

OUR COAST

Working Together for a Healthy Coast

Advancing Coastal
Protection & Restoration

Executive Director Letter

I am pleased to share exciting news about an important new initiative for our coast.

This spring, the Coastal Federation launched the Coastal Leadership Institute, a six-month leadership and professional development program focused on the environmental, economic, and community issues shaping coastal North Carolina. The idea behind the Institute is simple but powerful: if we want a healthy, thriving coast for generations to come, we must invest in the people leading it today as well as those who will lead it tomorrow.

For decades, the Federation has served as a trusted convener, bringing together individuals, organizations, scientists, policymakers, business leaders, and community members committed to protecting and restoring our coast. The Coastal Leadership Institute is a natural extension of that role. It creates a structured space for learning, dialogue, and collaboration among leaders whose work directly impacts coastal communities.

Our inaugural cohort brings together 20 participants representing a wide range of professional backgrounds, including local and regional government, nonprofit organizations, business, education, and industry. What unites them is a shared commitment to understanding the coast more deeply and leading more effectively within it.

The Institute is designed as a cohort-based experience, with two full-day sessions per month. We kicked off the program in March with a presentation on the natural history of coastal North Carolina by Bland Simpson, a tour of the Town of Beaufort with Mayor Sharon Harker, and a field trip to Down East Carteret County hosted by Karen Amspacher and the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center, where participants explored how coastal North Carolina's cultural heritage, natural systems, and history shape both its identity and its challenges.

Throughout the program, participants will engage in facilitated discussions, expert-led presentations, and site-based learning experiences. Topics include coastal and marine science, growth and economic development, public policy and management, and natural resource conservation and restoration, each examined through the lens of coastal resilience. Sessions will be held primarily in Carteret County and the Wilmington area, allowing the cohort to learn directly from the landscapes, communities, and professionals working on the ground.

Coastal issues rarely have simple solutions. They require informed decision-making, collaboration across sectors, and an understanding of how environmental, economic, and cultural systems intersect. One of the most rewarding aspects of this first cohort is watching participants build strong professional relationships – the kind that have the potential to shape how this coast is led for years to come.

We could not have launched the Institute without the generous support of our partners and funders. The Duke Energy Foundation, the Carlyle Adams Foundation, and the RBC Foundation helped make the inaugural class possible. We are also grateful to the many individuals and organizations who are helping us by sharing their expertise, insights, and time with participants.

This is just the beginning. Our vision is for the Coastal Leadership Institute to become an annual cornerstone of coastal leadership in North Carolina, to continue bringing together emerging and established leaders to learn, connect, and lead more effectively. By equipping leaders with knowledge, perspective, and meaningful connections, we are investing directly in the long-term resilience and prosperity of our coast.



With Gratitude,


Braxton Davis

-Executive Director

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Working Together We've...

Filtered
Billions of gallons
of water

Restored
15,000 acres
of wetlands

Recycled
43,914 Bushels
of oyster shells

Removed
4.7 million pounds
of marine debris

WATER QUALITY

Restoration Along the Newport

A major restoration project is coming to the Newport River. Over the last three years, the Federation partnered with the N.C. Coastal Land Trust to acquire nearly 3,000 acres of riparian land in Carteret County. This property was ditched and drained for timber production in the 1960s, increasing surface runoff and downstream impacts to prime shellfish waters.



Staff have collaborated with local stakeholders, community partners, government officials, and biologists to design a comprehensive plan that thoughtfully integrates ecological recovery, flood reduction, and new recreational opportunities.

Construction on the first 1,400 acres is set to commence later this year. Restoration efforts will prioritize reviving the site's natural hydrology and habitat conditions, which were significantly degraded by decades of intensive timber operations. By restoring the natural flow of water across the landscape, the project aims to drastically cut down on surface runoff. This change is expected to reduce the sediment and pollutants that have historically flowed into the Newport River, leading to improved water quality and a healthier ecosystem.

At the same time, the Federation will launch habitat restoration across the parcels. The iconic Longleaf pine, a foundational species of the Southeast's historic coastal forests, will be a primary focus. Other sections will be restored as a pond pine woodland, cultivating a diverse mosaic of pine and hardwood species that will support a wide array of wildlife.

In the wetter areas of the site, restoration crews will plant an herbaceous seed mix alongside specific tree species. These strategic plantings are designed to create a smooth, gradual transition from wetland to upland habitats, ultimately strengthening the ecosystem's resilience and restoring the landscape's natural beauty.

Restoring Hydrology and Protecting Coastal Wetlands

Lux Farms, located in northeastern Hyde County, shows what's possible when farmers and conservation organizations work together. Since 2012, this project has aimed to restore historic hydrology to farmland that had been ditched and drained for decades. The restoration project focuses on approximately 1,400 acres of wetlands within Lux Farms, where water is now held and managed on the property to improve water quality, support wildlife habitat, and provide a sustainable model for coastal wetland restoration in North Carolina.

The vision for Lux Farms is ambitious and involves many partners, including the Federation, NC State University, local farmers, and state and federal agencies.

Together, a system was designed that would hold drainage water in impoundments, and then allow it to slowly seep into restored sloughs and natural waterways flowing northward toward the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. New pumps move water from the Mattamuskeet Drainage Association, improving drainage for active cropland while reducing unfiltered runoff into Pamlico Sound. Early planning required navigating complex regulatory and logistical hurdles, including approvals from wildlife refuge managers, enrollment in the USDA Wetlands Reserve Program, and securing state restoration grants. Despite these challenges, the project gained momentum and became a model for cooperative, landscape-scale restoration.

Over the past year, Lux Farms has reached several important milestones. The north pump has been successfully installed and connected to power, enabling precise water management across the farm. Installation of the south pump is currently underway, which will further enhance the ability to control water flow throughout the restored wetland areas. Staff continue to conduct regular water quality monitoring and are using water level loggers to track hydrologic conditions, ensuring that water movement is both effective and ecologically beneficial.

The environmental impact of Lux Farms is significant. By restoring natural water flows, the project supports diverse wetland habitats, including shallow water areas used by migrating shorebirds and as fish nurseries. The restored hydrology also helps filter nutrients and sediments before they reach the Alligator River, contributing to overall water quality improvement. Beyond the ecological wins, Lux Farms is proof that productive agriculture and environmental protection can go hand in hand.

Lux Farms is the result of long-term vision and the dedication of staff, partners, and stakeholders committed to resilient coastal landscapes. As restoration efforts continue, the farm not only benefits wildlife and water quality but also inspires other communities to pursue practical, sustainable solutions for wetland conservation.



SALT MARSH



The Living Shoreline Cost-Share Program reduces financial barriers for waterfront property owners interested in implementing nature-based shoreline stabilization. Since the program began it has supported more than 290 projects across coastal North Carolina, resulting in the restoration of more than 6.6 miles of shoreline and nearly 24 acres of salt marsh habitat.

The program also provides comprehensive technical support throughout the process. Federation staff conduct site visits to evaluate shoreline conditions, develop site-specific project designs, assist property owners with state and federal permitting requirements and oversee installation. Following construction, staff provide guidance on maintenance and monitoring to support long-term project performance. Kristen Monahan, a cost-share program participant, explained why she chose to install a living shoreline. “I jumped on the chance to use the cost-share program for Living Shorelines. The benefits of erosion control, increased marsh growth, and animal diversity could be seen in a matter of months.

The program also supports workforce development through hands-on training. Implementation of living shoreline projects supports a network of marine contractors, engineers, landscapers, and native plant nurseries trained in nature-based shoreline stabilization techniques.

Together, these projects contribute to a growing network of natural shoreline buffers that protect coastal communities from storms and sea-level rise. The Living Shoreline Cost-Share Program shows how public and private sectors can work together to deliver real ecological, economic, and community benefits

Working Together for Stronger Shores

North Carolina’s shorelines are shaped by tides, storms, and boat wakes – and they are constantly changing. Historically, shoreline erosion has often been addressed through hardened structures such as bulkheads and riprap revetments. While these structures can provide immediate stabilization, they frequently disrupt natural shoreline processes and contribute to the loss of salt marsh habitat, reduced water quality, and increased erosion in adjacent areas.

Over the past decade, the Coastal Federation has worked directly with property owners, contractors, engineers, municipalities, and the general public to promote nature-based approaches to shoreline stabilization. This work has been supported through the Federation’s Living Shoreline Cost-Share Program, which is funded by the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina Land and Water Fund.

Living shorelines use salt marsh vegetation and, in some cases, low-profile offshore sills or marsh toe revetments to stabilize eroding shorelines while maintaining natural coastal processes. Unlike hardened structures that deflect wave energy and can damage nearby marsh and adjacent properties, marsh vegetation and living shoreline structures absorb wave energy, reduce erosion, and trap sediment over time. Restored salt marshes also improve water quality by filtering runoff and excess nutrients before they reach coastal waters. In addition, marsh habitat provides important nursery areas for shrimp, crabs, and finfish, supports shorebirds and other wildlife, and helps stabilize sediments through dense root systems.

Learn More Here



Leave a Legacy for the Coast

Including the Federation in your will or estate plans is a simple way to ensure a healthy coast for the next generation. Visit nccoast.org/give.



OYSTERS



Advancing Oyster Restoration Statewide

For almost a decade, the Coastal Federation has been coordinating oyster shell recycling along our coast. Recycled shell is the backbone of our state's wild oyster restoration – work that protects shorelines, improves water quality, and supports the fisheries so many coastal families depend on. Over the years, a robust network of staff, volunteers, and contractors has formed, collectively recycling 43,914 bushels of oyster shells over the program's history. But in 2023, Federation staff identified a clear gap: the state's capital had no recycling infrastructure at all.

High volumes of oyster sales in Wake County were generating a steady stream of recyclable shell, but without a local contractor, much of that material was at risk of being lost. Addressing that gap became a priority, paving the way for a new partnership that has quickly proven its value.

In September of 2025, Shell Recyclers LLC, became the Federation's first oyster shell recycling contractor in Wake County and they hit the ground running. The team, consisting of Worth and Emily Creech, now has regular shell collections from 12 restaurants and seafood markets throughout the area, including Angus Barn, St. Roch, Saltwater Seafood Market, Locals Seafood Market, Earp's Seafood Market, Mera Brothers, Shuckin' Shack - Raleigh, Whole Foods, and more. Their ability to make frequent, often daily pickups has made participation easier for businesses and ensured shells are handled properly from the moment they leave the plate.

"It's been an honor to spearhead the Federation's Recycle for Reefs efforts in Wake County for the past several months," said Worth Creech. "As shell recyclers, we are able to do almost daily shell pickups from either restaurants, markets, or events. It's been really rewarding to meet local restaurants, businesses, and oyster farmers at events who share the same passion for how important recycling NC oyster shells is for our coast! Sometimes folks aren't able to give us a large quantity of shells, but they are happy spreading the word and helping where they can. It takes a team to make it happen, and we want to set up a model that can be replicated in other areas throughout NC. It's great to see how large the pile of shells has grown!"

Once collected, shells are stockpiled and left to cure by Ordess Brothers, LLC in Bailey, North Carolina, until enough have accumulated to haul back to the coast for reef restoration. This coordinated approach ensures shells from inland communities still find their way back to coastal waters where they can make a lasting impact.

From September to the end of 2025, Shell Recyclers LLC collected 1,755 bushels of oyster shell. For 2026, the team is currently on track to meet its goal of 5,000 bushels, demonstrating both the demand for the program and the commitment of participating businesses.



Many Ways to Give!

Explore all the ways you can support the coast, from becoming a sustainer to giving through IRAs or Donor Advised Funds, or by donating stock. Visit nccoast.org/give.



MARINE DEBRIS



Removing ADVs for Cleaner Safer Waters

Earlier this year, the Coastal Federation received funding from the BoatUS Foundation to remove 12 abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV) from the waters of Carteret, Chowan, Hyde, New Hanover, and Onslow counties. We were one of ten organizations selected across five states, one tribal reservation, and two territories chosen for this work.

This project is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program through the BoatUS Foundation's Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Program. It will provide critical support for removing ADVs from working harbors in communities that lack the resources to tackle this issue on their own.

"This award will enable the Federation to continue its partnership with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and local governments to remove and dispose of ADVs affecting the livelihood and environment of our coastal communities," said Ted Wilgis, the Federation's Marine Debris Program Director. "In addition, approximately 85-90% of the funding goes to NC-based specialized ADV removal contractors. Three of these vessels are large commercial vessels, which are very expensive and complex removals."

Before the Federation can remove a targeted vessel, it goes through an investigation – typically led by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission or local governments – to confirm the boat meets the legal definition of an ADV and to give owners time to address the issue. If the owner can't be located, walks away, or refuses to act, we are authorized to proceed with removal.

The NOAA Marine Debris Program also requires every craft to undergo an Environmental Review and Compliance process. This gives federal and state regulatory agencies the opportunity to review the vessels and ensure removal complies with environmental and cultural regulations. The Federation started that process for all targeted vessels in June 2025, and received approval to begin work in early spring of this year.

Addressing ADVs remains a key focus under the NC Marine Debris Action Plan's goal of a debris-free coast. When left to deteriorate, these boats threaten vital habitats, including salt marshes and oyster reefs, and contaminate waterways with hazardous substances. Beyond the environmental impacts, they create navigational hazards that endanger the livelihoods of those who make their living on the water and threaten the vibrant tourism and recreational activities that drive our coastal economy. Thanks to the BoatUS Foundation funding, the Federation is able to add to the 172 ADVs we've removed since 2020, reducing these negative impacts on our coast.

In addition to the 12 vessels being removed through the BoatUS award, we have 23 more ADVs in the queue for removal, pending costs and remaining grant funding. These vessels will be removed through separate funding from the NOAA Marine Debris Program and the North Carolina General Assembly.

The Federation's success in ADV removal is made possible through the partnership and support of the NC Wildlife Resource Commission, local governments, the NC Division of Coastal Management, the NC General Assembly, BoatUS, and the NOAA Marine Debris Program.



Show Your Love for the Coast!

Show your love for the coast from the road with the Federation's specialty license plate, which supports the coast with a \$20 donation per plate. Visit nccoast.org/give.



COASTAL MANAGEMENT



Navigating Concerns about Expanding the State Port

A major proposal is underway to deepen and widen the shipping channel leading to the Port of Wilmington. Known as the Wilmington Harbor 403 Navigation Project, the plan would allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the Cape Fear River and expand portions of the channel so larger cargo ships can move in and out of the Port more easily.

While supporters frame the project as an economic opportunity, it has raised serious questions about long-term damage to environmental and cultural resources and whether the projected benefits outweigh the risks.

The Coastal Federation, along with many fishers, scientists, local governments, community members, and partner organizations, expressed concerns that expanded dredging could harm sensitive habitats, disrupt fisheries, and worsen water quality in an already stressed river system. The Cape Fear River has endured decades of industrial pollution and nutrient loading. Disturbing river sediments at a larger scale raises the risk of resuspending legacy contaminants, including the PFAS compounds widely documented in the basin. There are also concerns about increased erosion, saltwater intrusion, and flooding in nearby communities.

“Our coast isn’t just infrastructure or industry; it’s habitats, communities, and livelihoods that depend on healthy systems,” said Kerri Allen, Coastal Management Program Director for the Federation. “When we’re talking about large-scale dredging in a river that supplies drinking water and supports commercial and recreational fisheries, we have to make sure the long-term impacts are fully understood.”

Community concern has been substantial. Seven local municipalities have passed resolutions raising questions about the proposal,

underscoring that this is not simply an environmental debate - it is a community issue. Many residents have also questioned whether the expansion is necessary, particularly given projections showing no net increase in cargo capacity and no measurable economic gain for North Carolina.

In early 2026, following robust public engagement and detailed comments from residents, environmental organizations, and local governments, the Corps paused its federal review to examine unresolved questions more closely. More recently, the N.C. Division of Coastal Management issued a formal objection to the project, citing significant adverse impacts and gaps in the environmental analysis. Among the issues identified were impacts to wetlands and water quality, as well as the need for a more thorough evaluation of contaminated sediments, including PFAS.

The Federation views the State’s action as an important step toward accountability and science-based decision-making. “Persistent chemicals demand persistent oversight,” Allen said. “When there are credible questions about mobilizing contaminated sediments and long-term water quality impacts, regulators have a responsibility to press for complete answers before a project moves forward.”

While the objection does not necessarily end the proposal, it reinforces a core principle of coastal management: large infrastructure projects must meet a high bar for environmental protection and public transparency.

The Federation will continue to follow the project closely, keep communities informed, and advocate for decisions that safeguard the Cape Fear River’s health and resilience - now and for generations to come.



NEW! Celebrate a birthday or special event with our new build-your-own birthday fundraiser. Celebrate your way while supporting the coast! Visit nccoast.org/give.



EDUCATION

Educating the next generation of coastal stewards, coastal communities, students and adults is an important part of our work here at the Coastal Federation. Whether it's through hands-on learning in a classroom, on an informational cruise, presenting to a community group, or mentoring an intern, we are helping to develop knowledge of our coastal environment and an appreciation for the need to preserve these vital habitats. Our experienced team of educators leads these efforts all along the coast.

Discovering the Coast through Science



Our partnership with North Carolina Central University continues to welcome new students to the coast each semester. This year, we began mentoring three new graduate students who visit monthly to collect oysters for their research. Led by their advisor, Dr. Carresse Gerald, students Brittany, TaBonya, and Sabine are working to better understand PFAS, microplastics, and heavy metals in oyster populations.

We also had a great time exploring Carteret County with undergraduates from the NCCU Department of Environmental, Earth and Geospatial Sciences. Students met local professionals from a Leadership Carteret class, and took behind-the-scenes tours at the North Carolina Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores and Carteret Community College's Aquaculture Lab. They also explored the estuary at Hoop Pole Creek Preserve and stopped by Fort Macon State Park. We're grateful to every local professional and organization that works with us to provide meaningful experiences for these students.

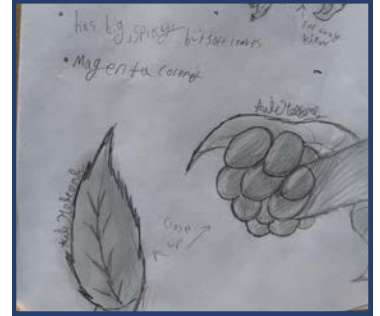
These opportunities are possible with support from NOAA and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation.



Where Education Meets Living Landscapes

Collaboration with local students in our northeast region is thriving through our living classrooms and schoolyard rain gardens. Rain gardens are a nature-based solution that reduces stormwater runoff entering our coastal waters, creates habitat, and even absorbs carbon.

Throughout the school year, the Federation's educators engage with teachers and students to use the rain gardens for lessons and activities. Our ability to use these areas year-round is thanks to the care and effort of community volunteers.



Over the course of a two-day visit to First Flight Middle School, our educator led 220 sixth-grade students on an exploratory lesson of the school's rain garden. The students took time identifying plants, making observations, and drawing sketches. As the seasons shift, students will use their data to observe changes amidst the gardens.

A Glimpse into Coastal Futures

Coastal Federation staff participated in New Hanover County Schools' Regions 1 and 2 5th Grade Career Fair, Passport to Possibilities, connecting with 909 students and 30+ teachers from elementary schools across the district. Through one-on-one conversations and real-world examples, students explored how coastal science and restoration translate into meaningful



careers—from clean water work and living shorelines to oyster restoration and community-based solutions. The event aligned with the district's Portrait of a Graduate initiative, which focuses on connecting classroom learning to real-world skills and future pathways. For many students, it may have been their first glimpse of what a science career on the coast could look like.



Give with Confidence

The Coastal Federation is a top-rated charity nationwide for fiscal transparency and financial stewardship, according to both Charity Navigator and GuideStar.

REASONS TO SHELLBRATE

In 2026, the Coastal Federation will celebrate major milestones on four long-term initiatives. Join us in shellebrating these successes!

Removing 5 Million Pounds of Marine Debris

In 2018, the Coastal Federation launched a major coastwide effort to clean up marine debris, relying on volunteers for local cleanups, and using federal grants and state appropriations to employ crews of commercial fishers and marine contractors to remove large debris and abandoned vessels. This year, these removal efforts will add up to more than 5 million pounds of debris and almost 200 vessels removed coastwide! In addition to removing debris that damages our coastal habitats and threatens wildlife, we are also working on reducing new debris.



Restoring 500 Acres of Oyster Sanctuary

In 2015, the N.C. Oyster Steering Committee set a goal of restoring 500 acres of oyster sanctuary by 2026. These sanctuaries are open to fishing but closed to oyster harvest, providing a safe place for oysters to grow and reproduce. Monitoring shows that these sanctuaries are thriving – filtering huge amounts of water, providing habitat for a wide range of species, and producing oyster larvae that can establish new reefs outside of the sanctuaries. This year, we'll achieve that milestone of 500 acres of sanctuary – securing a sustainable future for oysters!

Launching New Programs at the Center for Coastal Protection and Restoration

The Federation's new Center for Coastal Protection and Restoration will open this fall in Carteret County! More than just the new headquarters for the Coastal Federation, the Center will serve as a hub for our members, partners, and the coastal communities we serve. The campus will offer an education classroom and event center and will support a dynamic array of new programs, from guided walks and birding tours on the nature trails to hands-on youth programs, community events like festivals and plant sales, and much more. We look forward to celebrating our Grand Opening with you – stay tuned for details!



OUT ON THE COAST

The North Carolina coast is rich with wild spaces that have been conserved for the benefit of coastal ecosystems, communities, and future generations.

The Federation has been involved with the preservation of tens of thousands of acres of special properties since 1982. These lands are located in sensitive environmental areas such as the headwaters and shorelines of coastal rivers, creeks, and sounds. Many of these properties were either once slated for intensive development or were already extensively ditched and drained. Ownership of some of these lands has been transferred to various state or local government agencies for long-term preservation and public use.

The Federation also maintains several properties that you can visit. Whether it's a trip through the forest along the Patsy Pond Nature Trail, reconnecting with nature in its purest form at the North River Wetlands Preserve, or taking in the beautiful waters of Stump Sound at Morris Landing Clean Water Preserve there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Read more about the history of each property on our website.



Stay Connected with the Federation

Throughout the year, the Coastal Federation hosts a number of events and volunteer opportunities like marsh grass plantings, debris clean-ups and our popular event speaker series Green Drinks in the Outer Banks and in Morehead City. Be sure to check out our events calendar for the latest information.



CAROLINA LONG BAY WIND ENERGY FIRM TAKES TRUMP BUYOUT

By Trista Talton

Before accepting the Trump administration's \$1 billion taxpayer buyout, TotalEnergies fostered a campaign that its wind energy project off the coast of Brunswick County would eventually generate enough electricity to power 300,000 homes in the Carolinas.

"Our team is passionate about creating a clean energy economy and the new opportunities it brings to our local communities," reads an excerpt from TotalEnergies Carolina Long Bay website. "Our partnerships in the Carolinas are making renewable energy a regional priority, building a stronger future for us all."

TotalEnergies Carolina Long Bay, a wholly owned subsidiary of the France-based global energy company, "will harness the power of offshore wind to generate abundant energy and significant economic growth for the communities of the Southeast."

The Interior Department's announcement Monday that TotalEnergies had accepted a federal buyout of its wind energy leases off the New York and North Carolina coasts is a sharp pivot from the company's previous narrative on offshore wind in the United States.

TotalEnergies' chief executive officer and chair of the company's board of directors said in a Department of Interior release that the decision to relinquish offshore wind development in the United States was made because such projects are "not in the country's interest."

Instead, TotalEnergies will invest the refunded money in a liquefied natural gas export terminal in Texas and other fossil fuel projects.

The Trump administration lauded it as an "innovative agreement," one that is a major win for President Donald Trump, who has made offshore wind the biggest bullseye in his target to dismantle renewable energy projects and replace them with fossil fuel and nuclear power.

Offshore wind is one of the most expensive, unreliable, environmentally disruptive, and subsidy-dependent schemes ever forced on American ratepayers and taxpayers," Interior Secretary Doug Burgum said in a release. "We welcome TotalEnergies' commitment to developing projects that produce dependable, affordable power to lower Americans' monthly bills while providing

secure U.S. baseload power today – and in the future."

Shortly after taking office in January 2025, Trump issued an executive order barring new offshore wind leases and requiring reviews of existing and permitted wind projects.

Last December, the Trump administration, citing risks to national security, ordered work to stop in five offshore wind energy areas on the East Coast, including Dominion Energy's 2.6-gigawatt project based in Hampton Roads, Virginia.

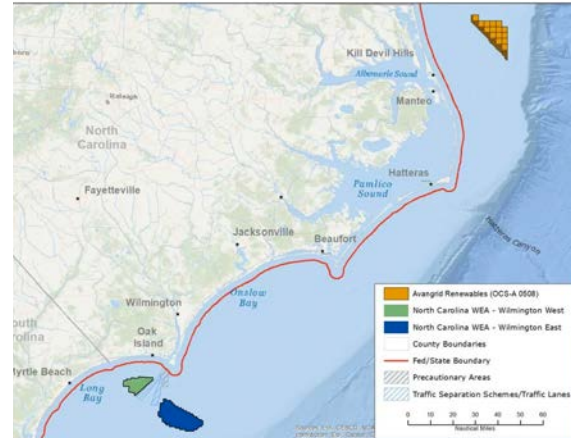
Courts have since allowed all five of the projects to operate for the time being until final judgments are rendered in those cases.

Monday's announcement drew immediate rebuke from opponents who argue the deal sets a dangerous precedent and limits alternative energy production as Americans face rising electricity bills and concerns about the amount of power artificial intelligence data centers use.

"Donald Trump truly can't leave a good thing alone," BlueGreen Alliance Vice President of Federal Affairs Katie Harris said in a release. "His never-ending vendetta against offshore wind shows that he either doesn't understand the affordable energy crisis or that he just doesn't care. Either way, it's clear he's never paid his own electricity bill, and he's determined to raise bills for working people."

Southeastern Wind Coalition Senior Program Manager Karly Brownfield said that the agreement "feels really counterproductive" at a time when people are closely watching their energy costs at home and at the pump

"The whole thing is unprecedented and it's also completely unprecedented to take a lease payment and then refund it in exchange for investment in the natural gas industry. That has never happened before," she said in a telephone interview earlier this week. "Whether you're investing in offshore wind or you're investing in solar or whatever it might be, it's not a great feeling to know that just because you have a project that's permitted or a project that's received all the stamps of approval that it still runs the risk of the plug being pulled halfway down the line. Certainty is what drives business and the more uncertain we make our



energy market the more complicated this is all going to become in the long term."

North Carolina is investing in natural gas, but the gas turbine industry is facing years-out backlogs on turbine orders. Nuclear power, from permitting to production, can take upwards of 15 years to build.

"And the leg up we had with offshore wind was that these projects were leased. Permitting had started. The sites were secured. There was some sort of headway that was made on those projects," Brownfield said.

The Carolina Long Bay wind energy area spans a little more than 110,000 acres roughly 22 miles offshore, south of Bald Head Island.

The area is split into two leases.

In May 2022, Duke Energy paid \$155 million for what equates to a little more than half of the total wind energy area.

In June of that same year, TotalEnergies Renewable USA paid more than \$133 million for the adjacent lease.

Projects in the Carolina Long Bay area were anticipated to generate up to 3 gigawatts of electricity, enough to power about 675,000 homes, and estimated to provide more than \$4 billion in net economic impacts.

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We're Moving!

The Coastal Federation will move into the new Center for Coastal Protection and Restoration this summer – and we can't wait to launch all our new programs!

Before we can dive in, we need your help! Please check out our Wish List of items needed - your gift toward any of these items will help outfit the Center and get us up and running!

Visit www.nccoast.org/CoastalCenter to learn more.

