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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Creeks in the Balance” Community Creek Meetings Focus on Education, Neighborhood Involvement

Wilmington- On April 15, more than 120 neighborhood residents turned out for the first of two neighborhood creek meetings. On Tuesday April 22, the creek meetings move to Bradley Creek Elementary School, and the speakers and discussion will focus on the health of Bradley, Hewletts and Whiskey Creeks. With recent events and attention focused on the health of these creeks, an equal or greater number of residents is expected to attend the second creek meeting.

When it comes to community action, it's all about making it personal- that is, talking about important issues that exist in people's "back yards". That is the philosophy behind two neighborhood creek meetings which are being organized by the North Carolina Coastal Federation, in partnership with the City of Wilmington, New Hanover County, UNCW, and the New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District.

In this case, the meetings will focus on the status of the health of the creeks that literally wind through the various backyards and neighborhoods that define portions of Wilmington and New Hanover County. The meetings will provide information about the current health status of these local creeks, and the issues that affect it. Meeting attendees will not only learn about their creeks, but will also be encouraged to become more active stewards. Speakers and displays will provide information on tangible opportunities that exist for residents to help to protect and/or restore the health of their neighborhood creeks, such as financial landowner assistance programs, ways to help protect water quality in your own backyards, membership and volunteer events with the NC Coastal Federation, and advocacy efforts.

The second creek meeting will be held on **April 22, from 7 p.m.-9 p.m., at the Bradley Creek Elementary School, on Greenville Loop Rd.** The second meeting will focus on issues that affect the residents in the **Bradley, Hewletts and Whiskey Creek** watersheds.

“Many people are working hard to ensure great community visibility and turnout at these meetings,” said Tracy Skrabal, Senior Scientist with the federation. “We all love our neighborhood creeks and streams, and these meetings provide residents with answers to some important questions- how healthy is my creek, and is it safe to swim or fish in my creek? And how can I get involved in helping to keep my creek healthy?”

“Gaining this information is a vital step to help our creeks,” said Skrabal. “At the current rate of development in our southeastern region, we cannot hope to protect the water quality and natural resources we all love without educating and involving many more of our neighbors in our mission.”

The “Creeks in the Balance” community creek meetings are made possible by generous support from the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation. The North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation awards grants to nonprofit community agencies, universities and other partners for programs that promote the sciences, health and education.

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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