



North Carolina Coastal Federation

Working Together for a Healthy Coast

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Carolina Coastal Federation Annual Pelican Awards Winners Announced Fowler Awarded Lifetime Achievement Honors

Ocean- The winners of the North Carolina Coastal Federation's annual Pelican Awards have been announced. The awards recognize exemplary work of people, organizations and groups to protect and enhance the N.C. coast. The awards were presented today at the North Carolina History Center in New Bern.

"These awards recognize the unique innovations, expertise, risks and achievements of those who have made an indelible mark on our coast and whose work helps the federation reach our goal of a healthy and productive coast," said Todd Miller, executive director of the federation.

This year's winners represent a wide range of contributions, including the prestigious Lifetime Achievement award presented to Patti Fowler of the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries for her 33-year career and dedication to the preservation of our coast.

A true champion of the coast, Patti has nurtured and cultivated a proactive atmosphere within her agency that put the welfare of the people and coastal resources she serves as her first priority. She worked her way through the ranks and will soon be retiring as Chief of the Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality Section for the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries.

For decades, Patti overcame political and fiscal obstacles that threatened to compromise public health. She made sure that we can still eat shellfish or swim in North Carolina without worrying about getting sick. For decades, Patti has been on the leading edge of efforts to protect and restore coastal water quality. She made sure that we had both the data and knowledge to keep our coastal waters clean. Her inspired leadership is infectious, and that means that her agency will continue her legacy after she retires later this year.

"Next time you take a dip at the shore or eat an oyster thank Patti Fowler for her years of public service. She's worked tirelessly to keep our coastal waters a safe place to fish and swim," added Miller.

Fowler is one of 13 recipients at the 2015 Pelican Awards. Other organization wide honorees include Jim and Bonnie Swartzenberg of Jacksonville. The couple was lauded for their tireless commitment to protecting and restoring coastal water quality and vital oyster habitats of the coast. As previous owners of J & B Aquafood, the Swartzenbergs' livelihood depended on clean water and a healthy estuary. Together, they have been unwavering advocates for protecting water quality and restoring habitats along the coast for years.

The Swartzenbergs have fought for tougher stormwater regulations, gone to court to champion shellfish waters, served on numerous commissions and advisory committees, and helped usher in the birth of oyster aquaculture in North Carolina. Their deep connection to the coast, combined with good humor and a willingness to help facilitate change makes them valued members of the federation family.


Other Pelican Award winners from around the state are:

- Dewey Hemilright of Kitty Hawk for outstanding contributions to education and outreach on behalf of the federation.
- Don Twyne of Manteo for his work with the federation's derelict crab pot removal project.
- Sara Mirabilio of Kill Devil Hills for her inspired leadership in coastal restoration initiatives.
- John Thomas of Grandy for exceptional volunteer contributions.
- Paul Donnelly of Swansboro for fostering successful partnerships that protect and enhance the outstanding natural and cultural resources of Hammocks Beach State Park.
- JoAnne Powell of Gloucester for contributions to the federation's education program and a commitment to advancing the field of environmental education.
- Ronald Sutherland of Durham and Fred Cabbage of Raleigh for outstanding grassroots leadership of the Campaign that saved Hofmann Forest.
- Rick Shiver of Wilmington for his contribution of expert research and strategic guidance in the "Stop Titan Cement" campaign.
- State Representative Rick Catlin of Wilmington for his dedication to the protection and restoration of coastal resources in the North Carolina General Assembly.
- Konrady and Son Construction, LLC of Wilmington for partnering to relocate and renovate the Fred and Alice Stanback Coastal Education Center.
- Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity for innovation in implementing low impact development practices into Habitat homes.

More information on each of our winners can be found at: nccoast.org/pelican.

About the North Carolina Coastal Federation:

The North Carolina 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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