



# ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

## Spotlight on Shoreline and *Spartina* Marsh Stabilization along the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway

This project rehabilitated tidal marsh areas experiencing degradation from boat traffic along the Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW), by constructing natural breakwaters using oyster reefs. The project engaged over 1,000 community volunteers in shoreline habitat restoration; constructing approximately 0.08 acres of oyster habitat to protect 150 meters of shoreline; and over time creating approximately 0.3 acres of adjacent tidal marsh. Results over time include: increased fish habitat (oyster reef, tidal salt marsh), stabilized shoreline, and improved water quality. The project was identified as a priority by the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership.

In South Carolina, shorelines adjacent to the AIWW are subject to severe erosion due to heavy boat traffic and artificial channelization, which disrupts natural shoreline processes. This erosion destroys or threatens oyster reef and salt marsh habitats. Bagged oyster shells provide a stable substrate for oyster recruitment and create self-sustaining reefs which stabilize the shoreline, promote sediment accretion, and foster salt marsh expansion.



The project is located within the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) along the AIWW, between Rock Creek and Ashepoo River, and drains into St. Helena Sound. The project expanded on a successful demonstration site that was constructed from 2007-09 with state revenue funds.

Recycled oyster shells were bagged and deployed along the AIWW in the Ace Basin NERR by volunteers in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' (SCDNR) community-based oyster restoration program (SCORE). US Fish and Wildlife Service funds were used to pay for a portion of SCDNR employee salaries and use of SCDNR vessels to transport volunteers, shell, fuel, and supplies. The Coastal Conservation Association is also a partner to the project.

Project text and photo provided by SCDNR.



For more information on the Partnership visit us at:  
[www.atlanticfishhabitat.org](http://www.atlanticfishhabitat.org)