

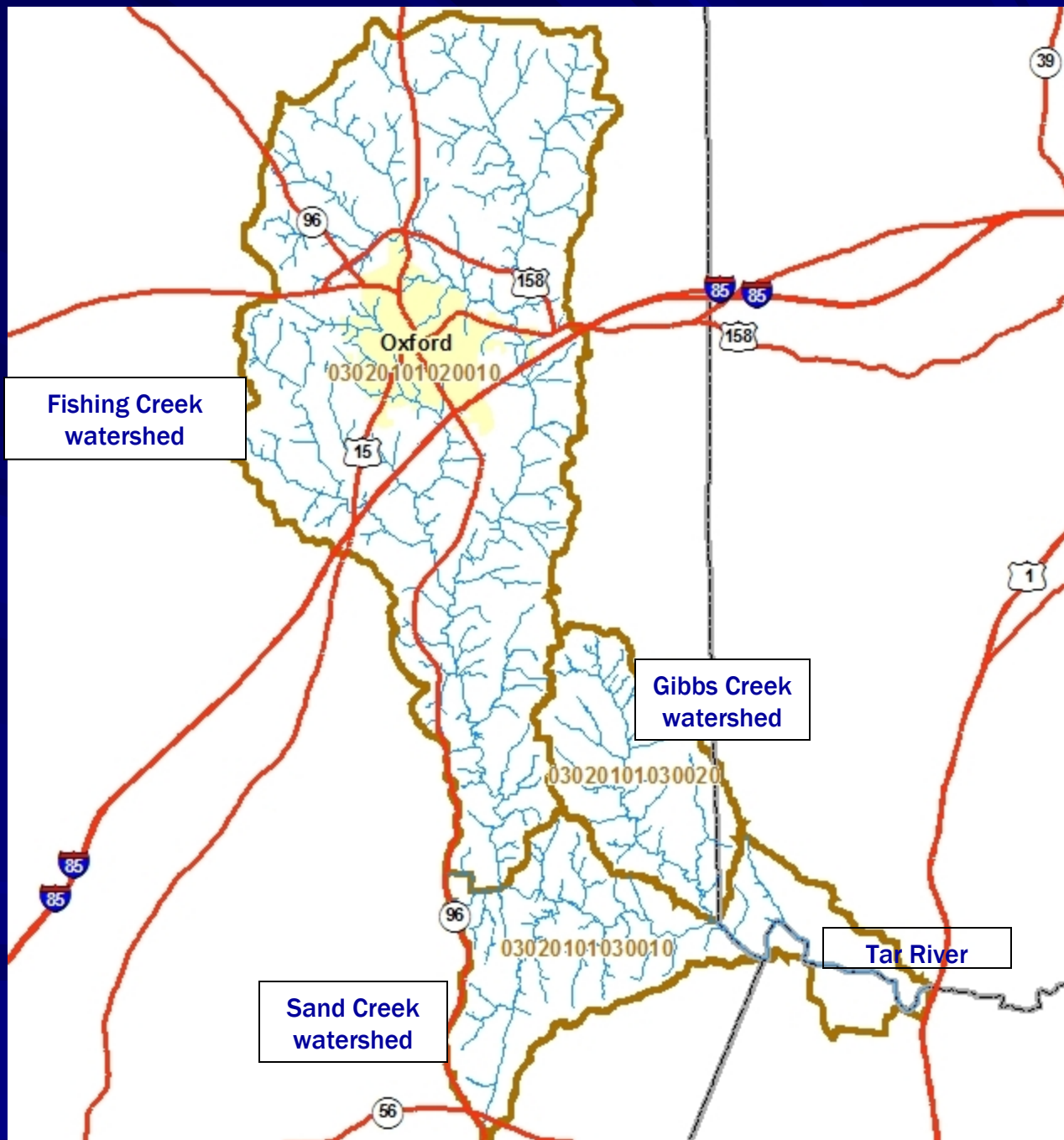
# Local Watershed Planning in Fishing Creek

an overview

by WECO, NC Cooperative Extension

## Fishing Creek Local Watershed Planning

- The Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP) is undertaking local watershed planning in the Fishing Creek watershed and two adjoining watersheds, Gibbs and Sand.
- Please see the map on the next slide for the planning area.



Fishing Creek watershed

Gibbs Creek watershed

Sand Creek watershed

Tar River

Oxford

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# EEP is:

- Ecosystem Enhancement Program
- part of DENR, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.
- a completely non-regulatory agency
- charged with mitigating for the loss of wetland and stream habitat

# What does mitigation mean?

When streams/wetlands are destroyed or degraded, EEP must find other streams/wetlands to replace their function, preferably in the same watershed area.

This may mean preserving good quality areas, or restoring poor quality areas.

One reason for mitigation is to lessen the overall affect of development, including road construction.

# Who pays for this?

- Much of EEP's money comes from the Dept. of Transportation. When DOT builds a road, they must pay into a fund to mitigate for stream/wetland loss.
- In addition, EEP receives money from Tar Pam and Neuse nutrient and buffer rules. In short, these rules require payment if stream buffers are disturbed, or excessive nutrients are put into streams. The money is used to mitigate for the damages.

# What is Local Watershed Planning?

- One way EEP finds mitigation projects.
- Involves the local community to help find the projects.
- Results in a local watershed plan (LWP) which includes a list of on the ground projects that may be used for mitigation.
- May also include policy, education, and other project recommendations to protect these natural resources.

# Who is involved in local watershed planning?

- Stakeholders – all the parties or interests that play a role in the area, including EEP, local governments, NRCS, Soil and Water, private citizens, state agencies, commercial/industry, and civic groups
- Technical Team – an environmental consulting firm and natural resource agencies
- Facilitators – WECO - to help organize the process, and be a point of contact for stakeholders

# Why involve stakeholders?

- It is more likely that the recommendations found in a local watershed plan will be accepted and acted upon by local decision makers if the recommendations come from a group of people representing various interests that have come together to discuss the issues.

# The EEP mission:

- To restore, enhance and protect watershed functions, which include:
  - Water quality
  - Habitat (both aquatic and terrestrial)
  - Hydrology (water flow)

# *Local Watershed Planning brings about the best projects*



# 4 phases of local watershed planning

- 1: collect available data about the watershed; determine what data is missing
- 2 write preliminary findings report; involve stakeholders; gather missing data; find possible projects; make recommendations
- 3: write a local watershed plan; prioritize the final recommendations
- 4: begin enacting recommendations; contacting landowners

# The result:

- Recommendations to local governments to help protect the watershed
  - e.g. - education, policy, development
- A list of possible in ground projects to help restore the watershed
  - e.g. - stream restorations and stormwater management projects
  - this list provides funding agencies with the criteria they need to fund these projects

# Who is involved:

- Ecosystem Enhancement Program
  - Rob Breeding, project manager
- Watershed Education for Communities and Officials (WECO) NCSU
  - Patrick Beggs & Christy Perrin
  - Responsible for stakeholder process and community involvement
  - [www.ncsu.edu/weco](http://www.ncsu.edu/weco)      919-515-4525
- W. K Dickson, environmental consultant
  - Jeff Keaton
- Stakeholders