



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Basnight Wins Lifetime Award From N.C. Coastal Federation

OCEAN -- Marc Basnight won the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award from the N.C. Coastal Federation for his commitment to the N.C. coast while serving almost three decades in the N.C. General Assembly.

"He was the best champion the coast ever had," noted Todd Miller, the federation's founder and executive director. "We're not likely to see the likes of him again."

Basnight was one of 15 statewide recipients of Pelican Award this year. The annual award recognizes the exemplary work of people and groups to protect and enhance the N.C. coast.

All will receive the awards Saturday at a luncheon at the N.C. Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores in Carteret County.

During his 26 years in the state Senate-the last 17 as president pro tempore-Basnight grew to be the most politically powerful man in the state. He outlasted governors, opponents and many of his closest colleagues. He also developed a reputation for ferociousness when it came to defending favorite causes-a number

of which included protections for coastal waters.

The N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund became one of Basnight's most cherished legacies to conservation. Since its inception in 1996, the fund has distributed almost a billion dollars in more than 1,500 grants. The money has been used to buy sensitive lands threatened by development, clean up hog lagoons, improve sewer plants and reduce stormwater runoff. It also bankrolled major planning initiatives, including a blueprint for restoring the state's once-great oyster population.

Long a supporter of jetties at Oregon Inlet, Basnight shepherded through a bill that banned hardened structures along much of the beach elsewhere. However, conservation groups were disappointed a few years later when a Basnight-led Senate passed a bill to weaken the seawall ban to allow small jetties, or terminal groins, at several more inlets.

"Such was the yin and yang of Marc Basnight," Miller said. "We didn't always agree with him but he got many good things done precisely because he had little patience for bureaucratic red tape. His proud accomplishments demonstrate his love for the coast and its people. This award is our way of saying thank you."

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About the North Carolina Coastal Federation:

"Working Together for a Healthy Coast"

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 restoration and preservation. The federation's headquarters are at 3609 N.C. 24 in Ocean between Morehead City and Swansboro and the office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The federation also operates field offices in Wrightsville Beach and Manteo. For more information call 252.393.8185 or check our website at www.nccoast.org.

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