



# Cape Fear Firebird

*The Light of Save the Cape*

May 14, 2014

*The results of the survey will allow the state to balance the outdoor recreation demands of its people with its mission to protect and restore natural resources.*

–Carol Tingley, acting director, NCDENR Division of Parks and Recreation

## ***Time to Talk about Parks***

The North Carolina State parks people are running a survey to assess outdoor recreation needs and preferences for the next five years. It's on their Web site at [www.ncparks.gov](http://www.ncparks.gov). Go there, click on the green tag "We need your ideas..." and fill in the survey. Tell them what you think. Be sure to go to the end where you put in the County where you live.

This is important. Here's what's at issue:

- Brunswick County, one of the State's largest and fastest growing, does not have a State park. Save the Cape is developing a plan for a new park on the State Ports Authority's 600-acre site on the Cape Fear River above Southport, a lovely place with views of the river from a high bluff with 300-year-old live oaks. A strong showing of interest from local folks will help convince the Division of Parks and Recreation to give this project a high priority.
- State parks have traditionally been local versions of national parks, with the emphasis on preservation of important natural resources. But the Division of Parks and Recreation is becoming increasingly sensitive to the needs for recreation and education that can be met in a well-located and well-designed facility. That is particularly true in Brunswick County, where the County parks, traditionally focused on athletics, are hard-pressed to keep up with the broader recreational needs of an increasingly diverse population, which has grown at the rate of more than 40% in each of the last four decades. The survey will tell the Parks and Recreation Division what we need and want in our parks: walking and biking trails, campgrounds, environmental education, even entertainment. A place to take and teach children and grandchildren. Our concept for a State park includes all these things and more! It would be a recreational oasis for families, the community, the County and the State.
- The survey is a crucial part of the State's park planning process, essential to maintain the State's eligibility for participation in Federal funding for parks. Although parks generate economic impacts of ten times their cost at both National and State levels, our parks are free and the cost must be met from the State's general fund. Federal funding programs, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, are essential to supplement local funding sources.

You have until May 30 to participate in the survey. Please do. Ask your friends to participate. If you need some inspiration, take a look at our park plan on our Web site, [www.savethecape.org](http://www.savethecape.org). A nifty map is linked on the sidebar. And we are still working on that plan.

Save the Cape, Inc

618 North Howe Street

Southport, NC 28461

[www.savethecape.org](http://www.savethecape.org)

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