



North Carolina Coastal Federation | 3609 Hwy 24 (Ocean) | Newport, North Carolina 28570 | Web: <http://www.nccoast.org>

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2005 North Carolina Oyster Restoration and Protection Summit

Raleigh – In North Carolina, oysters are often described as a keystone species for the health of our coast. Not only are oysters harvested and cultured as a seafood delicacy, but they also filter our coastal waters. Oyster reefs also provide habitat for a multitude of species. Thus, the North Carolina Coastal Federation, in partnership with North Carolina Sea Grant, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program and Environmental Defense will host the 2005 North Carolina Oyster Restoration and Protection Summit.

Shellfish harvesters, growers and gardeners, along with scientists, government officials, coastal residents and leaders of environmental groups have been invited to Raleigh for the summit designed to:

- * Provide updates on oyster science and research;
- * Describe existing and potential partnerships to fund restoration projects;
- * Outline updates to a five-year Oyster Restoration and Protection Plan for the state.

Media coverage of the summit is invited. The schedule includes:

Wednesday, Feb. 23
N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences, Downtown Raleigh

- * 12:30 to 4:45 pm in the museum auditorium: Summit opens with sessions including Funding Restoration: Coordination Pays! and Emerging Oyster Science: What Are We Learning?.
- * 4:15 pm in the museum auditorium: Legislative Priorities with Marc Basnight, Senate President Pro Tempore.
- * 6 to 8 pm in the museum lobby: Poster session and legislative reception will highlight two dozen current projects and partnerships.

Thursday, Feb.24
McKimmon Center at N.C. State University

* 8 am to Noon: Discussion groups on topics including oyster habitat and restoration; water quality protection and restoration; education and public involvement; and marketing and fisheries development.

* 1 pm: Comments from William G. Ross, secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

1:45 to 4 pm: Regional focus groups and closing remarks.

A complete schedule is available from Lauren Kolodij at 252-393-8185, through Feb. 22. On Feb. 23-24, contact 910-232-6210. For a copy of the North Carolina Oyster Restoration and Protection Plan go to www.nccoast.org. For directions to the museum, go online to www.naturalsciences.org. For directions to the McKimmon Center, go online to www.mckimmon.ncsu.edu.

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***About the North Carolina Coastal Federation:
"Citizens Working Together for a Healthy Coast"***

The North Carolina Coastal Federation (NCCF) is the state's only non-profit organization focused exclusively on protecting and restoring the coast of North Carolina through education, advocacy and habitat restoration and preservation. NCCF headquarters are located at 3609 Highway 24 in Ocean between Morehead City and Swansboro and are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 5 pm. The NCCF also operates regional offices in Wilmington and Manteo. For more information call 252-393-8185 or check out NCCF's website at www.nccoast.org