



## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY



Welcome to The Green Growth Toolbox, a cooperative, non-regulatory effort led by the Wildlife Diversity program of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. The Green Growth Toolbox, consisting of a handbook, GIS data package and website, provides North Carolina towns, cities and counties with tools, land use planning methods and case studies to conserve wildlife and natural resources as they grow.

### To use the Green Growth Toolbox:

- Download the handbook and GIS dataset from the project website.
- Local government staff, officials and consultants can enroll in training workshops.
- Communities that participate can receive follow-up technical guidance.
- Individual town, city and county governments can exhibit innovative leadership among their peers.

With initiative, creativity and support for “Green Growth,” North Carolina communities can stem the decline of our wildlife heritage while continuing to build homes, workplaces and shopping centers.

In addition to protecting environmental health, Green Growth can bring significant economic and social dividends to communities.

### Here is what you will find in the Green Growth Toolbox (GGT) Handbook.

#### SECTION 1. The Green Growth Toolbox: How it works and why it is needed

- Over the next 20 years, 3 million people will move to North Carolina. This unprecedented population growth is fueling sprawling patterns of land development that threaten North Carolina’s environment, public health and quality of life.
- The North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan identified sprawling patterns of land development as a top threat to the future of wildlife resources across the state.

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission developed the GGT to help communities conserve priority wildlife habitats for future generations while continuing to grow.

#### SECTION 2. Using Conservation Data: Wildlife habitat and natural resource maps and data explained

- Learn what the data mean.
- Use this data in development site selection and the three levels of planning: visioning and plan making, ordinance and rule setting and development design and review.
- Learn how to use the data to identify priority wildlife, habitats and natural resource conservation areas.
- Learn how to start a community-wide natural resource inventory.

### **SECTION 3. Habitat Conservation Recommendations: What the science tells us about how to minimize impacts to wildlife**

We recommend doing what is possible to incorporate these habitat conservation measures into the three levels of land use planning.

- Recommendations are non-regulatory and come from an expert review of the scientific literature regarding how much habitat wildlife need in developing landscapes.
- These recommendations are based on the NCWRC guidance document, “Conservation Recommendations for Priority Terrestrial Wildlife and Habitats in North Carolina.”
- Explore options for greenway design, stream buffers, habitat open space standards and other conservation measures for priority areas.

### **SECTION 4. Green Planning: Enabling wildlife conservation in visioning and planning**

“Green planning” means crafting a vision, goals and strategies in planning documents specific to conserving important species, habitats and ecosystems while continuing to grow.

- Learn a six-step process for creating a jurisdiction-wide conservation plan.
- Apply this process to write habitat conservation sections for existing land use plans.
- Link to examples of “green planning” documents from communities around the U.S.

### **SECTION 5. Greening Incentives and Ordinances: Incentives and policies necessary to achieve green planning goals**

“Greening incentives and ordinances” means using conservation data to design incentives, land use districts and conservation development standards that can minimize impacts to wildlife and delays in environmental permit review.

- Consider types of incentives that reward development projects for minimizing impacts to wildlife and natural resources.
- Review land use patterns that maintain wildlife and natural resources and consider how elements of land development ordinances can be crafted to conserve priority habitats and ecosystems.
- Explore example incentives and ordinances from around the U.S.

### **SECTION 6. Greening Development Site Location, Review and Design: Siting, designing and reviewing development projects to minimize impacts**

“Greening Development Review” means using conservation data and habitat conservation recommendations to site, review and design developments.

- This section can benefit planning staff and advisory boards that review development proposals. It can also benefit developers, engineers, consultants, and landscape architects that want to design conservation areas in developments.
- See a visual step-by-step example of interpreting and using conservation data in development review and site design.
- Use links to explore developments that embody many green growth principles.



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