



New Hanover County
Local Watershed Planning Group

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, April 4, 2001 meeting held at the Cape Fear Riverwatch Educational Ctr.

Mark your calendar! Next month's meeting is scheduled for Tuesday instead of Wednesday!

Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 1, 2001

- ◆ Presentation on Urban Stormwater Run-off and Best Management Practices (BMPs), Bill Hunt, NC Cooperative Extension Service
- ◆ Presentation on the City of Wilmington's Stormwater Program, David Mayes

The meeting will be held at the Cape Fear Riverwatch Educational Center from 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. The public is welcome to observe.

Group Members/alternates present:

Jim Bordeaux, Castle Hayne Steering Committee
Joe Blair, NC Department of Transportation
Curt Hensyl, Local watershed resident/ International Paper
David Mayes, City of Wilmington
Marian McPhaul, UNCW
Stacy Smaltz/Bouty Baldrige, Cape Fear River Watch
Tommy Tew, Corbett Timber Co.
Michael Pope, Sierra Club, Wrightsboro Community

Group members not present:

Don Cooke, CP&L
Jabe Hardee, Cameron Company
Karen Moorefield, Carolina Heights Neighborhood
Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover Co. Planning
Dick Loeffert, Northchase HOA

Support staff & guests present:

Larry Hobbs, NCWRP
Bonnie Duncan, NCWRP
Suzanne Klimek, NCWRP
Christy Perrin, WECO/NCSU
Sunny Snider, WECO/NCSU
Kevin Schneider, Cape Fear River Watch volunteer
John Feely
Stephen Hughes

Updates and Group Progress

The group spent their April meeting discussing other watershed initiatives and potential projects and the current status of the subcatchment selection. Group members also spent some time discussing their progress by asking two questions: 1) what about the process is working, and 2) what can be improved. Each member had a chance to express their satisfaction and concerns about the group's procedures thus far. Finally, the group defined a strategy for moving forward and brainstormed for informational needs.

Update on Water Quality Initiatives Within the Watershed

Della Dennis, City of Wilmington

Della provided the group with an update on outreach and education initiatives within the watershed. Currently, the City of Wilmington is applying for an EPA grant concerned with clean water initiatives. This grant will provide funding for water quality education and outreach within the community. Della would like to create examples of best management practices (BMPs), examples of restoration areas, and BMP installation workshops to educate the public and get community members involved. After all, no water quality initiatives will really succeed without the support of local community members! Della's projects will target on small areas at first, focusing on residents' backyards, and move outward into neighboring communities. The efforts of the New Hanover County Local Watershed Planning group will be incorporated into Della's education and outreach plans.

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Larry Hobbs, NCWRP

Larry provided the group with an update on restoration activities in the area. He described a small stream restoration project at the Pine Valley Golf Course. Currently, a feasibility study of approximately 1,000 feet of stream is underway with the potential for even more. There will be a workshop at Pine Valley when the project is complete to give participants a good idea of how stream restoration works in coastal areas. Larry is constantly looking for good restoration sites so let him know if you are aware of any potential restoration areas.

Bonnie Duncan, NCWRP

Bonnie provided the group with an update on the status of subcatchment selection. Joe and Bonnie have been working hard to scale back the activities outlined in Major Task 2 as the costs proposed for this task were very high. As soon as Joe gives Bonnie new cost estimates based on the abridged Major Task 2, the WRP will be able to make the final determination of which subcatchments will undergo further study. Bonnie offered thanks to Della and Larry for their presentations and emphasized the importance of having willing landowners to provide land for restoration projects. Della's education and outreach efforts may reach landowners that would not otherwise be a part of water quality activities.

Questions for Bonnie:

Q: Has Joe started field work yet?

A: Joe has started field work in Burnt Mill Creek. The WRP asked for field work in Burnt Mill creek in the original proposal in anticipation of the group's concern for this creek.

Q: What will be included in the model Joe is creating?

A: Joe will model the entire watershed. It will be more detailed in some areas, but will include the entire watershed.

Check-In with Group's Process

Everyone in the group was given the opportunity to discuss their progress by asking two questions:

- 1) What about the process is working? And
- 2) What can be improved?

The group's comments are outlined below.

What about the process is working?

- The process is very educational, group members felt they are learning a lot.
- Good organization
- The information provided to the group has been good.
- The consultant has done a good job providing technical information in an understandable fashion.
- Group members are becoming "ambassadors of the watershed."
- Good meeting location.
- Agree with the purpose and impetus of the process.
- Suzanne's cake!

What can be improved?

- The consulting services' methodologies could be more communicative. Group members had concerns about what was incorporated and what was not incorporated into the report.
- Issues that are agreed upon by the group are getting lost in the meeting minutes. A summary of the group's agreements could be summarized separately.
- Need more information on the RFP. What is included in the RFP? Is the money in the right places? What exactly will the consultant be doing?
- The group may be moving a little slowly.
- Areas outside of those chosen for further study need to be addressed. Landowners in these areas

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should be contacted.

- The group needs to better understand WRP's purpose and needs in order to provide as much help as possible.
- The group needs a better understanding of how to move from planning to implementation. How will the group help implement water quality initiatives?
- The group could use a better sense of purpose and perspective.

Questions

Q: How did you choose the consultant?

A: A RFP was developed and submitted to consultants. Each consultant provided WRP with a bid and, as a state agency, WRP chose the lowest bidder.

Q: What is the purpose of the WRP?

A: The purpose of the WRP is to implement restoration strategies and other strategies for water quality.



Hope to See You at the Earth Day Festival!

The New Hanover County Local Watershed Group will have a display at the Earth Day festival that is staffed by volunteers from the Group. The festival date is Saturday, April 21 from 10:00 am to 6:00 p.m.

Framework for Moving Forward

- Develop a common knowledge base
 - Define information needed to understand watershed concerns.
 - Define problem causes and solutions.
 - Prepare to use the consultant's study results to develop solutions.
 - Each person has their own knowledge base. It is important to the group's progress for everyone to have the same understanding of the current and best available science.
- Go through each subcatchment to determine which problems exist where and choose appropriate solutions.

To move forward, the group must return to their original six concerns for the watershed (water quality, flooding, growth & development, habitat, quality of life, and education) and determine what informational needs exist within each category.

The information can be provided in many different forms such as presentations, articles, summaries of scientific literature, fact sheets, etc.

Group members discussed educational needs for each concern at the meeting. Their discussions and concerns follow.

Water Quality

Group members should understand the following water quality issues in order to move forward with the planning process:

- Fecal Coliform
- Nutrients
- Sediment (turbidity)
- Delivery of pollutants through urban stormwater run-off and changes in hydrology

Bill Hunt will give a presentation on urban storm water run-off at the next meeting.

Comment: The first three issues (fecal coliform, nutrients, and sediment) have been covered.

Comment: Mike Mallin has a recent paper on growth and development and land use vs. fecal coliform.

Q: What does “changes in hydrology” mean?

A: Land use changes that alter the natural flow and infiltration of water into the ground- ditching for example. This was included because a study by Nancy White showed that in a watershed with very little impervious surface there was still high levels of fecal coliform due to changes in hydrology. We can share her research with the group.

Q: Should we have Mike Mallin come to talk about what he is doing for Major Task 2?

A: It’s a possibility!

Barbara Doll, with the Stream Restoration Institute, may give a presentation on stream morphology and ecology.

Flooding

Detailed flooding information will be provided in Major Task 2 for the chosen subcatchments. What else does the group need to know about flooding?

Q: Is Joe using real information from the City of Wilmington about storm events?

A: Yes.

Comment: Traditionally, during times of flooding people simply tried to get rid of the water from their property. Water was moved away without treatment.

Q: What are the different options for improving storage capacity? Are there any areas that have done this?

A: An option is a stormwater retention pond, an example is Randall Pond in Wilmington.

Q: What are the options for dealing with flooding? How do you control for flooding without sending water and pollutants straight to streams?

A: Bill Hunt will give a presentation on stormwater run-off that will address portions of this issue. Dave Mayes will then give a presentation on how stormwater manifests as a problem in Wilmington.

Comment: FEMA and state money has been provided

to Wilmington for a floodplain re-mapping initiative. The re-mapping efforts are being focused on areas that need to be re-mapped. For instance, Burnt Mill Creek will be re-mapped in great detail. Information on how the watershed will be re-mapped is available if the group thinks this information would be helpful.

Comment: Previously, to get a septic permit, a lot was required to “perc”. With a city sewer system, lots are no longer required to perc. Therefore, houses may be built on hydric soils with minimal drainage that will flood.

Q: A home does not have to be in the floodplain to suffer from flooding?

A: No, it just has to be built on hydric soils. Topography can also dictate flooding.

Comment: In order to curb flooding there are three options: 1) Move the house; 2) Build a drainage system; or 3) Raise the house.

Q: How do you get rid of the water from flooding and remove pollutants as well?

Comment: Areas that have been annexed may include subdivisions that don’t have a stormwater plan. These areas are now City problems.

Comment: Dave may be able to address some of these concerns in his presentation at the next meeting.

Growth and Development

Information needs concerning growth and development include:

- Presentations by Bill Hunt and Dave Mayes at the next meeting will provide some information on urban stormwater and growth and development.
- The Watershed Round Table in Wilmington may have some information on urban stormwater run-off.
- Gordon Cashion and Marshall Claussen may be good references for information regarding the thoroughfare plan.

Comment: Creation of a subcommittee for reviewing information that requires expertise may increase the efficiency of this portion of the process.

Q: Can a subcommittee review the amendments to Major Task 2 and report back to the group?

Wildlife Habitat

Information needs concerning wildlife habitat include:

- Feasibility information – is it feasible to have wildlife habitat in urban areas?
- Define an objective for wildlife habitat.

Comment: Years ago an environmental group tried to implement a Natural Heritage Inventory by the NC Natural Heritage Program. What is this and what can it do?

A: We may want to contact Richard LeBlond with the NC Natural Heritage Program.

Comment: If you do a restoration project, the wildlife will come. Ibis, Kingfishers, and killdeer have been spotted at the Kerr Avenue project.

Quality of Life

The group may want to define a definition of quality of life to include in the watershed plan.

Education

Education is not simply a concern, but also a solution to watershed problems. First the group must decide on which problem they will address and work education into the watershed plan as a part of their solutions.

*For more information about the New Hanover County Local Watershed Planning Group, contact Christy Perrin at (919) 515-4542
email: christy_perrin@ncsu.edu*

Action Item:

The group decided that next month's meeting will be on Tuesday instead of Wednesday. The meeting will be on **Tuesday May 1st** at the usual time and place!

Action Item:

Group members will think about defining quality of life for the watershed plan. The group will discuss this definition at a later date.

Action Item:

Tommy Tew and David Mayes will review the amendments to Major Task 2 and report back to the group and NCWRP staff

Action Item:

WECO staff will prepare an ongoing list of agreements made by the group.

Information Sources Identified:

- ◆ Bill Hunt, NCSU (Stormwater runoff and treatment options)
- ◆ David Mayes (Wilmington Stormwater program)
- ◆ Richard LeBlond, N.C. Natural Heritage Program (Natural Heritage inventory)
- ◆ Gordon Cashion, Marshall Claussen, NCDOT (Transportation plans in the watershed)
- ◆ Nancy White, NCSU College of Design, (paper on hydrology and bacteria will be provided to group)
- ◆ Barbara Doll, NCSU Stream Restoration Institute (stream morphology and ecology)