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## **Restore Stump Sound Marshes to Celebrate Estuaries Day**

WILMINGTON – The N.C. Coastal Federation is recruiting volunteers for an oyster and shoreline restoration project to celebrate National Estuaries Day. The celebration and volunteer event will be held at the Morris Landing Clean Water Preserve on Stump Sound in Holly Ridge on Saturday, Sept. 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

National Estuaries Day is an annual celebration that's been held on the last Saturday of September since 1988 to highlight the importance, beauty and vulnerability of our estuaries.

People are invited to help restore salt marsh and oyster habitats that make Stump Sound and other estuaries so productive. Salt marshes and other shallow estuarine areas serve as nursery areas for 90 percent of saltwater fish and shellfish in North Carolina. The state has about 2.5 million acres of estuarine and marine waters, which are spawning, nursery, and feeding areas for most of state's important coastal fishery species, including many that migrate throughout the Atlantic coast.

On Sept. 22, volunteers will fill mesh bags with oyster shells, plant salt marsh grasses along the shoreline and pick up trash and debris on the 52-acre preserve. The federation will supply a Bob-Cat to help with bagging oyster shells and heavy lifting, but many

hands will be needed to help cut, seal and stack the bags of shells, gather debris and plant seedlings.

The bags will eventually be used to create an oyster reef that will provide important habitat and help control erosion. The native plant seedlings are being used to enhance restored salt marsh habitat along the shoreline.

The public is invited to join the federation for the event, which will also include educational activities, such as pulling seine nets to get a close up look at some fish, shrimp and crabs. This event is suitable for all ages. Pre-registration is requested and can be done by visiting [www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org). For more information contact Ted Wilgis, the federation's coastal education coordinator, at 910-509-2838 or [tedw@nccoast.org](mailto:tedw@nccoast.org)