

# Crane's Creek Chronicle

Newsletter of the Crane's Creek Watershed Planning Team



The crane's Creek Local Watershed Planning Team met over the last few months. Tom Blue of BLUE:LWI, presented the Final Watershed Overview of Findings in May, and then again in June for those who missed it. That presentation can be found on the WCO website at : [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO/cranes/cranes\\_current.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO/cranes/cranes_current.html) . It is summarized in this newsletter also. Questions concerning the construction of Route 1 were brought up by the stakeholders. Over the next few months these questions were answered as best as possible.

The remainder of our meetings have been geared toward addressing local concerns and the corresponding recommendations for the Local Watershed Plan. Further work on these recommendations will occur at our September meeting, with a Final Watershed Plan scheduled for presentation at our October meeting.

This issue of our newsletter will attempt to explain the recommendations so far, the Route 1 construction questions, and the Final Watershed Overview of Findings.

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**Our Next Meeting: September 17, 2003 6:30 pm**  
**Cameron Fire Department**

AGENDA: Finalize local recommendations

**Watershed Education for  
Communities  
& Local Officials**

box 8109  
Raleigh, NC 27695-8109  
(919) 515-4525  
[www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO)

## Final Watershed Overview of Findings

Tom Blue of BLUE:LWI presented the final watershed assessment and overview of findings. The presentation can be found on the WECO website: [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO/cranes/cranes\\_current.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO/cranes/cranes_current.html)  
What follows are the main points of Tom's presentation.

Crane's Creek is in overall pretty good shape. Initially placed on the 303(d) list of impaired streams, it did not warrant inclusion here. In fact, it could be considered a benchmark for similar streams in the Sandhills. The creek drains a watershed of 101 square miles. Simplistically, NC has 3 physiographic regions, Mountains, Piedmont, and Coastal, but scientifically it has 9-13 physiographic regions. This takes into account how water infiltrates and travels through a soil. The Sandhills have a very high infiltration rate and they let water out of the soil at a very slow rate. There is very little overland flow, or runoff, from Sandhills soils. The drought of the past few years caused trouble in gathering data. The sediment study conducted by Moore County Cooperative Extension will continue now that the drought is over.

### Zoning:

Harnett county has less restrictive zoning and expanding utility lines. Moore County has more conservative zoning

Because of the good quality of Crane's Creek Watershed, the scope of BLUE:LWI's work was changed to incorporate a larger area to search for wetland and stream mitigation. That larger area search is not presented here.

Crane's Creek Watershed has not had a lot of impacts to this point. There is a cutoff point at which this area can take amore development and changes in the landscape that some other areas, but beyond this point, it is impacted more severely that other areas in NC. The Sandhills have soils like the Coastal Plain, but topography like that of the Piedmont. This is good for stormwater treatment, but does not lend itself well to development. For example replacing low infiltration soils in the Piedmont with impervious surfaces is not nearly as degrading as replacing high infiltration soils of the Sandhills with impervious surfaces.

Currently, water quality in Crane's Creek is good. Proper land management, preservation, and land use planning are needed to retain this water quality in the future.

### 9 Major Take Home Points

- Appears 303(d) listing was not warranted.
- Sandhills is a distinct ecological and hydrophysiographic region that must be assessed as such.
- Limited stream and restoration opportunity in watershed, but important to implement available projects.
- Water quality protection regulations relatively minor or absent in area.
- Significant opportunity for preservation, buffers, and best management practices.
- Drought affected monitoring and sampling during study period.
- Sediment study is continuing.
- Significant development pressures and development potential.
- US Highway #1 (R-210) project has significant issues to be addressed.

## Water Chemistry Update

Rob Breeding of the NC Division of Water Quality presented more findings on water chemistry in Crane's Creek Watershed. Overall the watershed has good water quality. Some creeks, namely Little Cranes and Beaver had very good water quality. Western Moore County Creeks show some elevated nutrient levels, probably due to poultry farms in area. The area has a natural low pH (higher acidity). Copper levels are higher in areas associated with chicken farms and manure land application. It is not a big problem based on biological findings. It can probably be handled by chick management practices. Local governments should keep an eye on this, since soil will not take much copper, thereby leading to runoff.

### Route One Vass Bypass Update

Many questions concerning Route 1 construction were brought up at the meetings. Most of these were not able to be answered by anyone present. In the May 30, 2003 Pilot newspaper of Southern Pines printed an article stating the NC Division of Water Quality (DWQ) has told the NC Division of Transportation (DOT) that the DOT is in violation of certain environmental rules concerning the construction of the Route 1 Vass Bypass. A Notice of Violation (NOV) dated May 5, 2003 lists the specific complaints the DWQ found concerning the DOT construction. The NOV refers to potential violations of the DOT's 401 permit requirements. A 401 permit is essentially a verification by the state that a given project will not degrade "Waters of the State" or otherwise violate water quality standards. More about 401 permits can be found at <http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/ncwetlands/basic401.html>

At the May and June meetings, stakeholders debated writing a letter from the team to show support for water quality regulations in the Crane's Creek watershed. In the July meeting, they made a decision to write a letter asking for more information on the topic. For their information, the NOV was obtained and mailed to the stakeholders, along with a letter from the Wetlands Restoration Program explaining the current situation. The NOV is under consideration by the DOT and DWQ, and the agencies are discussing and negotiating compliance issues for the 401 permit. Currently there is no more information available until intra-agency discussions are finished. An official letter from the stakeholders would not help further anything to the stakeholders advantage at this point in time. This was explained to the stakeholders at our August meeting, along with how to get further information. Further information can be obtained from the NCDWQ Fayetteville Regional Office. The office number is: 910-486-1541.

### Some Local Recommendations

Recommendations have not yet been solidified. In September, we will present what we have so far, and decide what will be placed in the Final Local Watershed Plan. The following are the recommendations so far:

- Local watershed based education, possibly through state sponsored Project WET and Streamwatch programs
- Local governments should educate about and support existing revegetation rules concerning utilities and forestry practices.
- Local governments should investigate the impacts of development on urban stormwater runoff.
- Local sediment and erosion control ordinances: There is some question whether a local ordinance would be better than the current state mandated rules. This section will be written as an educational point. With the recommendation that the local governments need to proactive in this area and do what will best protect their waterways.

### May 21 , 2003 Meeting Roster

Ken Averitte, NC DWQ  
 Patrick Beggs, WECO  
 Amber Coleman, BLUE: LWI  
 Gene Frazelle, Woodlake Committee  
 Marsh Smith, landowner  
 Jim Stanfill, NC WRP

### June 18, 2003 Meeting Roster

Ken Averitte, NC DWQ  
 Patrick Beggs, WECO  
 Tom Blue, BLUE: LWI  
 Harold Brady, Consulting Forester  
 Rob Breeding, NCDWQ – WARP  
 Bert Coffey, Moore County Cooperative Extension  
 Elizabeth Forbes, landowner  
 Jerry Hall, SWCD. - Moore County  
 Laura Lee Matthews, landowner  
 Christy Perrin, WECO  
 Jim Stanfill, NC WRP  
 Hughie White, NCDENR – DWQ  
 Vince Zucchini, SALT-Sandhills Area Land Trust

### July 16, 2003 Meeting Roster

Ken Averitte, NC DWQ  
 Patrick Beggs, WECO  
 Harold Brady, Consulting Forester  
 Deborah Branson, teacher/landowner  
 Bonnie Duncan, NC WRP  
 Elizabeth Forbes, landowner  
 Gene Frazelle, Woodlake  
 Jerry Hall, SWCD. - Moore County  
 Rosemary Maurath, Woodlake  
 Christy Perrin, WECO  
 Hughie White, NCDENR – DWQ

### August 20, 2003 Meeting Roster

-Ken Averitte, NC DWQ  
 -Patrick Beggs, WECO  
 -Billy Campbell, farmer  
 -Elizabeth Forbes, landowner  
 -Gene Frazelle, Woodlake  
 -Suzanne Klimek, NC WRP  
 -Rosemary Maurath, Woodlake  
 -Christy Perrin, WECO



**LEON DANIELSON  
 CHRISTY PERRIN  
 PATRICK BEGGS  
 KIM McCLAIN**

**WE ARE WECO**

**919-515-4525  
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 Raleigh, NC 27695-8109  
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