



# ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

## Spotlight on Oyster Reef and Salt Marsh Restoration in Stump Sound, North Carolina

### Project Partners

North Carolina Coastal Federation

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Restoration Center

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

US Fish and Wildlife Service

The shoreline in Stump Sound, Holly Ridge, North Carolina, has been experiencing erosion from boat wakes and storms, as well as degradation due to dredging, shoreline hardening, and high harvest pressure on natural oyster reefs, which in turn has led to a reduction in available habitat for estuarine-dependent species. This project will protect 200 ft. of estuarine shoreline in the sound by restoring 0.05 acres of fringing oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) reef and 0.07 acres of tidal salt marsh (*Spartina alterniflora*) habitat. The restored oyster reefs and salt marshes will directly benefit a number of species including red drum, sheepshead, spotted seatrout, weakfish, spot, Atlantic croaker and penaeid shrimp.

Approximately 3,000 bushels of oyster shells will be added to Stump Sound to create a 200' x 12' x 1.5' (L x W x H) reef waterward of the 3,000 salt marsh seedlings that will be planted along the shoreline.

The loose shell will be colonized

by oyster larvae, and will transform it into a

living reef almost immediately. The living reef will protect the adjacent salt marsh, allowing for the *S. alterniflora* seedlings to take root and trap sediments for marsh accretion and increased stabilization.

Through a competitive selection process, the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership chose the N.C. Coastal Federation's project to receive U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funding. This restoration is possible due to a collaborative effort between these organizations and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, the NO.AA Restoration Center, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and 100 volunteers.

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

Project text and photos courtesy of North Carolina Coastal Federation



Restoration Project Area

