

# OUR COAST

North Carolina Coastal Federation | [NCCOAST.ORG](http://NCCOAST.ORG) | SUMMER 2017



North Carolina  
Coastal Federation  
**35** years .....  
working together for a healthy coast

**Coastal Champions:**  
**2017 PELICAN AWARDS AND**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**





Photo © Vance Miller

### *Dear Friend of the Coast,*

Renowned journalist Edward R. Murrow said, “A nation of sheep will beget a government of wolves.”

As is always the case, our Pelican Award winners this year are not sheep, nor are they complacent. Each of these 10 people, organizations or businesses invest their talents and resources in innovative and amazing ways. Their efforts keep our coast healthy and productive, as well as help keep pollution at bay.

Our group of winners includes two public school teachers and a community education group, two civic-minded volunteers, one elected leader, three business people and a private charitable foundation. All make the North Carolina coast a better place. Their stories are featured in this newsletter.

The teachers use the work of the Coastal Federation in lesson plans to provide students with real-life experiences that

prepare them to be our next generation of decision-makers. The community education group has partnered with the Coastal Federation to help youth develop skills so they can help improve life in their troubled neighborhoods. Our volunteers often work quietly behind the scenes, helping us with their encyclopedic coastal knowledge that guides our work in varied ways.

Elected officials can play a strong role in environmental leadership. The public official we selected has engaged and educated constituents about environmental injustices in their town and is working to improve the community's health by pushing for those issues to be resolved.

We also recognize accomplished business people — the health of our coastal economy and environment depend on each other. Skills used to develop and manage businesses are useful in helping the Coastal Federation achieve its organizational mission by making our environmental

policy work more effective, measurable and lasting.

And finally, we thank the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. It has been a friend for the last 35 years by providing continuous financial support for the Coastal Federation, ever since I founded it in 1982, back when my dog was the only other employee. It helps hundreds of organizations all over North Carolina make our state a better place for people, fish and wildlife.

Year after year, our winners inspire us to do more to make North Carolina and its coast as good as it can be, and to take full responsibility for protecting what's already so great about our state. They illustrate that none of us should feel entitled to a good quality of life, unless we're willing to do our part of building, maintaining and improving the communities where we live, visit, work and play.

The positive optimism shared by our winners also guides us in an era when too many people find it easier to create divisions and complain about problems rather than solve them. Our winners work in their communities to net together stronger partnerships to address coastal environmental needs, working to build bridges and not walls among people of all walks of life. Their contributions to protect and restore and educate people about the coast inspire us all to be better stewards.

With best regards

— Todd Miller, Executive Director



North Carolina  
Coastal Federation  
**35** years  
working together for a healthy coast

[nccf@nccoast.org](mailto:nccf@nccoast.org) • [www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org)

**Headquarters & Central Regional Office:** 3609 N.C. 24 (Ocean), Newport, NC 28570 | ph: 252-393-8185

**Northeast Regional Office:** 637 Harbor Road, Wanchese, NC 27981 | ph: 252-473-1607

**Southeast Regional Office:** 309 W. Salisbury St., Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480 | ph: 910-509-2838

PUBLISHED BY: North Carolina Coastal Federation

EDITORS: Danielle Herman, Caroline Lamb

DESIGN: 8 Dot Graphics

COVER PHOTO: Rachel Bisesi

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS AND STAFF: Rachel Bisesi, Sam Bland, Kate Conery, Erin Fleckenstein, Mike Giles, Jessica Gray, Sara Hallas, Mark Hibbs, Sarah King, Lauren Kolodij, Todd Miller, Tracy Skrabal, Bree Tillett, Lexia Weaver, Ted Wilgus

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS: Bill Birkemeier, Sam Bland, Mark Hibbs, Vance Miller

# Celebrating 35 years of achievements

Throughout our 35th anniversary year, we've been sharing graphics that highlight some of our achievements — none of which would have been possible without you, our members. Below is a graphic that weaves together some of our accomplishments that have helped improve water quality. To see more graphics, visit [nccoast.org/35years](https://nccoast.org/35years).

## We've eliminated 1.1 million gallons of stormwater runoff.

Stormwater runoff is the greatest pollutor of coastal waters. In our 35 years, we've worked with many partners to eliminate **1.1 million gallons** of runoff by installing **more than 200 stormwater retrofit projects**, including rain gardens, infiltration systems and rain barrels.

## We've installed 47 living shorelines on the coast.

Living shorelines help reduce shoreline erosion while improving water quality. By installing these **47 living shorelines**, we've restored almost **three miles of fringing wetlands**.

Through collaborative efforts, we've restored more than **110 acres of oyster habitat**.

Using over **200,000 bushels of native oyster shell** and nearly **70,000 tons of limestone**, we've restored more than **110 acres of oyster habitat**. Oysters filter and clean water while providing habitat for other wildlife.



## Meet Coastal Review Online's new assistant editor, and keep up with her work at [coastalreview.org](http://coastalreview.org)

Based at headquarters, **Jennifer Allen** creates content for CRO and assists with managing the website and social media. She comes to CRO after having served as public information officer for the town of Beaufort and almost 10 years at the Carteret County News-Times. She has also written for *Our State Magazine* and other regional and statewide publications. Originally from Swansboro, she now lives in Morehead City.



## Meet our new board member

Working with fellow directors and staff, the Coastal Federation's board of directors ensures effective and fiscally sound programs and operations by providing leadership, accountability, advice and direction. In April, the Coastal Federation elected David Cignotti to the board. For a complete list of board members visit [nccoast.org/board](http://nccoast.org/board).

### David Cignotti, Wrightsville Beach:

A retired public school teacher and administrator, David is an alumnus of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and has been a resident of Wrightsville Beach for 40 years. He served in Wrightsville Beach's town government as chairman of the planning board, as an alderman and also as the town's mayor. David's past membership on community boards includes Keep America Beautiful of New Hanover County; the New Hanover County Tourism Development Authority; the New Hanover County Port, Waterway and Beach Commission; and the Wrightsville Beach Museum of History. He actively supports many environmental initiatives and has been a member of the Coastal Federation for over 20 years.



## MEET OUR 2017 SUMMER INTERNS

All three offices hosted interns this summer. Six interns completed the Coastal Policy and Restoration Internship at the headquarters office in Ocean. Learn more about this summer's interns and read their blog posts at [nccoast.org/interns](http://nccoast.org/interns).

### Northeast Region Intern

- Kadie Midgett, N.C. State University through the Golden LEAF Foundation

### Central Region Interns

- Alex Christopher, Ohio State University — intern at Hammocks Beach State Park
- Kai Johnston, University of Central Florida

### Southeast Region Interns

- Camden Brunick, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- Natalie Cibel, University of North Carolina at Wilmington
- Keely O'Brien, University of North Carolina at Wilmington
- Kayla West, University of North Carolina at Wilmington



Photo © Sam Bland

*The Coastal Policy and Restoration Interns, from left: Jaclyn McGarry (Duke University), Morgan Rudd (Duke University), Mackenzie Taggart (California Polytechnic State University), Summer Rich (Appalachian State University), Lakshya Dhar (Duke University) and Marygrace Rowe (N.C. State University).*

## Remembering James Barrie Gaskill

The Coastal Federation is deeply saddened by James Barrie Gaskill's passing in June. Todd Miller met him more than 30 years ago, back in the early days of the Coastal Federation. An Ocracoke native and commercial fisherman, Gaskill was on the board of directors and won a 2013 Pelican Award for leadership in restoring coastal habitat.

An excerpt from Todd's eulogy in *Coastal Review Online* is below.

*There are many funny stories that James Barrie would tell us about his travels and interactions with people who had a hard time understanding his Outer Banks brogue. He loved adventure, and he respected people who appreciated his way of life. He was a vital member of the federation's board of directors, always reminding us that our work is as much about people as it is about fish and wildlife.*

*It is with a heavy heart that I must say goodbye to a good friend. He was always there when you needed him, and now his spirit will continue to reside in our fond memories of his life.*



Photo © Sam Bland





North Carolina  
Coastal Federation

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## Making a Difference

Just the other day, a gentleman who supported a lifetime of work in the Chesapeake Bay became a new supporter of the Coastal Federation. He said that while they are working hard to bring back the Chesapeake, he wanted to join us because the North Carolina coast is still healthy and beautiful — we still have time to save it.

Here at the Coastal Federation, we recognize that our coast is special, and we work hard to keep it that way.

We are making a real difference for our coast. As we embark on our next 35 years, our biggest challenge is reaching more people. Help us make a difference for our coast by joining today, or if you're already a member, by telling a friend.

Because we still have time to save it.

*Todd Miller*

Todd Miller, Executive Director

## 2016 Summary of Major Accomplishments

The North Carolina Coastal Federation is the state's only nonprofit organization focused exclusively on protecting and restoring the coast of North Carolina through education, advocacy and habitat preservation and restoration. **In 2016 we:**



Restored over  
200,000 oysters



Planted 18,450  
wetland plants



Installed 26 stormwater  
reduction measures



Prevented 227,155  
gallons of runoff from  
entering coastal waters



Cleaned up 753 crab pots  
and over 5.5 tons of  
marine debris



Engaged 1,007  
volunteers



Educated 4,186  
students



Informed 10,745 people  
through programs, work-  
shops and presentations



Demonstrated the  
economic benefits of  
restoring habitats



Protected the coast  
from offshore drilling  
and other polluting  
industries



Produced award-  
winning coverage  
through 500 stories on  
*Coastal Review Online*



Reached over  
170,000 people

Photo by Bill Birkemeier



## Revenue and Expenses

Full audited financials for the year ending December 31, 2016 are available at [www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org) or upon request.

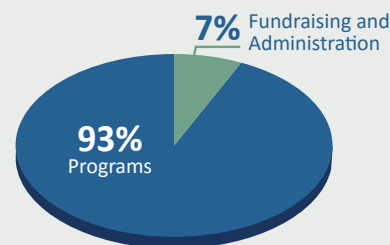
### Public Support

Memberships.....	\$211,025
Contributions.....	\$242,112
Events Net.....	\$49,905
Government Grants .....	\$1,218,653
Private Foundations .....	\$1,228,300
Rental Income.....	\$11,253
Investment Income .....	\$80,753
Miscellaneous.....	\$13,671
Total Grants and Revenues .....	\$3,141,306

Support to the Community\* ... \$1,800,337

\*Grants and foundation funds that the Coastal Federation paid to local contractors and vendors to complete on-the-ground projects, trainings and other work.

### How we spent your donations



Programs.....	\$3,711,356
Fundraising and Admin .....	\$284,580
Total Expenses .....	\$3,995,936



THREE  
CONSECUTIVE  
YEARS



nccf@nccoast.org  
[www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org)

Headquarters & Central Regional Office  
3609 N.C. 24 (Ocean)  
Newport, NC 28570  
252-393-8185

Northeast Regional Office  
637 Harbor Road  
Wanchese, NC 27981  
252-473-1607

Southeast Regional Office  
309 W. Salisbury St.  
Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480  
910-509-2838

NCCOAST.ORG





North Carolina  
Coastal Federation  
*Working Together for a Healthy Coast*

## OUR MISSION

The North Carolina Coastal Federation empowers coastal residents and visitors from all walks of life to protect and restore the water quality and critically important natural habitats of the North Carolina coast.

## OUR VISION

A natural, beautiful and productive coast that is a great place to live, work and visit.

As we celebrate 35 years of protecting and restoring the North Carolina coast, we're proud of what we've accomplished with the help and support of our partners and members — restoring thousands of acres of wetlands and oyster habitat, protecting those special places on our coast and educating nearly 15,000

students and adults each year. Looking ahead, we'll continue to implement projects like our 50 Million Oyster Initiative, which will restore 50 acres of oyster habitat by 2020; grow initiatives like our cost share program to promote living shorelines for homeowners; and foster our partnerships that help us more effectively reach underserved communities that are so often left out of the conversation. With your help, we are making a difference.

*"To me, it only makes sense that anyone who lives near or enjoys the ocean should become involved in protecting this wonderful resource that we all enjoy."*

DAVID CIGNOTTI,  
former mayor, Wrightsville Beach

Photo by Bill Birkemeier

## 2016 Board of Directors

### LEADERSHIP

<b>President</b>	Dick Bierly, Morehead City
<b>Vice President</b>	Lauren Hermley, Beaufort
<b>Treasurer</b>	David Paynter, Wilmington
<b>Secretary</b>	Joseph Ramus, Beaufort

### AT LARGE

Allison Besch	Randy Mason
Jennifer Biddle	Katherine McGlade
Peggy Birkemeier	Richard Peruggi
Veronica Carter	Lewis Piner
Sandie Cecelski	JoAnne Powell
April Clark	John Runkle
Donald Ensley	Allie Sheffield
Ernie Foster	Bland Simpson
James Barrie	Donna Snead
Gaskill	Doug Wakeman
Mac Gibbs	Sarah Williams
Olivia Holding	Angie Willis
Bill Hunneke	

**Executive Director and Founder, Todd Miller**

## 2016 President's Council

Dick Bierly, Chair	David Paynter
Philip Blumenthal	John Preyer
Hugh Cullman	Simon Rich III
Dick Daugherty	William G. Ross, Jr.
Joan Gillings	Billy Sewell
Jim Goodmon	Bland Simpson
Olivia Holding	Fred and Alice Stanback
Tom Looney	Smedes York
Carmen Hooker	
Odom	

## 2016 DONORS

Membership and contributions help protect and restore our beautiful coast. We greatly appreciate each and every supporter. Special thanks to the following donors who gave at recognition levels in 2016.

The Abrams Charitable Trust	Coastal Provisions Market	Joanna McConnell	Restore America's Estuaries
The Estate of John Ackermann	Robert Coles	Charles Meeker and Anne McLaurin	H. Smith Richardson, Jr.
Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership	Dare County Restaurant Association	Todd Miller and Julie Shambaugh	Rob Lamme and Associates
Anna and Nathan Flax Foundation, Inc.	Barry and Nonnie Dillehay	John and Stephanie Mitchell	Boyd and Linda Rogers
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission	John Runkle and Nancy Dole	Jim and Marilyn Mohler	Saxer Family Foundation
Bob and Margy Ayres	EarthShare North Carolina	Merry-K. Moos and Locke deBruyne and friends	Wayne Schriever
Backwater Environmental	The Educational Foundation of America	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Dennis and Ann Sessom
Balloun Family Foundation	Ella Ann L. and Frank B. Holding Foundation	Natty Greene's Brewing Co.	Adam and Sarah Shay
Beaufort Wine and Food Weekend, Inc.	Kyle and Kelly Elliott	NC Dept. of Agriculture	Melvin M. Shepard, Jr.
The Benevity Community Impact Fund	Emerald Isle Realty	NC Dept. of Environmental Quality- Water Resources	Keith Smith and Lisa Jones
Richard Bierly	Charlie and Jenny Godwin	NC Dept. of Justice- Environmental Division	Lloyd Smith and Jen Goldberg Smith
Bill and Peggy Birkemeier	Grace Jones Richardson Trust	NC Dept. of Transportation	Bill and Nancy Stanback
Glenn and Jere Blackburn	Grady-White Boats, Inc.	NOAA Restoration Center	Brad and Shelli Stanback
Blockade Runner Beach Resort	David Groves	Ed and Susan Norvell	Fred and Alice Stanback
Sam and Kim Boyce	Gary and April Hardee	Colleen Oaksmith	State Farm Youth Advisory Board
Scott Bradley and Kelley Shinn	David Harrison and Gail Kenyan	Carmen and Fountain Odom	Sally Steele and George Gusler
Maurice and Mary Hughes Brookhart	Kathryn B. Howd	The Orton Foundation	Stevens Towing Co. of NC, LLC
Kathryn Peyton Brown	Joseph Huberman and Ruth Bromer	Park Foundation, Inc.	John O. Stevenson
David Bryan	James Hunt	Adele F. Paynter	Syd's Hair Shop, Inc.
Ken Karn and Sally Buchanan	Paul and Susan Jones	David and Cary Paynter	Jim Vernon
Charlie Burgess	Penelope Kilpatrick	Stuart and Linda Paynter	Stephen A. Wainwright
Lee and Diane Butzin	Charles and Patricia Klapheke	Lizzet Prest	Doug Wakeman
Calvin and Kelly Carter Family Foundation	Roman and Marie Kolodij	Joe and Jackie Ramus	Walmart Neighborhood Market
Carlson Family Foundation	Kris Bass Engineering	Sam C. Rankin Advisor Fund	David Weaver
Carolina Paddleboard Co.	Robby and Gina Lemons	Julian (Bubba) and Barbara Rawl	Murray Whitehill
Clean Water Management Trust Fund	Thomas F. Looney	Adele Richardson Ray	WithersRavenel, Inc.
	Judy Lotas	The Raymond E. and Ellen F. Crane Foundation	Without Limits Coaching, Inc.
	Beau and Sue McCaffray	RBC Foundation	Smedes and Rosemary York





# CELEBRATING OUR COASTAL CHAMPIONS



**The Pelican Awards** annually recognize the exceptional people, businesses, organizations and local and state governments that work to protect and restore our coast.

The award winners listed on the following pages have demonstrated exemplary commitment and undertaken meaningful actions to help the Coastal Federation reach our goal of a healthy and productive coast. Congratulations to the many dedicated individuals and organizations that have made our 35th year a special celebration of the coast and demonstrate all we can accomplish when we work together for a healthy coast.



## Northeast Region Winners



### Mary Ann Hodges

#### For Enthusiastic Student Engagement in Coastal Environmental Stewardship

Mary Ann Hodges is a long-standing education partner with the Coastal Federation's Wanchese office. She helped establish the Coastal Federation's outreach program and has given crucial support that continues to strengthen it. Mary Ann always comes up with new ways to incorporate the Coastal Federation's programs into her classroom to connect the students with the community. She is fearless at trying out new lessons and is a tireless expert at persevering among large classes of middle school students, which is no easy task. Mary Ann is a dependable educator and volunteer who has also led efforts to recruit students to volunteer at local events. We have great respect for Mary Ann's phenomenal leadership, and we're so fortunate that she's shared her talents with us.

*"I've always been a hands-on science person, so I always look for ways to get my students out of the classroom and really experience the environment they live in. The Coastal Federation has helped to make that possible. I want my students to take away a respect for the environment and an insight on how they impact the world around them, and how they could impact the world in a positive way."*



### Dan Lewis

#### For Exceptional Business Engagement, Promotion and Support for Coastal Restoration

To say he's an oyster enthusiast would be putting it lightly. This man loves oysters, and he understands that clean water is vital to the growing North Carolina oyster mariculture industry. Dan Lewis and his business partner Scott Foster own Coastal Provisions Oyster Bar & Wine Bar Café in Southern Shores. Over the past decade, they have grown their business from a specialty market to a top food business on the Outer Banks with three locations. At Coastal Provisions, Dan has set the bar high for offering a diverse and extensive selection of North Carolina cultivated oysters. But he doesn't just want to serve oysters to discerning customers. Dan integrates an environmental ethic into his business. In the past three years, he has hosted six wine and dine events to benefit the Coastal Federation, an event where he creates a multi-course meal that highlights a local seafood and pairs the courses with a selection of fine wines. He has traveled to Raleigh on multiple occasions to lobby the General Assembly for additional funds to help with oyster restoration and protection efforts. When the General Assembly cut the budget for the state shell recycling program, he partnered with the Coastal Federation to launch a targeted program on the Outer Banks to ensure the shells from local restaurants would be used to create new reefs. And as president of the Outer Banks Restaurant Association, he has worked to pass resolutions in support of oyster restoration efforts and hosted fundraisers to benefit the Coastal Federation's oyster work.

*"It has been incredibly rewarding to have worked with an organization that not only promotes such beneficial stewardship of our coastal environment, but has also been instrumental in the growth of the oyster industry in North Carolina. As a chef and restaurateur, it has been thrilling to see and be part of the tremendous growth of perhaps the most sustainable protein source on the planet, and a food that sustains the livelihoods of myself, my team and so many others in our coastal community."*



## Central Region Winners



### Kathleen Lester

#### For Dedication and Leadership in Coastal Environmental Education

Kathleen Lester, a first-grade teacher at Swansboro Elementary School, was instrumental in creating two rain gardens and a stormwater education program at her school. Kathleen contacted the Coastal Federation in 2009 requesting help to reduce polluted stormwater runoff on the school's property. She then applied for a grant to receive funding and kick-start the project. Two rain gardens were built in 2010 with help from contractors, teachers and students. Since then, she has continued to partner with the Coastal Federation and use the rain gardens as living classrooms in order to teach her students and their families about stormwater runoff and protecting local waterways. Each year, Kathleen goes above and beyond to educate those around her about keeping our coast clean and healthy.

*"I love opportunities when I get to introduce my students to so much more than just reading and math. My students have learned about oysters and how they clean our waters for us. They have learned about monarch butterflies, how they are tagged and tracked, and how to plant milkweed to hopefully encourage their population to grow. What an amazing thing for 6- and 7-year-olds to be a part of and to be able to say they learned about in first grade. I want them to be proud of where they live."*



### John Fussell III

#### For Enduring Commitment to Preserving the Spectacular Natural Heritage of Our Coast

John Fussell is an avid birder, native habitat specialist and wildlife enthusiast who has helped lead educational and conservation efforts on the central coast for many years. He was an adviser on the original Hoop Pole Creek Committee, which led to the preservation of this unique maritime forest. He assisted in the development of the Patsy Pond trail system in the Croatan National Forest and is currently an adviser on the North River Wetlands Preserve Committee. John has offered valuable guidance on the types of rare flora and fauna found at Coastal Federation conservation areas. He has been a volunteer for many years, is always present at the annual Hoop Pole Creek cleanup and leads birding trips at the North River Wetlands Preserve.

*"For many of the issues I get most deeply involved in, it has to do with feeling that someone needs to do something, and knowing that if I don't do something, it won't get done. I do feel strongly that saving our native biodiversity is a no-brainer; surely maintaining biodiversity is important insofar as keeping humanity's options open."*



## Southeast Region Winners



### Blockade Runner Beach Resort

For Remarkable Business Partnership in Restoring Coastal Water Quality

Long recognizing the importance of a clean coast to maintaining success as a beach resort, the Baggett family, owners of the Blockade Runner Beach Resort in Wrightsville Beach, have demonstrated a strong commitment to their community as coastal stewards and advocates. They have hosted numerous forums on topics ranging from offshore drilling and marine debris to the economic importance of coastal protection. Additionally, resort staff created the Blockade Runner “Green Team” that performs environmental waste audits at the resort and works to reduce the resort’s energy consumption, plastic pollution and more. Most recently, they partnered with the Coastal Federation to complete the installation of an innovative stormwater reduction project on the resort grounds, dramatically reducing the amount of stormwater that runs off the property into adjacent drains and outfall pipes. They also utilize water collected in a cistern to irrigate their landscaped areas. The owners and staff of the Blockade Runner Beach Resort demonstrate the great potential that exists to protect and restore our coast through partnership.

*“We are so surprised to receive a 2017 Pelican Award. It has been an honor working with the North Carolina Coastal Federation this past year, and we look forward to continuing our partnership in the future. Our commitment to the coast stems from a deep respect for this island we call home. It has provided for us everything we have needed, and for that we are eternally grateful.”*



### Blue Ribbon Commission on the Prevention of Youth Violence

For Dedicated Leadership and Commitment to Connecting Youth with Pathways to Success

The Blue Ribbon Commission on the Prevention of Youth Violence (BRC) primarily serves an area known as the Youth Enrichment Zone (YEZ), which is an approximately 140-square-block area in the north side of downtown Wilmington with high crime and poverty rates. The goal of the BRC for the YEZ is to develop and implement a model that breaks the cycle of poverty and builds a pathway toward success for our youth.

The BRC partnered with the Coastal Federation to provide their students an opportunity to connect to the coastal environment and expose them to new experiences. Thanks to the partnership, their students have increased their understanding and appreciation of learning about why it’s important to understand and protect the coastal environment, and they are developing a sense of stewardship. The partnership supports the BRC’s Vision, Opportunity, Youth leadership, Advocacy, Guidance and Empowerment (VOYAGE) Initiative. VOYAGE was developed to provide a comprehensive range of programs geared toward addressing many risk factors experienced by youth living in the YEZ. VOYAGE currently includes programming for youth in second through 12th grades, as well as a community outreach model that provides continual support and case management for VOYAGE participants and their families.

*“We have been so grateful for this partnership and for the wonderful exposure to the coast that you have provided our children.”* — Jana Jones Hall, executive director of the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Prevention of Youth Violence.





### Mayor Eulis Willis

For Open and Candid Assistance with *Coastal Review Online* Reporting

Navassa Mayor Eulis Willis has been extremely helpful and supportive in *Coastal Review Online's* coverage of issues in that town, spending hours with editor Mark Hibbs during his work on the Navassa special report published in July 2016. As *CRO* has continued to follow the ongoing story of industrial pollution there, he has provided the same support and time to other *CRO* reporters. Navassa is a small town in Brunswick County with a predominantly black population that has endured more than a century of issues related to industrial pollution that affected soil and groundwater. The 251-acre, former Kerr-McGee Chemical Corp. site is now an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site, where the cleanup that began two-and-a-half years ago is expected to continue for years. Mayor Willis has been generous in sharing his extensive knowledge of the history of the town and how its residents have been affected, and he's been refreshingly candid in his remarks to *CRO* regarding the disagreements and challenges in regard to the town's response to the environmental mess and its continuing economic development efforts.

*"At the time when the fertilizer production and creosote operation — all the things that are now Superfund sites — when they were coming here, the concern was economics and that we were living in a segregated society where black folks could not get jobs, so we wanted to work. Now 50 years later, we're able to justify some of the actions that were taken and explain them, and we're also trying to get environmental justice going on."*



### David Paynter

For Longtime Commitment to Advancing the North Carolina Coastal Federation's Efforts to Protect and Restore Our Coast

For 25 years, David Paynter has worked quietly and often behind the scenes to ensure that the coast maintains its important habitat and coastal water quality. Since the 1990s, the multiple roles he has played for the Coastal Federation have proved immeasurable. He has served as the Coastal Federation's treasurer, as southeast advisory committee chair, on several campaign committees and currently serves as co-chair of the Investment Committee. David is also a member of the Coastal Federation's board of directors, President's Council and Coastal Society. He first became a member to support the protection of Brunswick County's Bird Island, which was slated for development of a bridge and homes. David knew the importance of saving this fragile and unique ecosystem for the birds and fauna that call it home. The former director of the New Hanover County Library System in Wilmington, David oversaw its extensive expansion and the formation of the New Hanover County Public Library Foundation in 2006. Now retired, he gives his time to the community and to coastal initiatives. He is active in the Rotary Club and the New Hanover County Smart Start program; has served on the board of public radio station WHQR; and currently serves as treasurer for Cape Fear Audubon Society and on the boards of directors for Audubon North Carolina and for Piedmont Trust.

*"The focus on achieving measurable results gives the Coastal Federation a great deal of credibility with our funders. I am optimistic that our past success will generate future success in preserving our coastal environment."*



## Coastwide Winners



### Tom Looney

For Leadership in Advancing Oyster Restoration as a Sound Economic and Environmental Initiative in North Carolina

Tom Looney loved catching clams when he was a young kid living on Long Island. That's why seafood is now part of his DNA. Later in life, he sold typewriters — that experience taught him to be open to trying new things so that his professional career would not run aground. He learned that lesson well; Tom recently retired as the General Manager of Lenovo North America. Tom is devoted to making North Carolina a better place. He is active on prestigious boards, including those of the North Carolina Economic Development Partnership, North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics and Wake Technical Community College. Tom is also a member of the Coastal Federation's board of directors, President's Council and Coastal Society. He spends a huge amount of his time and resources helping to restore oysters and the coast. He realizes oysters are key to providing expanded economic opportunities for many coastal residents. He also believes that having more people invested financially in clean coastal waters will result in better, long-term protection of coastal resources. Tom's business savvy leadership is helping to chart out a path forward so North Carolina is the Napa Valley of Oysters in the United States. Over the past several years, he's become a leader in our state for restoring the coast's natural environment as a way to improve economic opportunity as well.

*"I understand the obligation we have to protect our coastal assets, and the Coastal Federation has had a profound impact restoring and preserving our coastal experience here in North Carolina. I am committed to building a new industry on our coast, oyster mariculture, one that preserves and protects the environment while delivering economic opportunity and jobs for our coastal residents."*



### Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

For 35 Years of Sustained Partnership with the North Carolina Coastal Federation to Protect and Restore Our Coast

North Carolinians have a better quality of life because of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation (ZSR). Since 1983, the organization has invested every year in the work of the Coastal Federation, and it has been a constant advisor, friend and mentor. Our 35-year partnership makes life better for everyone who lives, visits, works and plays here along the coast, and it has given the Coastal Federation the capacity to become part of the social fabric of coastal communities. The foundation's trustees are dedicated to building an inclusive, sustainable and vibrant North Carolina. The vision of ZSR is to invest resources that will enable the people of our state to realize their full potential, which includes taking care of the coastal environment so that it remains a valued part of our state's cultural, natural and economic heritage. The foundation's staff works tirelessly to reflect and implement the values of its trustees as they cultivate and evaluate relationships with potential and existing grantees. Their job is demanding given the limited resources ZSR has available to address our state's many needs, and the Coastal Federation is blessed to have the good fortune of working with the ZSR staff since our first exploratory meeting back in 1982. Lots of troubled waters pass under the Coastal Federation's wheelhouse as we tackle many issues, which often means swimming upstream to achieve our agenda. That has been possible since ZSR has always been there for the past 35 years to give a strong push forward. The Coastal Federation is pleased to recognize ZSR for its enormous positive contributions to our state, and especially to the North Carolina coast.

*"The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation is honored to receive a 2017 Pelican Award from the North Carolina Coastal Federation. The Coastal Federation continues to do incredible and important work to protect and restore our state's coast. The Foundation is proud to support the federation's efforts to cultivate a resilient, healthy, vibrant coast that makes North Carolina a great place to live, work and visit." — Maurice "Mo" Green, executive director of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.*



# ADVOCACY UPDATES

The Coastal Federation advocates at the state, local and federal levels for a clean, healthy coast. We promote the adoption of policies that protect and benefit natural resources, coastal communities and the state economy.

## Coastal Federation and other groups gear up against offshore oil drilling and seismic blasting

In the months since offshore oil drilling and seismic blasting have again become a possibility off the North Carolina coast, thousands of people have written letters, attended rallies, made phone calls and displayed “Don’t Drill NC” signs in their yards.

In June, the Coastal Federation helped organize a meeting in Wilmington that drew more than 125 people interested in learning what they can do to join the fight against offshore oil drilling. That meeting resulted in the formation of the resident-based group, Save Our Sea NC, and elevated the fight to oppose the harm seismic surveys would have on protected marine mammals, including endangered right whales and dolphins. The Coastal Federation also submitted comments — and encouraged the public to submit

comments — to the National Marine Fisheries Service’s public notice on proposed authorizations for “taking” of marine mammals during seismic surveys.

“Take” is defined as harassment, injury or death of a marine mammal and is illegal without authorization.

To learn more about how you can help and to stay updated on the issue, visit [nccoast.org/oil](http://nccoast.org/oil) and [nccoast.org/seismic](http://nccoast.org/seismic). “Don’t Drill NC” signs are available for pickup at all three offices.



## BUDGET UPDATE

This year’s budget includes good news for oysters and crab pots — go to [nccoast.org/raleighreport](http://nccoast.org/raleighreport) for a full update.

## Public input sought for Lake Mattamuskeet watershed restoration plan

Lake Mattamuskeet is a vital part of Hyde County’s cultural heritage. However, the lake’s declining water quality and changing water levels are worrisome to federal and state agencies, county residents and visitors. To begin addressing these concerns, the Coastal Federation will assist Hyde County, the Hyde Soil and Water Conservation District, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in developing a watershed restoration plan for the lake. This plan will identify potential management strategies to address water quality and water level concerns.

On Aug. 8, community members will gather at the Hyde County Government Complex in Swan Quarter for the first of six public

meetings designed to seek public input to identify issues facing the lake watershed.

“We want to design a voluntary blueprint that helps our county’s residents and landowners take care of the lake and their properties for decades to come,” said Bill Rich, Hyde County manager. “We will identify and then work to carry out cost-effective steps to restore water quality

in the lake, and at the same time, reduce flooding problems in the watershed.”

The other five public meetings will be held at the same location on Nov. 7, 2017, as well as Feb. 6, May 8, July 10 and Sept. 18, 2018. To stay up-to-date on the project, leave comments, view project resources or sign up for the mailing list, visit [nccoast.org/lakemattamuskeet](http://nccoast.org/lakemattamuskeet).





# EDUCATION UPDATES

Staff at all three offices have been busy in the field and the classroom with students this spring and summer. Many kids do not have opportunities to spend time exploring the marsh, and the Coastal Federation strives to make it possible for everyone to be able to have these experiences. It also works to educate local community leaders. Check out some highlights.

## Outreach efforts successful in helping to reduce stormwater runoff

The Coastal Federation has continued to work with coastal towns to develop watershed restoration plans and expand education on watershed planning. Staff members are currently helping the town of Beaufort and Hyde County develop watershed restoration plans designed to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff flowing into waterways. One key component to a successful plan is outreach.

Outreach programs empower residents to reduce runoff at home and give local governments the tools to make waters safer and healthier. On May 25, the Coastal Federation and the North Carolina Coastal Reserve hosted a watershed planning workshop that drew 50 town planners, managers and watershed professionals. On June 2, staff from the Coastal Federation and Charles Humphrey, PhD and associate professor at East Carolina University, led a tour of effective, yet simple, retrofits installed in the Cedar Point recreation area. Participants were excited to receive a free gutter downspout diverter to reduce runoff at home.

"We are pleased with the partnerships we are developing to reduce stormwater runoff. Stormwater is the greatest pollutant of



our coastal creeks, rivers and sounds, so it is a major priority for us," said Lauren Kolodij, deputy director of the Coastal Federation. "We are advancing our commitment to reducing runoff, restoring impaired waters and realizing the environmental and economic benefits of clean coastal water."

## Schools are out, but coastal education continues this summer

### River City YouthBuild visits Durant's Point

Staff and AmeriCorps members from Elizabeth City-based River City YouthBuild joined Wanchese staff for a trip to Durant's Point in Hatteras, where they learned more about living shorelines and the habitat they provide. Thanks to a grant from the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership, the Coastal Federation has continued working with River City YouthBuild on water quality projects in Elizabeth City to help students stay engaged throughout the summer.

### Students explore Crystal Coast during two Coastal Discovery camps

Ocean staff members had their hands full the last two weeks of June with camps for elementary school students. During the first camp, students earned their Junior Ranger certifications, spent time at Hammocks Beach State Park and visited Jones and Bear islands. The second camp took place in Down East Carteret County in partnership with the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage

Center. Students learned about wildlife in the Core Sound and visited Cape Lookout National Seashore.

These camps were sponsored by: Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership, Boys & Girls Clubs of Coastal Carolina, Walmart's Community Grant Program, the Croatan Chapter of the Sierra Club, Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative, Unitarian Coastal Fellowship, Transportation Impact and individual donors.

### Coastal Federation staff continues work with Blue Ribbon Commission through the summer

Students from the Blue Ribbon Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence (BRC)'s after-school VOYAGE program wrapped up school-year lessons with the Coastal Federation's Wrightsville Beach staff at the end of May, but staff continued to work with BRC students this summer. A high school student from BRC's VOYAGE summer employment program helped with education activities, and staff is also working with ninth-grade students through a summer bridge program. These programs are made possible by a grant from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board.



# RESTORATION UPDATES

Many of our projects are moving along well thanks to collaboration among state agencies, private contractors, community volunteers and others. Two of our major restoration projects, both funded in part by NOAA grants, are highlighted below.

## Living shoreline resiliency grant moves into second year

The Coastal Federation has moved into its second year of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grant. This grant was awarded to the Coastal Federation in 2016 to increase coastal resiliency by building more living shorelines in North Carolina. Living shorelines use marsh plants and sometimes oyster or rock sills to create a more natural and productive shore than those armored with bulkheads. Projects that are funded through this grant are either in development or are ongoing, and span all the way from Duck down to Oak Island.

This funding has enabled the Coastal Federation to develop a cost share program for waterfront landowners. Through this program, landowners receive up to 50 percent of the total cost of materials and labor for constructing a living shoreline. Additionally, the Coastal Federation trains marine contractors on how to build living shorelines, including how to obtain, bag and deploy recycled oyster shells. More than 25 requests were received during the program's application period.

The Coastal Federation has also developed community partnerships in order to test new materials for building living shorelines. The Ocean office is working with Sandbar Oyster Co. to place their new Oyster Catcher™

substrate along several shorelines in the near future. Additionally, staff members are partnering with Filtrex to test various types of biodegradable mesh for oyster bags.

The Coastal Federation is excited to continue to build more living shorelines, create and maintain habitat and educate the community on this effective and environmentally friendly alternative to hardened shoreline stabilization structures. Stay updated with the latest news on this grant at [nccoast.org/livingshorelines](https://nccoast.org/livingshorelines).



Photo © Mark Hibbs

## Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary ahead of schedule

Good news for oyster restoration — the Coastal Federation and its partners are ahead of schedule on the 50 Million Oyster Initiative. Construction wrapped up on the first 15 acres of the Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary at the end of June, six weeks ahead of schedule. And because construction costs were lower than expected, the contract with Stevens Towing Company, Inc. was extended to create five more acres at the site.

These 20 acres of sanctuary in Pamlico Sound are part of the Senator Jean Preston Oyster Sanctuary Network, and were funded, in part, by state appropriations from the North Carolina General Assembly. Additional funding for the project came from NOAA's community-based habitat restoration program, from donor support and from Grady-White Boats.

The Swan Island Oyster Sanctuary is the first major installment of the Coastal Federation's 50 Million Oyster Initiative, which benefits North Carolina's coastal economy and oyster habitat. For more information or to support this initiative — either through a donation or through Adopt an Oyster — visit [nccoast.org/oysters](https://nccoast.org/oysters). There you'll find photos, videos of construction and detailed information.



## Visit the Living Shorelines Academy website today

Living Shorelines Academy offers tools and resources for everything you need to know about living shorelines and your options for shoreline erosion control.

Check out [livingshorelinesacademy.org](https://livingshorelinesacademy.org) to learn more.

*The Living Shorelines Academy was developed by the Coastal Federation and Restore America's Estuaries through funding from the Environmental Protection Agency.*





North Carolina  
Coastal Federation

35 years  
working together for a healthy coast

3609 N.C. 24 (Ocean)

Newport, NC 28570

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 12  
Newport, NC

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



[www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org)

© 2017 North Carolina Coastal Federation. Printed on Recycled Paper



## WILMINGTON ARTIST CREATES 35TH ANNIVERSARY PRINT

The Coastal Federation is excited to showcase our special 35th anniversary print by David Starbuck, a Wilmington-based artist. "Harkers Island Orientation, NC" features a brown pelican over the Harkers Island U.S. Geological Survey map. Prints can be ordered at [dstarbuck.com](http://dstarbuck.com). Twenty percent of the proceeds on any work in the Orientation Series will be donated to the Coastal Federation.

Join the thousands of people who are  
passionate about protecting our coast —  
today and for future generations.

To join or renew your annual membership,  
visit [nccoast.org/membership](http://nccoast.org/membership).

You can also renew by mailing a check to 3609 N.C. 24 (Ocean),  
Newport, NC 28570.

Your membership in the Coastal Federation  
helps protect, restore and wisely manage our coastal  
rivers, sounds and beaches.

Questions? Call us at 252-393-8185 or email us at [nccf@nccoast.org](mailto:nccf@nccoast.org).



Purchase your full-color  
PROTECT OUR COAST  
license plate today at  
[nccoast.org/licenseplate](http://nccoast.org/licenseplate).

Visit [nccoast.org/events](http://nccoast.org/events) to check out our fall events, including  
a family-friendly Low Country Boil & Brew at Wrightsville  
Beach Brewery on Sept. 24. Learn more at [nccoast.org/brew](http://nccoast.org/brew).



Coastal Review Online

A Daily News Service Covering North Carolina's Coast

Stay informed with *Coastal Review Online*, the award-winning  
daily news service dedicated to covering the North Carolina  
coast. Subscribe at [coastalreview.org](http://coastalreview.org).