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# **Press Release**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dec. 17, 2007

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## **Settlement Results in Better Stormwater Controls**

**Ocean, N.C.** – The N.C. Coastal Federation and Down East Tomorrow, a grassroots citizen group in Carteret County, settled their challenge of a state stormwater permit after the developer of a proposed subdivision on Core Sound agreed to incorporate low-impact development (LID) techniques to better protect one of the cleanest water bodies left along the N.C. coast from polluted stormwater.

After months of negotiations, Core View LLC, the developer of a proposed 24-lot subdivision near Atlantic in eastern Carteret County, agreed to go beyond state stormwater standards and include LID techniques to reduce the flow of stormwater into Core Sound. LID reduces runoff by re-creating the drainage patterns that were present before development. By including practices such as rain gardens, green roofs, bioretention cells, cisterns, swales, and porous pavements, developers can increase runoff infiltration, storage, filtering, evaporation, and detention onsite.

The developer of Core View will build a low earthen berm around much of the subdivision to hold runoff and allow it to infiltrate into the ground rather than flow into the sound or into wetlands on the property. The berm will become a condition of the developer's state stormwater permit.

"We knew that the minimum requirements contained in the original stormwater permit wouldn't adequately protect Core Sound," said Todd Miller, NCCF's executive director. "We're extremely pleased that we've been able to work with the developer to incorporate LID measures that should better protect the sound."

The settlement also shows that coastal property can be developed without sacrificing sensitive waters, noted Gerry Barrett, the president of Down East Tomorrow and a developer himself.

“I would like to thank the developer for his willingness to join us at the table and reach a settlement that works for both of us. We were able to protect the water quality of Core Sound by incorporating these LID techniques into his revised stormwater plan, and Core View is a much better project because of these changes,” Barrett said. “This is a big victory for the people of Down East, our commercial fishermen and women, and the culture and heritage we continue to fight to protect.”

The enhanced stormwater controls that grew out of the negotiations should provide better protection for Core Sound, said Larry Zucchini, the managing partner of Core View LLC.

“Our goal has always been to design a residential development with sustainability and environmental protection in mind,” he said. “We believe that the Core [Viewview](#) project will demonstrate that quality development is not incompatible with maintaining the surface water quality of North Carolina’s rivers and sounds.”

Despite written objections from more than 100 residents of eastern Carteret County, the N.C. Division of Water Quality (DWQ) gave Core View LLC a low-density stormwater permit in August 2006. NCCF and Down East Tomorrow challenged the permit, claiming that it would fail to protect water quality in Core Sound. The sound is classified for shellfish harvesting and as Outstanding Resource Waters, the state’s highest water classification. The groups based their claim largely on DWQ’s own analysis that found that the low-density permits had failed to protect the most sensitive waters along the coast.

The number of acres closed permanently to shellfishing because of high bacteria has increased 13 percent in the 20 years that the coastal stormwater program has been in affect. An additional 40,000 acres often close temporarily after even moderate rainfall. Polluted stormwater runoff is the biggest contributor to coastal water pollution.

Before an administrative law judge heard the permit challenge, the developer and the two groups began negotiating a settlement. The Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) filed the challenge for the groups and handled the subsequent negotiations for them.

“Shellfishing along the Core Banks is not only a staple of the region’s economy, it’s a central part of the region’s heritage and culture,” said Amy Pickle, SELC attorney. “This agreement will help protect these important waters from further damage without sacrificing the Core View development.”

The N.C. Environmental Management Commission devised more effective coastal stormwater regulations to replace the existing flawed rules. The commission is scheduled to vote on the proposed rules in next month.

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***About the North Carolina Coastal Federation:  
“Citizens Working Together for a Healthy Coast”***

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*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. NCCF headquarters are located at 3609 Highway 24 in Ocean between Morehead City and Swansboro and are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 5 pm.*

*The headquarters include NCCF's main offices, the Cape Lookout Coastkeeper office, a gift shop, Nature Library, Weber Seashell Exhibit, ShoreKeeper Learning Center, and adjoining nature trail.*

*The NCCF also operates field offices in Wilmington and Manteo. For more information call 252-393-8185 or check out NCCF's website at [www.ncccoast.org](http://www.ncccoast.org)*