



North Carolina
Coastal Federation
Working Together for a Healthy Coast

2012 ANNUAL REPORT



PHOTO BY JIM SNYDER

Since 1982 the N.C. Coastal Federation has built an impressive track record that has helped to assure a healthy coastal economy and environment. We reach across political, economic and social boundaries to regularly engage a wide diversity of people to help protect and restore the coast. Innovative programs and services consistently place the federation on the leading edge of addressing coastal concerns with cost-effective and workable solutions.

From a staff of one person and his yellow Labrador Retriever working from a home office to a thriving nonprofit with three regional offices, 23 staff members, 11,000 members and 3,000 volunteers, the federation is one of the nation's most reliably effective grassroots environmental organizations.

And it's a good thing. Evolving economic pressures and widespread public skepticism about government means that many traditional ways of doing our conservation work aren't that effective anymore. With the help of many people, the federation became even more resourceful in 2012, and adapted with the times while not losing sight of the need for us to set a forward-looking, proactive agenda for the coast.

Staying focused on the coastal issues that most people care about was the key to our successes in 2012. This enabled the federation to overcome intense political polarization, economic turmoil, and governmental dysfunction, and still strengthen and expand upon the ability of coastal residents and visitors to be good environmental stewards. The following pages outline our 2012 goals and accomplishments.



Build political and social support for compatible land and water uses that protect water coastal quality and critical fish habitat.

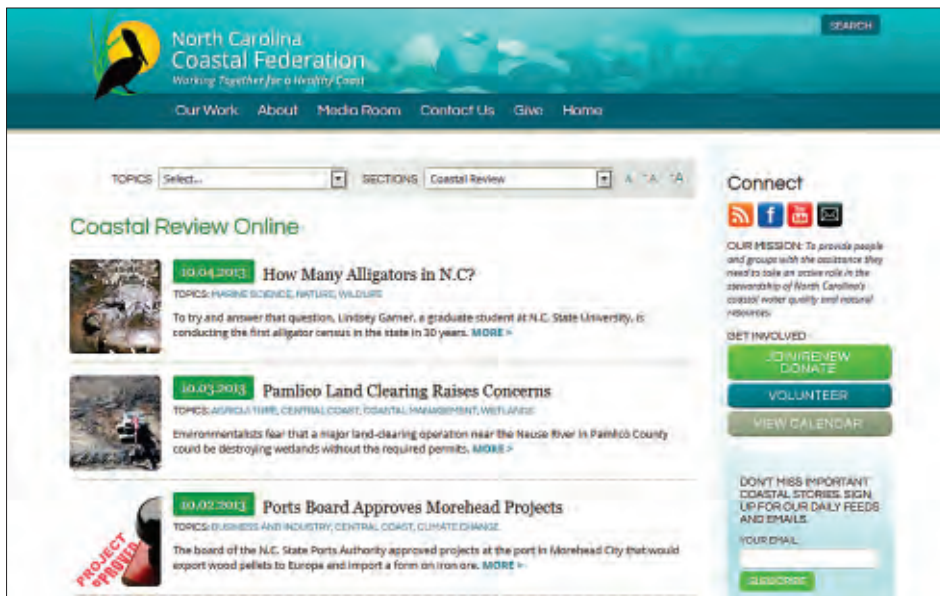
THE FEDERATION'S ADVOCACY WORK TOOK MANY AVENUES FOLLOWING OUR BASIC STRATEGY OF EQUIPPING PEOPLE AND THEIR LEADERS TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE COASTAL STEWARDSHIP. AS ILLUSTRATED WITH THE STOP TITAN AND LOW IMPACT

development coalitions, federation advocacy campaigns include the following elements: (1) Recruit all possible partners including non-traditional stakeholders that don't normally join environmental causes; (2) provide internal leadership, technical assistance and management; (3) obtain funds to support critical needs and activities; (4) disseminate information necessary for informed decision-making; (5) evaluate successes and failures; and (6) applaud significant accomplishments by stakeholders.

The federation's advocacy efforts put a lot of faith in the belief that coastal residents and visitors as well as their community leaders want the coast to be protected and restored, and they will make the correct choices to accomplish this aim when provided with good information, and decision-making is an open and highly public process.

In 2012, the federation launched a new communications strategy to compensate for the decline in the ability of the news media to provide sufficient news coverage and analysis of coastal issues. The quality and extent of reporting has declined significantly as the capacity of state and local news media has eroded due to the economic and technological challenges it faces. *Coastal Review Online* now provides daily coverage and analysis of coastal issues, and serves as a source of news for the public as well as the traditional news media.

We made great strides working with developers, engineers and homebuilders as well as state and local government agencies to make Low Impact Development (LID) an effective and economical tool for development. We worked with the state government to develop a formal state commitment to LID that includes ways to overcome impediments and work to promote educational and outreach opportunities.



Highlights:

- Launched Coastal Review Online (CRO), providing 240 new stories and features. CRO was the first to report that the N.C. General Assembly wanted to legislate the science of sea level rise, and our story resulted in worldwide coverage of this startling proposal.
- Organized public participation in the Figure 8 Island Terminal Groin hearings on the draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- Worked with City of Wilmington, Wrightsville Beach, N.C. Division of Water Quality, UNC-Wilmington and engineers to develop and adopt the Bradley and Hewletts Creek Watershed Restoration Plan to reduce runoff.
- Continued to lead the growing opposition to the Titan America plant construction on the Northeast Cape Fear River, and successfully appealed Titan's air permit from NC Division of Air Quality.
- Worked with the Town of Columbia to create and adopt a LID manual for the Town, and conducted a workshop in Dare County to educate architects, engineers, developers and local governments.
- Maintained an effective lobbying presence in the N.C. General Assembly that helped to educate and engage lawmakers in coastal management issues.
- Promoted regulatory reforms for living shorelines throughout the nation.
- Distributed 100,000 copies of *Our Coast* magazine to members and the public.
- Recognized the exceptional work of people, businesses, nonprofit groups and government to help protect and restore the coast through the annual Pelican Awards.



Restore and protect coastal water quality, habitat and public access.

THE FEDERATION'S RESTORATION STRATEGIES ARE ROOTED IN THE FOLLOWING CONCEPTS: (1) DEVISE PROJECTS THAT REPLICATE NATURAL PROCESSES INCLUDING HYDROLOGY SO THAT THEY RESULT IN MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENTS TO

environmental health and are sustainable; (2) work at scales that are meaningful in terms of accomplishing real improvements to environmental health; (3) stay focused within high priority watersheds so that the cumulative effects of numerous projects add up to obtain needed environmental gains; (4) connect the resources of federal, state, and local funders and governmental agencies to provide for project synergy that could never be achieved by one entity alone; (5) engage people directly in restoration efforts as a way to obtain their long-term understanding and participation in providing stewardship of coastal resources; and (6) project successes result in additional project successes as people see tangible progress being made to protect and restore coastal resources.

The federation's habitat and water quality restoration projects engage thousands of people from all walks of life. This includes: Private foundations; six federal agencies; seven state agencies; dozens of not-for-profits; numerous consulting engineers; lawyers; private construction contractors; dozens of scientists from five universities; businesses; lawmakers; media; laborers; and volunteers who donated more than 50,000 hours in the past three years.

At a national level the federation is one of eleven coalition estuary groups from around the country, and is actively involved in a national partnership with the NOAA Community Restoration Center from the national office in D.C. The federation is a founding member and serves on the board of Restore America's Estuaries (RAE). A national agenda for habitat restoration is promoted through this coalition. In addition, federation staff and its contract lobbyist work with federal, state and local government agencies to undertake restoration projects and establish laws and programs that support restoration efforts. Restoration efforts are typically well received by the public, and provide a solid mechanism for promoting public policies that encourage future restoration efforts.



Highlights:

- Developed plans for wetland restoration on nearly 20,000 acres in Hyde County, part of a large-scale 42,500 acre project with the goal of reopening closed oystering waters.
- Created a living shoreline on Springer's Point near Ocracoke, working with volunteers, fishermen, students and teachers.
- Helped to expand the national influence of Restore America's Estuaries (that the federation helped to start in 1993) in its work to promote habitat restoration and preservation.
- Worked with two private landowners in the northeastern coastal region to plant 50 acres of rare and endangered Atlantic White Cedar.
- Created more than half an acre of oyster habitat and planted more than an acre of living shoreline at Jones Island in the White Oak River.
- Reduced shoreline erosion and created new oyster habitat at Beacon Island in the Pamlico Sound.
- Worked with the state and commercial and recreational fishermen to develop the state's first joint recreational/commercial ramp/dock in Manns Harbor in Dare County.
- Reduced pollutants from stormwater runoff by creating and maintaining 12 stormwater reduction projects in New Hanover and Brunswick counties, including rain gardens and wetlands.
- Built a rain garden at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center in Harkers Island to control stormwater runoff into Core Sound.
- Worked with volunteers to plant 11,000 sea oats to restore dunes at three locations on Bogue Banks and coordinated two dune restoration workshops.



IN 2012, THE FEDERATION'S EDUCATION WORK REACHED INTO HOMES, CLASSROOMS, SCHOOLYARDS, ESTUARIES, BOARDROOMS AND CYBERSPACE. WE TAP THE EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL OF BOTH OUR ADVOCACY AND RESTORATION

programs to provide hands-on, tangible learning experiences for people of all ages and walks of life.

Our student engagement programs are aligned with the formal public education standards adopted by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction for the age levels we teach. They serve as opportunities for enriching, learning opportunities both in the classroom and outside. Some of our student education programs are designed to serve economically disadvantaged communities, and most of the federation's student education programs occur in public schools, reaching a wide diversity of kids.

Our Coastal Advocacy Institute began as a new program. Undergraduate and graduate students apply to the federation's program. The majority of the students are supported by Duke University through the Stanback Internship Program. The federation provides a structured environment for learning and working with some of the most outstanding and accomplished coastal management and nonprofit professionals in the world, as well as hands-on opportunities to participate in field projects that develop real-life skills.

The federation educates thousands of community volunteers each year who help us with our advocacy and restoration projects. We also target our workshops and publications to reach community decision-makers and work to be on the cutting edge of web-based communication strategies. Social media has significantly expanded the federation's ability to reach and engage new audiences.

Through these efforts as well as through our organizational development work, we continue to strengthen our collective voice.



Highlights:

- Engaged 3,313 K-12 students in an environmental education program including wetland nurseries, rain gardens and oyster habitat creation.
- Graduated seven college students who participated in the Stanback Internship Program from the federation's Coastal Advocacy Institute.
- Conducted a course for 45 elected officials that focused on strategies for local governments to help balance environmental protection with economic development.
- Educated an estimated 18,000 people through education and outreach programs coastwide, including more than 200 public events.
- Launched the federation's video "Habitats, Heroes & Hallelujah: Stories of Hope from the North Carolina Coast," and hosted screenings around the state.
- Expanded southeastern regional environmental education program with the new stormwater education program, Students Restoring Community Creeks.
- Engaged 2,093 adult volunteers in hands-on activities that resulted in 17,301 donated hours.
- Added 1,700 members to the federation, bringing the total membership to about 11,000 members.



North Carolina Coastal Federation

Working Together for a Healthy Coast

MISSION

To provide people and groups with the assistance needed to take an active role in the stewardship of North Carolina's coastal water quality and natural resources.

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DONOR LIST

The Coastal Federation's day to day operation is supported with donations from individuals, businesses, groups, and foundations. Each gift is greatly appreciated and invested efficiently.

For every dollar donated in 2012, 92 cents went directly to support our programs. The following donors contributed to our work at the recognition level.

The Abrams Charitable Trust • Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Ayres
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REVENUE & EXPENSES

Revenue and Expenses for the year ending December 31, 2012

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Memberships \$162,869

Donations 955,467

Grants 380,827

Special Projects 935,078

Investment Income 177,050

Miscellaneous 4,500

TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT \$2,615,791 and REVENUES

A copy of the 2012 audit can be found at www.nccoast.org and is available on request.

HOW WE SPENT YOUR DONATIONS



Program \$2,260,303

Fundraising & Administration 187,773

TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,448,076

Change in net assets \$167,715*

** Reflects grant funds carried over to 2013 for projects and programs.*

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