

Environment and Natural Resources, Department of ^[1]

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by David Stick, 2006

The origins of what came to be known as the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources date as far back as 1823, when the state sponsored a geological survey. Later, state research activities were expanded to include [forestry](#) ^[2], and in 1891 these and other varied functions were combined in a single agency, the [North Carolina Geological Survey](#) ^[3]. The name was changed to the North Carolina Geological and Economic Survey in 1905, and between then and its replacement by the Department of Conservation and Development in 1925 the agency took on still more responsibilities. From the outset, the Department of Conservation and Development was one of the more important divisions of North Carolina state government, and membership on its board was a widely sought political plum.

In addition to [geology](#) ^[4], [mineral resources](#) ^[5], and forestry, the divisions of the Department of Conservation and Development included marine fisheries, coastal resources, water resources, [tourism](#) ^[6], [advertising](#) ^[7], and [state parks](#) ^[8]. By the time it was replaced by the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development with adoption of the [Executive Organization Act of 1971](#) ^[9], the new department included 18 different agencies, boards, and commissions. Other name changes followed, and by 1998 the state's catchall agency was known as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. In the early 2000s, the department worked to protect water quality, air quality, and [public health](#) ^[10] through various programs designed to do everything from encouraging respect for the environment to assisting businesses, local governments, and the public with technical matters related to its divisions.

Additional Resources:

North Carolina Department of Environment & Natural Resources website: <http://ncdenr.gov> ^[11]

Archived webpages, NC Department of Environment & Natural Resources. 2010-present: http://wayback.archive-it.org/194*/http://www.ncdenr.gov ^[12]

Archived webpages, NC Department of Environment & Natural Resources. 2001-present: http://wayback.archive-it.org/194*/http://www.enr.state.nc.us ^[13]

Department of Environment and Natural Resources. "A Short History of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources." <http://web.archive.org/web/20101120200124/http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/guest/history-of-denr> ^[14].

North Carolina State Government Publications Collection: <http://www.ncgovdocs.org/> ^[15]

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[Mines and mineral resources](#) ^[17]

[Natural resources](#) ^[18]

[UNC Press](#) ^[19]

Authors:

[Stick, David](#) ^[20]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[21]

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