



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Join Oyster Tuesdays at Jones Island in the White Oak River

OCEAN – Volunteers are working with the N.C. Coastal Federation and Hammocks Beach State Park to build oyster reefs at Jones Island at the mouth of the White Oak River every Tuesday through Aug. 9.

Starting at 9:30 a.m., volunteers will fill mesh bags with recycled oyster shells and marl, move the bags to Jones Island and then place them in the water to create 500 feet of a partially submerged wall, or sill. The oyster shells inside the bags provide a hard surface for oyster larvae to attach to. In a few years, the sills will become large oyster reefs that will protect the island from erosion, improve the water quality of the river and provide a variety of commercially and recreationally important fish and shellfish species with a place to live, eat and hide.

Volunteers may also help with scientific monitoring of the reefs and plantings and with island clean-up activities.

The work is part of a multi-year habitat-restoration project that includes planting marsh grasses, creating reefs with bagged oyster shells and placing loose shells in the water.

If you are looking for something different to do this summer, while at the same time helping the coast, contact Sarah Phillips at 252-393-8185 or sarahp@nccoast.org for more information and to register.

Volunteers will meet at 9:30 a.m. at the maintenance area at Hammocks Beach State Park in Swansboro. They will take a short boat ride on a park ferry to the island. Water, snacks, sunscreen and bug spray will be provided. Restroom facilities are available on the island. Volunteers should wear closed-toed shoes and clothing that may get wet and dirty. All ages are invited, though children under 12 will need to be accompanied by an adult.

The habitat restoration projects at Jones Island are being funded by the NOAA Restoration Center, Restore America's Estuaries, the Estuary Restoration Act, FishAmerica Foundation and the Bruswick Public Foundation.

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