



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wal-Mart to Help Coastal Federation Build Rain Gardens

OCEAN – The N.C. Coastal Federation has received \$50,000 to build three rain gardens at schools along the coast. The Wal-Mart Foundation's N.C. State Giving Program gave the grant to the non-profit group.

The schools will be chosen this month, and the federation will work with 150 students over the coming school year to plan, build and plant rain gardens, which will filter runoff and reduce flooding around the schools.

Eric Litchfield, market manager for Wal-Mart in Eastern North Carolina, explained the company's interest in supporting the education program: "The Coastal Federation offers programs that connect students to local water quality by teaching them about habitat and ecosystems and then helping students to build rain gardens that will improve water quality at their school and in their community. This grant supports Wal-Mart's commitment to environmental sustainability."

A rain garden is a shallow depression, planted with native plants, designed to slow, capture and soak up rain. These gardens help to control stormwater runoff and reduce pollution and flooding. Native plants are used because they can grow under a variety of environmental conditions and are accustomed to the area's soil and climate. Their vibrant colors also attract butterflies and birds so gardens become great wildlife habitat.

"While rain gardens help to improve the environment, they also are wonderful teaching tools," said Todd Miller, the federation's executive director. "The gardens will become a permanent part of the school grounds, providing a living classroom for future students."

Federation educators also will conduct classroom lessons and activities that teach students about coastal ecology, stormwater and how to be better coastal stewards.

Wal-Mart store employees and other volunteers will help students plant the gardens in the spring.

Founded in 1982, the N.C. Coastal Federation is the state's only non-profit organization focused exclusively on protecting and restoring the coast of North Carolina through education, advocacy and habitat preservation and restoration. Its headquarters is located in Ocean, N.C. and regional offices are located in Manteo and Wilmington. To learn more about the Coastal Federation visit www.nccoast.org.

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