

OUR COAST

North Carolina Coastal Federation | NCCOAST.ORG | SPRING 2017



North Carolina
Coastal Federation
35 years
working together for a healthy coast

Come See Us at the Coast:
OUR 2017 SUMMER HAPPENINGS



Photo © Vance Miller

Dear Friend of the Coast,

Power to protect and restore our coastal environment resides not in laws, but with you — the people who live, work and play along our coast.

Your support enables our staff here at the Coastal Federation to work with lawmakers and government officials on efforts to better safeguard our coastal environment and economy — two things we all agree are worth protecting and growing.

Our powers of persuasion work best when deeply rooted in the concerns of residents and visitors. We know that public support for our work does not just spontaneously ignite. It requires listening, outreach and one-on-one conversations to make sure we

understand how people feel and think.

Solutions to environmental challenges that allow everyone to win are always preferable, but not always possible. When management decisions result in winners and losers, we all share the responsibility of listening and learning from diverse viewpoints.

For the past 35 years, we have often found that our initial ideas regarding solutions to environmental issues are sometimes ill-conceived. Meaningful dialogue with a diversity of stakeholders makes it easier to develop effective management strategies.

Environmental gains achieved through backroom deals or raw power plays tend to be short-lived and ineffective. Lasting

solutions depend on developing a sense of ownership for responsible actions among the people who must live with the consequences of those decisions.

None of this is easy to do, much less achieve, as our society and its politics become even more sharply divided and polarized.

That's why we pursue an aggressive agenda focused on issues that bring people together rather than drive them apart. We identify specific coastal management actions that most coastal residents and visitors support. Overcoming legal, regulatory, institutional and economic barriers is still a huge challenge, but much more feasible when the wind of public support is at your back.

Over time, the more a diversity of stakeholders accomplish together, the more they know and trust each other. Once we trust that each of us is only trying to do what's best for the coast and its people, it becomes easier to tackle tough management concerns by combining our experiences, talents and creativity.

I thank you for your support, which allows us to focus our work on initiatives that enable people to work together to protect and restore our coast. Your support holds great promise for continued, lasting advancements going forward.

With best regards

— Todd Miller, Executive Director



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to benefit the

NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL FEDERATION

CELEBRATE WITH US

We'll be toasting 35 years of working together for a healthy coast at the 2017 Pelican Awards and 35th Anniversary Soundside Soiree!

Enjoy live music, local seafood, a champagne toast and our coastal auction. We'll honor 35 years of our beautiful coast in true southern style — a summer evening you won't want to miss.

Aug. 5 on the banks of Bogue Sound

Location: Crystal Coast Civic Center in Morehead City

Time: Awards presentation starts at 5:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$50 for Coastal Federation members and \$60 for non-members

Get your tickets today at ncoast.org/celebrate.

Meet our new AmeriCorps members

In May, we say goodbye to our two AmeriCorps members, Erica Connery in Wanchese and Nina Quaratella in Wrightsville Beach. Erica is staying in Wanchese as an outreach programs specialist at the UNC Coastal Studies Institute. Nina is moving back to her home state of Rhode Island, where she will be a marine science educator at the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. We welcomed two new members to our Wanchese and Wrightsville Beach offices in March.

Kate Conery

Kate is a former Coastal Federation intern who graduated from the University of North Carolina Wilmington with a Bachelor of Science in environmental science and a minor in geospatial technologies. She grew to love North Carolina's wetlands and beaches after moving to Wilmington in 2012. She's excited to inspire kids in the community to become environmental stewards and explore the many coastal habitats of our area.



Madison Douthitt

Madison is a North Carolina native who graduated from North Carolina State University with a Bachelor of Science in zoology and a minor in Spanish. She grew up going to the beach, which fostered her passion for conservation and ecology. She is excited to have the opportunity to educate and engage local communities and hopes to inspire others to get outside and be stewards in their communities.



Congratulations to the team at Coastal Review Online!

Our news organization collectively won 14 awards from the North Carolina Press Association in March, including seven first-place awards. Don't miss a story — go to coastalreview.org.

Meet our new President's Council members

The Coastal Federation's President's Council enhances our ability to forge new partnerships and provide for an environmentally and economically healthy coast. For more information, visit nccoast.org/presidents-council. Four new members joined the council this year:

David Bryan, of Fayetteville, is the co-owner of Bryan Honda and has held dealer franchises for Pontiac, Cadillac, Oldsmobile and Nissan. A former Navy lieutenant, David is active on many business and nonprofit boards and is the president of North Carolina Life Insurance Company.

Bobbi Hapgood, of Chapel Hill, is an organizational leader and nonprofit strategist who is active with many family-based and education nonprofits. She is the founder of Philanthropic Ventures, which guides community, private and family foundations in improving organizational, giving and fund development strategies.

Charles Meeker, of Raleigh, is a partner at Parker Poe, representing private and public clients on local government issues. Meeker served on Raleigh City Council for eight years and as mayor of Raleigh for five terms, advocating for downtown redevelopment and a light rail system for the Triangle.

Joe Ramus, of Beaufort, is Professor Emeritus at Duke University, with expertise in estuary and ocean processes and interest in coastal water quality. Ramus is active with Carteret County Crossroads and the Carteret County Economic Development Council, and is chair of the North Carolina Sea Grant Advisory Board.

Current members include:

Dick Bierly, Morehead City, Chairman
Philip Blumenthal, Charlotte
Hugh Cullman, Beaufort
Dick Daugherty, Raleigh
Jim Goodmon, Raleigh
Olivia Britton Holding, Raleigh
Tom Looney, Cary
Carmen Hooker Odom, Manteo
David Paynter, Wilmington
John Preyer, Raleigh
Simon Rich, III, Edenton
William G. Ross Jr., Chapel Hill
Billy Sewell, Jacksonville
Bland Simpson, Chapel Hill
Fred and Alice Stanback, Salisbury
Smedes York, Raleigh

Spring into summer:

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE COAST THIS SEASON



START YOUR SUMMER ADVENTURE AT ONE OF OUR COASTAL LOCATIONS



Few places compare to the beautiful North Carolina coast — its stunning beaches, productive sounds and tranquil wetlands provide for people’s livelihoods and for their enjoyment.

Experiencing these special places is a critical part of learning why it’s important to protect them. Ensuring that everyone is able to have that experience is one of the main reasons the Coastal Federation works to protect and restore the North Carolina coast for current and future generations.

In the next three pages, you’ll get highlights of what our staff has planned to get people out in the coastal environment near our Wrightsville Beach, Ocean and Wanchese offices. Every summer, the offices stay busy with fun learning experiences, volunteer hands-on field days and summer camps and tours. Each office is located near some of North Carolina’s most beautiful coastal places, including several that the Coastal Federation helped save and protect in perpetuity. If you’re traveling to the coast this summer or live here and are looking for something to do, we hope you’ll stop by or visit some of our favorite spots along the North Carolina coast.

For more information about the programs on the following pages, please visit nccoast.org/events.

Wrightsville Beach

The Fred and Alice Stanback Coastal Education Center, located beside the Wrightsville Beach Museum of History, the visitor center and the Wrightsville Beach Park Inclusive Playground, offers family-friendly programs and is a short distance from the beach. We invite people to drop in and learn more about our programs, take a tour of our office, find our geocache and try out our monthly classroom activity.

Here are some things you don't want to miss:

Drop in for Touch Tank Tuesday

Get your hands on starfish, puffer fish, sea urchins and various kinds of crabs. The critters vary by week so make sure you stop by every Tuesday for this interactive program for all ages!

Walk the Loop to learn about how we're reducing runoff

Come with us on a walking tour of the stormwater reduction projects around the John Nesbitt Loop in Wrightsville Beach. You'll see how simple techniques can reduce runoff and protect and restore water quality in the coastal waters we all love.



Give new life to plastic beach toys left on the shoreline

The Coastal Federation partners with the Plastic Ocean Project Inc. and the Wrightsville Beach Sea Turtle Project to collect discarded beach toys. Community members are invited to stop by our office and drop off plastic toys or pick some up before they head over to the beach.



Turtle Talks with the Wrightsville Beach Sea Turtle Project

The Wrightsville Beach Sea Turtle Project hosts Turtle Talks every week at our office. Stop by every Tuesday evening this summer and learn about these remarkable animals that nest on our beaches.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Help us monitor our living shorelines in the area or join us for a rain garden workday at our partner elementary schools. Check out nccoast.org/events for more information about upcoming opportunities to get involved.

Top Photo © First in Flight Media; Below © L.A. Jansen

Take a day trip to these nearby special places:

MORRIS LANDING CLEAN WATER PRESERVE | Holly Ridge

This beautiful site offers one of the few public access points for boating, fishing and communing with nature along the Stump Sound. The Coastal Federation helped save and maintains this 52-acre site that features oyster reefs, living shorelines and a public dock. It is across the waterway from Permuda Island and features a memorial to Lena Ritter, the fisherman who worked with us to save the island and the viability of the surrounding oyster grounds.

BIRD ISLAND | Sunset Beach

This special place, with its Kindred Spirit Mailbox for sharing coastal musings with fellow visitors, was saved by the Coastal Federation and partners in the late 1990s. Once slated for development, this barrier island is now part of the N.C. Coastal Reserve. The island is accessible by foot.

CAROLINA BEACH STATE PARK

Take a trip out to Carolina Beach State Park for trails that are suitable for all skill levels and to get a glimpse at some amazing native carnivorous plants. While you're there, check out how we're making the coast a more resilient place by visiting the living shoreline we constructed at the park.

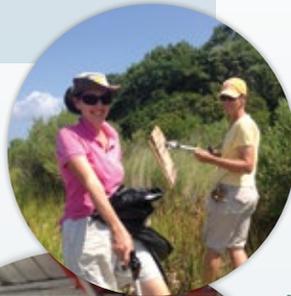
Ocean

Every summer, our staff based in Carteret County offers estuary cruises, living shoreline construction events, cleanups, summer camps and more as a way for people to enjoy and learn about the coast. There's something for everyone — for those who want to relax and those who want to get their hands dirty.

Learn more about a few of our summer programs:

Relax on a coastal cruise or birding cruise

The coastal waters and marshes of central North Carolina are magical places. Come learn about these magnificent areas and get a look at the wildlife that calls the White Oak River and Bogue Sound home.



Kayak to Jones Island for yoga under the oak trees

The trip begins with a 30-minute paddle to Jones Island in the White Oak River. You'll learn about conservation and restoration projects on the island. We also relax under the shade of giant oak trees during a gentle yoga session and take an afternoon swim.

Harvest fresh, local produce at EarthWise Farm

On Wednesday evenings, people visit this small community farm on the Bogue Sound to work the soil, hoe the weeds and harvest a wide variety of veggies and melons. Members of the Coastal Federation are invited to join us for our weekly workdays this summer.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We're looking for volunteers to help us plant marsh grass, build oyster reefs and clean up shorelines. Visit nccoast.org/events to learn more.

Go on an adventure to these beautiful spots:

HOOP POLE CREEK | Atlantic Beach

Once slated for development, Hoop Pole Creek is a hidden gem in the middle of Atlantic Beach. The trails give visitors fantastic views of live oak trees, salt marsh and the estuarine waters of the Bogue Sound. Hoop Pole Creek is open year-round but summer visitors should be sure to bring bug spray.

NORTH RIVER WETLANDS PRESERVE | Otway

We're excited to open up North River Wetlands Preserve to members starting this spring. You can access this 6,000-acre preserve for free if you're a member, or for a small fee of \$5 per day if you're a non-member. All visitors are required to sign a waiver and register, either at nccoast.org/northriver or the on-site cash box.



PATSY POND | Ocean

The Patsy Pond trail is located in the Croatan National Forest across from our headquarters and central regional office on N.C. 24. Many of the longleaf pines have white spray-painted bands around them — look toward the tops of these trees and you'll see holes created by the endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers that call the longleaf pines home.

Photo © Sam Bland

HAMMOCKS BEACH STATE PARK | Swansboro

Hammocks Beach State Park is located in Swansboro and includes a mainland visitor center as well as islands that can be

reached by a short ferry ride. The Coastal Federation built living shorelines at two different locations within the park — the mainland and at Jones Island.

Wanchese

Our Wanchese staff members are excited to be settled into their new office for the first full summer in the Wanchese Marine Industrial Park. The site offers the Coastal Federation increased opportunities to demonstrate restoration and education programs. We are looking forward to working with neighbors, which include boat builders, fishermen and other water-dependent industries.

Hang out with us at these upcoming events:

Help foster a love of the coast

After spending a summer reading books about the coastal environment, students who participate in Mano al Hermano's summer reading program take what they've learned out to the marsh with the Coastal Federation. Mano al Hermano is a Dare County nonprofit that works to empower Latino families through education. Volunteers will be needed for the trip in August.

Teens get out in the water at the Service in Science Camp

Service in Science campers earn community service hours while spending time on the water. From kayak cleanup trips to water



quality monitoring to oyster restoration, participating teens will learn about why protecting the coastal environment they love is so important. We partner with Jennette's Pier in Nags Head for this weeklong camp July 17-21.

Learn about marine debris and a local watershed

Catch up with our AmeriCorps member, Madison, at Jennette's Pier to learn about marine debris, how it affects our environment and what everyday choices you can make to reduce the amount of plastic in our oceans. Madison will also lead a program at the Jockey's Ridge Soundside Access. Come explore this watershed and learn how you can help keep our coastal waters clean and healthy.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We're looking for volunteers to bag oyster shells and participate in cleanups on a recently adopted stretch of N.C. 345. Check nccoast.org/events to learn more. You can also get involved in our pilot oyster shell recycling program by calling 252-473-1607.

We're lucky to work and live near some unique coastal places:

JOCKEY'S RIDGE STATE PARK | Nags Head

Jockey's Ridge State Park includes the tallest active sand dune system in the eastern United States. If you climb the dune when leaving from the visitor center, you'll find one of our living shoreline projects along the Roanoke Sound.

SPRINGER'S POINT PRESERVE | Ocracoke

Springer's Point Preserve is a beautiful maritime forest in Ocracoke Village. It's home to a variety of bird and plant species, including ancient live oaks. We helped with a living shoreline on the preserve. Please plan to travel there by foot or bicycle, as there is no parking available.



Springer's Point Preserve, Photo © Sam Bland

ADVOCACY UPDATES

The Coastal Federation advocates for a clean, healthy coast at the state, local and federal levels. We promote the adoption of policies that protect and benefit natural resources, coastal communities and the state economy. Learn more below.

Summit a great success

Almost 200 people — including appointed and elected officials, business leaders, scientists, academics, economic developers, tourism leaders and shellfish growers — attended the **Sound Economic Development: Creating a Rising Tide for the North Carolina Coast** summit hosted by the North Carolina Coastal Federation March 22-23 in Raleigh.

Speakers from North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland discussed successes in the oyster aquaculture and low-impact development industries, as well as what North Carolina needs to do next to become more competitive in these fields. Michael Regan, secretary of the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), welcomed the crowd and spoke on how DEQ and Gov. Roy Cooper endorse efforts to restore oysters and to bolster the state's aquaculture industry.

"That's the great thing about oysters and coastal restoration — there's a little bit of something here for everyone," Regan said in his speech.

The two-day summit made apparent the passionate and bipartisan state support for these efforts, as well as the need for collaboration on regional economic development strategies that leverage North



Photo © Ashita Gona



Photo © Ashita Gona

< Pictured from left: Michael Regan, secretary of N.C. Department of Environmental Quality; Todd Miller, executive director of the Coastal Federation; and Tom Looney, board member for the Coastal Federation and the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

Carolina's coastal assets. Moving forward, priorities include the development of a shellfish aquaculture plan and a continued emphasis on public-private partnerships to grow both the oyster industry and the use of low-impact development.

The Coastal Federation presented the *Strategic Plan for Creating a Robust Coastal Economy with Coastal Restoration*, which will help guide economic growth on the North Carolina coast for the next five years. This plan was created with input from

business owners, legislators, scientists and others, and it can be read at nccoast.org/strategicplan.

State legislators attended the evening Legislative Oyster Reception, as did Lt. Gov. Dan Forest, who also confirmed his support for oyster restoration and shellfish aquaculture.

To see presentations and to learn more about the summit, please visit nccoast.org/economicssummit.

Nationwide permit for living shorelines

In January, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers authorized its first nationwide general permit for the construction and maintenance of living shorelines. This is a big step in streamlining the living shoreline permitting process. However, there's still work to be done. The Coastal Federation has been working with scientists and government officials to develop a regional living shoreline permit for North Carolina.

Stay tuned at nccoast.org/livingshorelines and at livingshorelinesacademy.org.

EDUCATION UPDATES

Our educators and staff take students and adults out in the coastal environment to learn about the coast and the many ways we can protect it. Check out these highlights.

College students dedicate spring breaks to protecting the coast

Several spring break groups helped the Coastal Federation install living shorelines, make office repairs and restore oyster habitats.

Students from East Carolina University and Ohio State University visited the Ocean office in March. They worked on a living shoreline at the Trinity Center in Pine Knoll Shores, primed and painted the back office, did maintenance at Hoop Pole Creek and the North River Wetlands Preserve, helped with stormwater activities in local elementary schools and worked at EarthWise Farm.

“My favorite activity was building a living shoreline,” said Hannah Crouse, the student leader for ECU’s trip. “It was really hard work, but it felt good to know that we were making an impact.”

The Wanchese office hosted a group from Ithaca College in New York. These students assembled rain barrels for a rainwater harvesting workshop, worked in rain gardens and assisted with education activities at local schools. They also helped remove litter



from the Coastal Federation’s recently adopted stretch of N.C. 345, the highway that leads to the Wanchese office.

Sara Hallas, coastal education coordinator, said the students collected 25 bags of trash and 15 fish totes of recyclable items.

“The community responded with much thanks as they passed by, and we received several calls and emails with compliments that it’s the best that the Wanchese road has looked in a long time,” she said.



Students pretend to be raindrops, engineers during stormwater lesson

Students from the Wilmington-based Blue Ribbon Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence (BRC) have been learning more about the coastal environment and how stormwater can pollute waters during recent lessons with the Coastal Federation.

Staff at the Wrightsville Beach office resumed programs with BRC students in March. Using some really creative learning approaches, staff asked students to pretend to be stormwater engineers tasked with designing their own rain gardens. They also got outside and pretended to be raindrops going into an estuary during a round of BMP (best management practice) tag. Students followed up that lesson with hands-on work in the rain gardens at the Coastal Federation’s Wrightsville Beach office.

Staff members’ work with BRC students is ongoing, thanks to a grant from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board, which also helps fund projects with local high school students.

This summer, students will be participating in more activities that get them out in the coastal environment, including oyster restoration, marsh water quality monitoring and living shoreline work.

RESTORATION UPDATES

We work with volunteers, students, scientists, contractors, local governments and engineers to restore coastal habitats along the North Carolina coast. Check out three of our highlighted projects below.

Fifteen-acre oyster sanctuary construction began early May

The community of South River has been busier than normal these last few months, as work started on the Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary, a 15-acre oyster restoration project that will help increase oyster population and improve water quality near Pamlico Sound.

Trucks started delivering materials — rock, shell, concrete and marl — for the sanctuary in late February. Eight trucks made approximately four trips per day for several weeks, delivering 20-25 tons of material with each trip to the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries' (DMF) South River facility.

Stevens Towing Company, Inc., which has an office in Edenton, began constructing the 15 acres of sanctuary in early May. The Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary is a unique public-private partnership that has involved support from the state legislature, state agencies, a nonprofit, private companies and federal agencies.

Because the sanctuary is not open to harvest, it serves as a nursery for oysters, which repopulate by producing spat. The spat drifts and attaches to nearby surfaces, which in this case will be other harvestable reefs and cultch planting sites created by DMF. This project is the first major installment of the 50 Million Oyster Initiative, which aims to restore 50 million oysters to North Carolina waters by 2020. When oysters grow to full-size, the cultch sites will be open to harvest.

You can help support these efforts through our Adopt an Oyster program. For the cost of a few bottles of cocktail sauce, you can adopt a single oyster, a dozen or even a bushel. In three years, your oyster will be all grown up, filtering 50 gallons of water a day and providing a home for shrimp, crab and fish. **Visit nccoast.org/adopt to adopt an oyster today.**

Oak Island projects reduce stormwater runoff by 85 percent

The Coastal Federation teamed up with Brunswick County, the Town of Oak Island, local communities and other partners to address stormwater runoff and its effect on water quality in the Lockwoods Folly watershed. The plan involved constructing 16 stormwater BMPs. These simple BMPs consisted of regrading existing street-side swales to allow stormwater to enter the swales and infiltrate into the ground before reaching surface waters.



Many of these techniques look simple, but they yielded impressive results. Monitoring results show that these simple projects successfully reduced the amount of polluted runoff entering surface waters of the Lockwoods Folly watershed. Nine local residents helped monitor the success of the project by taking photos during rain events. This dedicated team, which won a Pelican Award from the Coastal Federation in 2016, recorded over 300 hours of volunteer monitoring during rain events and recording site data. Analysis shows that there was an 85 percent reduction in stormwater runoff volume as compared to the pre-project conditions. This project was funded by DEQ through its Section 319 Environmental Protection Agency grant program.

Salt marsh restoration good for water, fisheries habitat

The Coastal Federation recently broke ground on a salt marsh restoration project in Williston Creek, located at the 6,000-acre North River Wetlands Preserve in Otway. The project will restore and create approximately 8.8 acres of salt marsh and 3,500 linear feet of tidal creek.

This project is funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Bring Back the Natives) and with private funds that have been raised by the Coastal Federation. "If these wetlands were being built to be sold to private developers for mitigation credits, state rules value them at \$160,000 per acre, or more than \$1 million total," said Bree Tillett, coastal specialist for the Coastal Federation. "Instead, they're being built just to make the creek a cleaner and healthier place."





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Join the thousands of people who are passionate about protecting our coast — today and for future generations.

To join or renew your annual membership, visit nccoast.org/membership.
You can also renew by mailing a check to 3609 N.C. 24 (Ocean), Newport, NC 28570.

Your membership in the Coastal Federation helps protect, restore and wisely manage our coastal rivers, sounds and beaches.

Questions? Call us at 252-393-8185
or send us an email at nccf@nccoast.org.

Photo © Sam Bland



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