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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PUBLIC INVITED TO COASTAL WIND DEVELOPMENT MEETING IN GREENVILLE**

GREENVILLE, N.C.—The N.C. Solar Center, the State Energy Office (SEO) of the N.C. Department of Administration and the Coastal Wind Working Group invite the public to attend a town meeting on coastal wind Thursday from 7:00–8:30 p.m. at the Pitt County Agricultural Extension Auditorium, 403 Government Circle, Greenville.

The meeting, co-hosted and organized by the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation (PTRF) and the Cypress Group of the Sierra Club, is one of three meetings scheduled this summer on coastal wind potential. It will provide a forum for the public to voice questions, concerns, support and/or apprehensions about wind-energy development along North Carolina's coast. Representatives from municipal, county and state government, members of local environmental and business groups, residents, farmers, utility representatives, and even tourists are encouraged to attend, ask questions and learn about this renewable energy resource.

“I think the population is becoming more conscious of where their energy comes from, especially with issues like climate change, energy security and energy independence becoming more pedestrian,” said Lyra Rakusin, Solar Center outreach program manager and organizer of the meetings. “We are on the cusp of changing where most of our energy is sourced, and wind energy should be a big part of that debate, especially in the coast of North Carolina. We hope to open that discussion with the public through these town meetings.”

Solar Center Executive Director Steve Kalland will lead the discussion and field questions from the audience. Bob Leker, SEO renewables program manager, will be present at the forum as well. Leker said he wants to make sure that North Carolina prepares for a future that includes diverse energy resources.

“Through wind mapping and data collection, it is clear that coastal North Carolina has significant wind resources,” said Leker. “Experience around the nation and in Europe shows that wind-power development, responsibly sited, can provide a renewable, environmentally friendly source of power. In addition, wind development can provide an economic boost to local communities and improve energy security.”

“This will be a wonderful opportunity for both advocates and skeptics to learn more about the future of wind energy in eastern North Carolina,” said Mary Alsentzer, PTRF executive director. “We are delighted to have the Solar Center and the State Energy Office bring this forum to Greenville, making it accessible to many people who recreate and live in our coastal region. Both the PTRF and Sierra Club have been interested in this topic for a long time, and we hope that many of our members and the public at large will take advantage of this chance to educate themselves about one of North Carolina’s options for meeting future energy needs.”

Two additional town meetings on coastal wind are scheduled for both July 19 at the Center for Marine Sciences and Technology in Morehead City and Aug. 9 at Jockey’s Ridge State Park in Nags Head. Both will be held at 6:30 p.m.

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