



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rain Garden Planting at Bradley Creek School Moved to Earth Day

WILMINGTON —Sixty third-grade students at Bradley Creek Elementary School will have to wait until Earth Day on Thursday, April 22, trade pencils and paper for shovels and rakes to plant a new rain garden at the school. The planting, originally scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, is being postponed one day because of the threat of rain.

The rain garden, which will contain native plants, is designed to capture stormwater runoff from the school and serve as a classroom for students and teachers.

The students will be joined at 12:00 p.m. Thursday, April 22, by community volunteers and the Bradley Creek Parents-Teachers Association to plant native grasses, flowers, shrubs and trees in the 3,400-square-foot rain garden.

Everyone is invited to attend this Community Clean Water Day. Information on rain gardens and other measures people can take to reduce stormwater pollution will be available during the planting.

The N.C. Coastal Federation is leading the effort in partnership with the New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District, New Hanover County Schools and Coastal Carolina Resource Group Inc. The district's Community Conservation Assistance Program and N.C. Attorney General's Environmental Enhancement Grant Program are paying for the project.

The large rain garden will help to slow down and soak up the rain water flowing off the school's parking lot. It will also treat this polluted stormwater before it can reach the nearby headwaters of Hewletts Creek. The project is a piece of the watershed plans that the federation and Wilmington are devising to identify stormwater sources and reduce runoff in Hewletts and Bradley creeks. The N.C. Division of Water Quality and the federal Environmental Protection Agency are paying for the plans.

Rain gardens are excavated and prepared depressions that are planted with native trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers that help capture and infiltrate stormwater runoff before it enters a local waterway. Such simple measures can be effective in reducing polluted stormwater runoff and coastal flooding. Rain gardens also can be pretty landscape features; provide natural habitat for birds, insects and other wildlife; and promote sustainable design practices while encouraging environmental stewardship and community pride.

Reporters and volunteers planning to attend the planting are asked to contact Ted Wilgis at tedw@nccoast.org and to check in at the school office when arriving.