



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Restore Oyster Habitat to Celebrate National Estuaries Day

WILMINGTON – Celebrate the beauty and productivity of our coastal waters by helping the N.C. Coastal Federation build an oyster reef and restore a salt marsh in Stump Sound in Onslow County.

Volunteers will join federation staff members on Saturday, Sept. 25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the federation's Morris Landing Preserve near Holly Ridge.

The project is part of National Estuaries Day, a national celebration that has been held every year since 1988 on the last Saturday in September to highlight the importance, beauty and vulnerability of these special places where the rivers meet the sea.

Volunteers can take part in a fun-filled Community Clean Water Day along the shores of Stump Sound. They can work on a project to create an oyster reef at Morris Landing by filling mesh bags with oyster shells. They can also help pick up trash and debris at the 52-acre preserve. A Bob-Cat will do the hard work, but we will still need many hands to cut, seal and stack the bags of oyster shells.

The bags eventually will be used to create an oyster reef that will help control erosion. Native salt marsh seedlings planted behind the reef will help restore the marsh. The oyster reef and marsh will become valuable habitat for important species of commercial and recreational fish and shellfish. The reef also will improve water quality by filtering sediment from the water. The Fish America Foundation, the American Sportfishing Association and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Restoration Center supplied money for the project.

Everyone is invited to join us at Morris Landing. Educational activities and updates on the projects at the landing and nearby Permuda Island Coastal Reserve will also be provided.

Please contact Ted Wilgis at the federation's Southeast Region Office at 910-509-2838 or at tedw@nccoast.org to register and receive more information.

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