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## **Stormwater Polluting Lockwoods Folly River**

WILMINGTON – Polluted runoff is closing shellfish beds in the Lockwoods Folly River in Brunswick County, according to new study done by the N.C. Coastal Federation, the state and others. The report finds that bacteria entering the river with each rain must be reduced as much as 84 percent if the river is to once again meet state water standards for shellfishing.

The study addresses the causes of bacterial contamination of the river and the continued closures of shellfish beds in what was once an important commercial oyster fishery. More than 55 percent of the river is now closed permanently or temporarily to shellfishing because of high bacteria levels. That represents a three-fold increase since 1980. Runoff after rainfalls accounts for most of the bacteria entering the river, the study found

The federation joined Brunswick County, the N.C. Division of Water Quality, the N.C. Ecosystem Enhancement Program and the N.C. Department of Transportation on the three-year study of the river. A grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency paid for the study.

The N.C. Division of Water Quality has posted the study report on its Web site to allow for public comment and input. To review the study and make comments visit <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/ps/mtu/tmdl/tmdls> or call 919-807-6305. Written comments will be accepted until Aug. 13. Send comments to Adugna Kebede at [adugna.kebede@ncdenr.gov](mailto:adugna.kebede@ncdenr.gov) or by mail to him at NCDWQ Planning Section, 1617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh 27699.

For more than two years volunteers collected water samples, measured stream flow and water heights both in the lower river and in the swampy streams and creeks of this

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88,000-acre watershed. That information was fed into a computer model, which identified the sources of the bacteria and the ways they were entering the river. The model also established a limit to the amount of bacteria that can enter the river without polluting shellfish beds.

For further information on the project and how to make comments please contact Mike Giles at 910-509-2838 or [mikeg@nccoast.org](mailto:mikeg@nccoast.org). Information on the project is also available on the federation Web site at [www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org). Click on the SE page link and follow the link to the advocacy page.