

Restoring North Carolina's Coast

NC COASTAL FEDERATION RESTORATION & PROTECTION PROJECT

EAGLE POINT GOLF COURSE

Eagle Point Golf Course in New Hanover County is situated between intense suburban development and Little Creek. It has protected this fragile tidal creek that is still open for shellfishing by providing a water quality buffer that infiltrates a huge amount of stormwater runoff from upstream development. Low impact designs incorporated into the course and professional property management are to credit for the environmental benefits the course provides.

EAGLE POINT GOLF COURSE PROJECT



In 2003 the owners of the golf course donated a 218-acre conservation easement to the North Carolina Coastal Federation. This easement guarantees that the course will either remain in its current use or be returned to a natural area. It prevents any further development of the land for housing and commercial uses. The State of North Carolina certified the easement as providing the necessary conservation values to qualify the donation as a charitable contribution based upon the water quality benefits the course provides.

Eagle Point has increased its commitment to protect the adjacent shellfish waters since it made its donation. It has replaced large areas of managed turf with low-maintenance native grasses and refined a connected, closed-loop stormwater pond system to contain and infiltrate much more stormwater runoff within the property.

Despite these efforts, water quality in Little Creek shows signs of becoming more degraded. This pollution is coming from increased development upstream of the golf course that is discharging more stormwater runoff onto the course.

A Project to Protect Little Creek

Polluted stormwater – with its high fecal coliform levels, excessive nutrients and/or sediment – is the biggest source of pollution to coastal shellfishing and swimming waterways. To address the problems associated with increased amounts of polluted stormwater passing through the golf course into Little Creek, Eagle Point has worked with scientists, engineers, citizens and local government



June 2009 volunteer planting of the stormwater wetland at Eagle Point Golf Course.



Site of stormwater wetland (pre-construction).



Stormwater wetland (3 months after planting).



Eagle Point Golf Course is located adjacent to high quality shellfish waters of Little Creek.

agencies to develop a comprehensive water quality management plan. The course has also begun to carry out this plan by installing several of the plan's stormwater reduction and low impact development (LID) measures. These efforts are designed to increase the course's ability to function as a water quality buffer between development and valuable coastal waters. Additional water quality measures outlined in the plan will be installed over the next few years.

These measures include innovative, targeted on-site controls to infiltrate stormwater runoff and encourage pollutant removal through biological processes and evaporation. They include:

- rain gardens
- permeable pavement
- constructed stormwater wetlands
- enhanced vegetated benches around existing stormwater ponds
- cisterns
- vegetated swales
- bioretention areas

A Valuable Conservation/Restoration Model

This pilot project uses adaptive management practices that allow the course to progressively enhance its ability to function as a water quality buffer. The plan provides a working model for how to solve water quality problems plaguing our coast. Measures being used are designed to prevent bacteria and nutrients from reaching coastal waters. The course provides a role model to inspire other institutional managers of large tracts of land to use low impact design and water quality management for their properties.

Success through Community Partnerships

This project was made possible by generous financial support from the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund, the New Hanover County Soil and Water Conservation District (North Carolina Community Conservation Assistance Program) and Eagle Point Golf Course. Financial support allowed scientists, engineers, citizens and decision-makers to engage in hands-on activities and educational events to develop and carry out the plan. Additional partners include:

- North Carolina Coastal Federation
- New Hanover County Planning Department
- North Carolina State University
- University of North Carolina Wilmington



Site plan of created stormwater wetland and bioretention area.



Eagle Point
GOLF COURSE



North Carolina
Coastal Federation

North Carolina Coastal Federation | 3609 Hwy 24 (Ocean) | Newport, NC 28570
252.393.8185 | Fax: 252.393.7508 | nccf@nccoast.org | www.nccoast.org

"Citizens Working Together for A Healthy Coast"

The North Carolina Coastal Federation (NCCF) 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. For more information call 252.393.8185 or check out NCCF's website at www.nccoast.org.