

SUPPORTING INFORMED COASTAL LANDSCAPES: AN ASSESSMENT OF PREFERENCES IN CAROLINA TIDAL CREEK COMMUNITIES

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1 ABSTRACT

This study assessed the values, attitudes, and knowledge that influence residential landscaping decisions in coastal areas. This effort represents the initial step of a larger initiative to engage, educate and transform tidal creek communities to foster healthy ecologies through a strategic alignment with resident behaviors. Homeowners located in two single-family neighborhoods adjacent to tidal creeks were surveyed to evaluate factors such as existing site conditions and perceptions, landscape preferences, willingness-to-pay, and level of satisfaction. Surveys also assessed homeowner knowledge of and preferences for native and invasive species common to their areas. Findings indicate good potential for small to moderate sustainable landscape interventions based on an additive combination of: low-levels of satisfaction with current landscape, clear characterization of desired improvements, and a modest willingness to pay. Findings support a need for educational programs to improve understanding of stormwater management, use of native plants, and landscape strategies to increase resilience to hurricanes and flooding.

1.1 Keywords

Landscape Preferences, Coastal Resiliency, Residential Landscapes, Survey, Watershed Development