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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Shoreline Restoration Continues at Jones Island

Ocean, NC – Strong storms and wind-driven tides have chewed into the shoreline of Jones Island over the years causing considerable erosion. Come lend a hand in the ongoing effort to stabilize the island's eroding shoreline.

The N.C. Coastal Federation invites volunteers to help plant 6,000 marsh plants along the shoreline of Jones Island in the White Oak River near Swansboro on Friday, May 2. Two species of marsh grass will be planted, smooth cordgrass and saltmeadow hay. The goals of the planting are to stabilize the eroding shoreline at Jones Island and to establish coastal marsh habitat. Volunteers will also learn about marsh and wetland ecology, erosion and shoreline stabilization.

"It's important for students and citizens to be good stewards of their environment. This project is a perfect opportunity for volunteers to learn about stewardship through a hands-on restoration activity", said Sarah Phillips, coastal outreach specialist for the federation.

Students from Swansboro High School and staff from Hammocks Beach State Park and the N.C. Soil and Water Conservation Districts will also help with the planting.

This will be the fourth community planting to take place on the island. Last year, volunteers planted more than 4,500 salt marsh plants in October. Boy Scout Troop 82 from Cherry Point and Troop 310 from Raleigh also helped to plant 1,450 plugs of saltmeadow hay and smooth cordgrass in March and April.

The federation bought a portion of Jones Island last year through a grant from the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund. The organization has donated the land to the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation and will soon be part of Hammocks Beach State Park. N.C. Audubon, which owned an adjoining tract, also donated its land to the park last year. About 70 percent of the island is now protected and designated a White Oak River Clean Water Preserve.

The purchase of Jones Island protects about a mile of waterfront buffer. Preserving this land prevents it from being developed and becoming a potential source of stormwater pollution in the impaired White Oak River.

Volunteers for the marsh planting will meet at Hammocks Beach State Park's Visitor Center in Swansboro at 10 a.m. Park rangers will ferry them to the island. The planting should last until 2 p.m. Volunteers should wear closed-toed shoes that may get wet, cool clothing and a hat. Lunch and drinks will be provided. Those interested in helping should contact Sarah Phillips at 252-393-8185 or email her at sarahp@nccoast.org.

The Community Conservation Assistance Program of the Onslow County Soil and Water Conservation District is partially paying for the project. This new program is administered by the N. C. Soil and Water Conservation Commission and implemented by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts. It provides financial and technical assistance to correct existing water-quality problems. This program is an innovative approach to controlling pollution caused by existing stormwater runoff.

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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 headquarters include NCCF's main offices, the Cape Lookout Coastkeeper office, a gift shop, Nature Library, Weber Seashell Exhibit, ShoreKeeper Learning Center, and adjoining nature trail. The NCCF also operates field offices in Wilmington and Manteo. For more information call 252-393-8185 or check out NCCF's website at www.nccoast.org