M to improve public beach, water accesses

Nine coastal communities have been awarded more than \$2.8 million to improve public accesses to beaches and waters.

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management announced Monday the awards for fiscal 2023-24.

"This funding makes our coasts more accessible to all North Carolina residents and visitors, so everyone has the opportunity to enjoy our natural resources," NCDEQ Secretary Elizabeth S. Biser said in a statement. "We are proud to partner with local governments and communities to support projects that also benefit our coastal economy."

The Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access program provides matching funds to local governments in the 20 coastal counties. Governments that receive grants must match them by contributing at least 25% toward the project's cost. Funding for the grant program comes from the North Carolina General Assembly through the state's Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.

Sunset Beach received \$460,734 total to renovate the existing beach accesses at 29th, 34th and 37th streets.

Holden Beach received \$420,000 for development of Block Q. This project will create new restrooms and parking for beach access, a boat ramp, and public entertainment area. The project also includes landscaping and stormwater improvements.

Carolina Beach received \$600,000 for the acquisition of three adjacent parcels on Canal Drive on the north end of town to provide parking and access to the beach and Freeman Park.

Kure Beach received \$71,025 to replace the existing 8-foot wide, 134-foot long wooden walkway with a 10-foot wide Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible walkway to the beach at Public Beach Access No. 140, and \$62,700 to replace the existing 8-footwide 97-foot long wooden walkway with a 10-foot wide, Americans With Disabilities Act-compliant walkway to the beach to Public Beach Access No. 99.

Nags Head received \$89,313 for improvements to the Governor Street Public Beach Access. Improvements include a new ADA-compliant elevated dune crossover with associative ADA-compliant parking stalls, and a shower station upfit.

Washington received \$800,000 to complete renovations to the 1,981-foot boardwalk along the Washington Wetlands Boardwalk.

Hyde County received \$108,900 to complete boardwalk renovations at Far Creek Boardwalk along Far Creek in Englehard.

Surf City received \$10,875 for updates to the Broadway Street Access Site. This project will update the existing public restrooms and outdoor showers to meet federal accessibility standards, pave dedicated handicapped accessible parking spaces and walkways to the restrooms and beach accessway.

Winton received \$189,325 for improvements to the Winton Town Park. Improvements include construction of a new fishing pier with boat slips; replacement of the decking on the existing boardwalk; renovation of the restrooms to meet federal accessibility specifications; paving of dedicated handicapped accessible parking spaces and walkways to the restrooms and water accessway; and the addition of riprap to shoreline to secure the eroding shoreline.

The program has awarded 497 grants totaling more than \$53.8 million to improve public waterfront access sites since it began in 1981. For more information about the program, go to the [Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access website](#).

Access projects may include walkways, dune crossovers, restrooms, parking areas, piers and related projects. Funds also may be used for land acquisition or urban waterfront revitalization. Division of Coastal Management staff selected the recipients based on criteria set by the Coastal Resources Commission.