



For Immediate Release

April 8, 2013

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Springtime Salt Marsh Plantings Set for Jones Island

The N.C. Coastal Federation and Hammocks Beach State Park are recruiting volunteers to help plant thousands of marsh grasses this spring along the shoreline of beautiful Jones Island in the White Oak River near Swansboro.

The plantings are part of a multi-year restoration effort to help reduce erosion of the uninhabited island, create vital habitat for our favorite seafood, including shrimp, blue crabs and flounder and improve the water quality of the river.

“The roots of the marsh plants that we will be planting will help to hold the sediments together, thereby reducing erosion of the island’s shore,” said Lexia Weaver, a coastal scientist at the federation.

The marsh grass blades will also slow waves during storms and provide a sheltered place for recreationally and commercially important fish and crabs to live and grow, she explained.

“Along with volunteers and students, we hope you can join us to help protect and restore our coast by planting these important grasses,” Weaver said.

The planting days include a scenic boat ride to the island, with possible dolphin sightings along the way.

The salt marsh plantings will be held on the following dates and times in April and May:

- April 18 and 19, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- April 22, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- May 2 and 3, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- May 6, 22 and 23, 11 to 3 p.m.
- May 20, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Volunteers should register through the federation's Events Calendar on its Web site at www.nccoast.org.

A state ferry boat will transport volunteers from Hammocks Beach State Park in Swansboro to the island. Participants should wear clothing that may get wet and sandy and wear closed-toe shoes, which are required. They should also bring work gloves, a towel and lunch. Planting tools, snacks, water and sunscreen will be provided. A restroom is available on the island. The planting events are weather dependent. More details will be emailed to registered volunteers prior to the event.

At the event, volunteers will be able to join the federation, a non-profit group, for a special discounted membership price of \$15. This summer, the park and the federation will also be offering several one-day summer camps on the island for elementary and middle school students, marsh cruises and more volunteer opportunities to help complete shoreline and oyster restoration projects at Jones Island. For more information, visit www.nccoast.org.

Grants from the Estuary Restoration Act, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Restore America's Estuaries will pay for the plants.

preservation and restoration. Since its founding in 1982, the federation has worked with citizens to safeguard the state's coastal rivers, creeks, sounds and beaches and has protected or restored more than 50,000 acres along the state's coast. Its headquarters is in Ocean in Carteret County, between Morehead City and Swansboro, and it has regional offices in Wrightsville Beach and Manteo. For more information about the Coastal Federation visit www.nccoast.org.