



The Nature Conservancy
Albemarle-Pamlico Sounds Office
701 West Ocean Acres Drive
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948
Tel [252] 441-2525; nature.org

April 15, 2025

U.S. Congressman Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: East Carolina University's Coastal Studies Institute Living Shoreline Restoration Project
and Educational Boardwalk

Dear Honorable Congressman Murphy,

As a representative for The Nature Conservancy, I am pleased to write this letter in support of East Carolina University's Community Project Funding request to complete their living shoreline project along the significantly eroding shoreline of their Coastal Studies Institute on Roanoke Island in Wanchese, NC. The living shoreline will increase the resiliency of the campus by reducing shoreline erosion through the restoration and protection of salt marsh and oyster habitats. The project will also install an educational boardwalk to connect students, researchers and the community with the shoreline and showcase effective techniques that protect shorelines surrounding our communities.

This project bodes well for the health of our estuary systems, our coastal communities and creating an understanding of the stewardship approaches which are necessary to ensure their continued productivity. If funded, we will also be a supporting partner in this project by providing resources, for example boats, technical expertise, and access within our conservation easement to monitor the marsh and shoreline adjacent to the project site.

The Nature Conservancy has been doing conservation work in North-eastern North Carolina for over 35 years and has conserved around 362,000 acres in the area. Our work includes such places as Nags Head Woods Preserve located on Bodie Island in Dare County. Here, we own and manage a 1,200-acre maritime forest with the in conjunction with the Towns of Kill Devil Hills and Nags Head. We also own and manage the Currituck Banks Game Land located in Currituck County on the Outer Banks, where we work with our partners USFWS and the State Coastal Reserve program to oversee all properties in a whole system approach.

The Nature Conservancy's mission is to preserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. The loss of Coastal Plain wetlands increases the threats to the community as it faces sea level rise. Due to the low-lying topography of the landscape around the North-east region it is highly vulnerable to sea level rise and storm surge. This project sets in motion measures to improve the understanding of techniques that improve the health and resilience of these wetland communities that will not only offer a physical buffer to protect our communities but will also extend the life of natural resources upon which the local economy, including fisheries, hunting, farming, and tourism depends.



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The Nature Conservancy finds this to be a beneficial project for the local ecosystem and community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lora Eddy".

Lora Eddy
Conservation and Resilience Specialist



North Carolina
Coastal Federation
Working Together for a Healthy Coast

April 14, 2025

U.S. Congressman Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: East Carolina University's Coastal Studies Institute Living Shoreline Restoration Project and Educational Boardwalk

Dear Congressman Murphy,

I am writing to express the North Carolina Coastal Federation's strong support for the Community Project Funding request to complete a Living Shoreline Restoration Project and Educational Boardwalk at East Carolina University's Coastal Studies Institute on Roanoke Island in Wanchese, NC. The Institute's shoreline is exposed to significant wave energy and is experiencing long-term erosion and loss of salt marshes and oyster habitat. The proposed living shoreline will increase the resiliency of the campus while also creating a long-term learning and educational opportunity for students, researchers, and the community through installation of an educational boardwalk.

Since its establishment in 1982, the Coastal Federation has been committed to improving water quality and habitat along the North Carolina coast. One way we achieve this goal is through the restoration of fringing salt marshes that have been lost due to storms, boat wakes, development impacts, and sea level rise. Our approach involves the use of living shorelines as a natural alternative to bulkheads and seawalls to control shoreline erosion while at the same time protecting and creating valuable estuarine habitat. We have designed, implemented and monitored numerous successful living shorelines throughout the coast.

Thank you for your consideration of this project, and for your service to North Carolina's communities. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Braxton Davis
Executive Director
North Carolina Coastal Federation