



New Hanover County
Local Watershed Planning Group

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, May 1, 2002 meeting held at the Cape Fear River Watch.
Summaries available on WECO website: www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO

PLEASE NOTE THAT IN LIEU OF A REGULAR GROUP MEETING IN JUNE, THE GROUP WILL HOST A **COMMUNITY MEETING FOR BURNT MILL CREEK LANDOWNERS –TIME, DATE AND LOCATION YET TO BE DETERMINED.** FLIERS WILL BE MAILED TO GROUP MEMBERS WITH TIME, DATE, AND LOCATION OF COMMUNITY MEETING. GROUP MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY MEETING.

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, July 10

Agenda:

- ◆ **Debrief from June community meeting**
- ◆ **Update on project implementation efforts**
- ◆ **Review Watershed Plan draft**

Group Members/alternates present:

Bouty Baldrige, Cape Fear River Watch
Michael Pope, Sierra Club, Wrightsboro Community
Dick Loeffert, Northchase Homeowners Association
Jim Bordeaux, Castle Hayne Steering Committee
David Mayes, City of Wilmington
Tommy Tew, Corbett Timber Co.
Don Cooke, CP & L
Marian McPhaul, Lower Cape Fear River Program
Stacy Smaltz, Burnt Mill Creek
Jabe Hardee, Cameron Co.

Support staff & guests present:

Patrick Beggs, WECO/NCSU
Bonnie Duncan, NC WRP
Jason Jolley, WECO/NCSU
Deborah Amaral, Cape Fear River Assembly
Scott Logal, Cape Fear COG

Project Implementation Updates

Maids Park

Bonnie informed the group that a letter was sent to individuals in this area concerning the restoration opportunity. Jabe Hardee gave permission for WRP to look at Cameron Company’s property. We have also contacted a property owner who lives in Maryland. We still have some gaps to fill-in and may need to contact community leaders. This project is a lower priority than Burnt Mill Creek/Mineral Springs.

Burnt Mill Creek/Mineral Springs confluence

Bonnie informed the group that WRP had received many responses, but a community meeting may help us to reach more people and obtain a continuous segment of stream for restoration. The potential for stream restoration is greater than originally reported by KCI, meaning that if property owners were interested, we could restore more than just 3,000 ft. Dave is working with the City of Wilmington on developing a memorandum of understanding for Mineral Springs Branch. We need to inform landowners that we only need an easement or purchase of 10-20 feet for a stream buffer.

Prince George’s Creek Burton Steel Project

Jim Burton described the project opportunity to the Burton Steel secretary, but has not heard back. This project is being considered, but the Burnt Mill Creek project is a priority.

Questions about projects:

Q: Have you given consideration that purchasing a section of a lot would make the lot non-conforming, so that it could not be built on due to set back regulations. Would you have to purchase the whole lot?

A: WRP can not buy the whole lot because we can not buy existing buildings. We would have to consider easements, and we have not gotten far enough into the process to discuss this specific issues.

Q: Where is the funding coming from for restoring more than 3,000 feet of stream if we are in a budget crisis?

A: The consultant gave a price quote for 3,000 linear feet stream segments. That doesn't mean we can not do more restoration. This project is larger because there are three 3,000 linear feet stream segments. This is an important area, but only one of these three 3,000 linear feet stream segments was identified in the restoration opportunities booklet. The funding for these projects comes from DOT mitigation. Burnt Mill Creek is 303(d) listed, so it is important.

Q: Can a wetland project be funded at Northchase community?

NCWRP can not legally fund a Northchase project from our mitigation funds because it is a flooding problem and not a water quality problem. WRP can not pay for these projects this year because the funding for flexible projects was removed for this fiscal year.

Q: You are looking at future mitigation impacts; what about Smith Creek Parkway?

A: We do have some mitigation for Highway 17, but not for Smith Creek Parkway. These mitigations are for 2003-2004 and cannot be used for mitigation outside of DOT.

Q: Can the money be used to reroute water? We are concerned about water that is being rerouted in Prince George's Creek and affects our watershed (from Futch's Creek)

A: No, we can not reroute water because it is not in our 14-digit hydrologic unit.

Q: What is the pollution source in Burnt Mill Creek?

A: There is no biological activity (i.e. insects) and the source of pollution is nonpoint source pollution, including sedimentation and fecal coliform from pet waste.

DECISION: A community meeting for Burnt Mill Creek landowners will be held on Thursday, June 20, at the Forest Hills Elementary School.

Follow-up: WECO and WRP are still working to set up the community meeting. The time, date, and location will be sent to each group member.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Stacy Smaltz volunteered to distribute the fliers and help with a community meeting for Burnt Mill Creek.**
- **WECO/WRP will make fliers and send to Stacy in early June. The fliers should contain information on creek degradation, economic**

advantages to restoration, and include goals for stream restoration without misleading the public about its benefits.

- **Dave Mayes will arrange refreshments for the meeting**
- **WECO/WRP will write a press release and submit it to Bouty.**
- **Bouty will pass on the press release to Garreth McGraf and Si Cantwell (local reporters)**

Additional discussion:

The group discussed the benefits of the stream restoration projects. Concern was expressed about giving the public the impression that stream restoration will significantly improve water quality. The Group agreed on the need to be clear about what may be accomplished, in particular that the proposed stream restorations could provide data on the effectiveness of restoration in restoring the watershed's functions.

Implementation of Projects

Bonnie introduced Deborah Amaral, who will help NCWRP with implementing projects in the Cape Fear River Basin. Bonnie informed the group that WRP and WECO drove around the watershed viewing BMP sites. A few stood out as appropriate, and some were difficult to view because of vegetation. A site near AAI seemed appropriate, but some doubts exist about sites at Belleview and the cemetery near 15th street.

Letter to Environmental Management Commission Concerning Stormwater Requirements

This was brought up at the last meeting because innovative BMPs are not allowed by the state. A win-win situation may be to use existing wetlands for stormwater treatment, rather than destroying them. Presently, wetlands are destroyed and stormwater detention ponds are being put in place.

The state's new EPA Phase II stormwater permitting rule is currently undergoing public review.

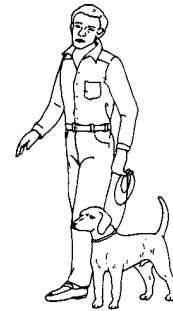
ACTION ITEMS:

- **WRP will try to get existing stormwater rules**
- **Tommy Tew will contact the Land Use Council to determine their interest and problems.**
- **Dave Mayes will provide some examples of problems with current rules.**

GREENFIELD LAKE PET WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS

Presented by Dave Mayes

Dave handed out a summary of recommendations for reducing pet waste pollution developed by the Greenfield Lake Committee. The objective of the committee is to increase public awareness. They are addressing lawn care, illicit discharge, and public safety. The next step is to contact neighborhood associations and conduct an informational mailing to registered pet owners. They are also seeking more pet receptacles in Green Field Lake. At this time they are unsure how implementation of recommendations will occur.



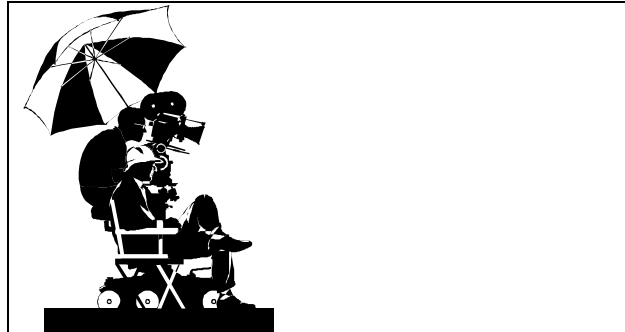
The New Hanover Group discussed enforcement of the Wilmington pet waste ordinance. A group member mentioned that fines could be used to implement the pet waste recommendations, but concern was raised that these cases are considered “minor” in court and are typically thrown out. The Group discussed the option of the court adding an “Environmental Court” day, so that environmental infractions would be given their due attention in court. Wildlife infractions could be considered on the same day.

ACTION ITEM: Marian McPhaul agreed to bring the Group information on Environmental Court days for the Group to consider. After considering the information, the group will decide if they want to recommend for an Environmental Court Day in the New Hanover County Plan and also include wildlife infractions.

**LETTER TO NEW HANOVER COUNTY REGARDING
STORMWATER ROUNDTABLE**

Jabe Hardee noted that he could not support the recommendations because of his concern for private property rights related to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). While the document is related to development and forestry, some group members had a problem with the UDO and its treatment of vegetation and timber. In particular, agriculture and forestry is not specifically exempted from the UDO. Other members wanted to review the administrative code and UDO before they can give a dissent or support. It was noted that a comment could be added to the letter to New Hanover County noting the lack of an exemption for agriculture and forestry.

ACTION: WECO will re-word the letter to attempt to adequately express some members’ concerns about the lack of exemption for agriculture and silviculture in the UDO and the Roundtable recommendations.



Help us make a training video!!

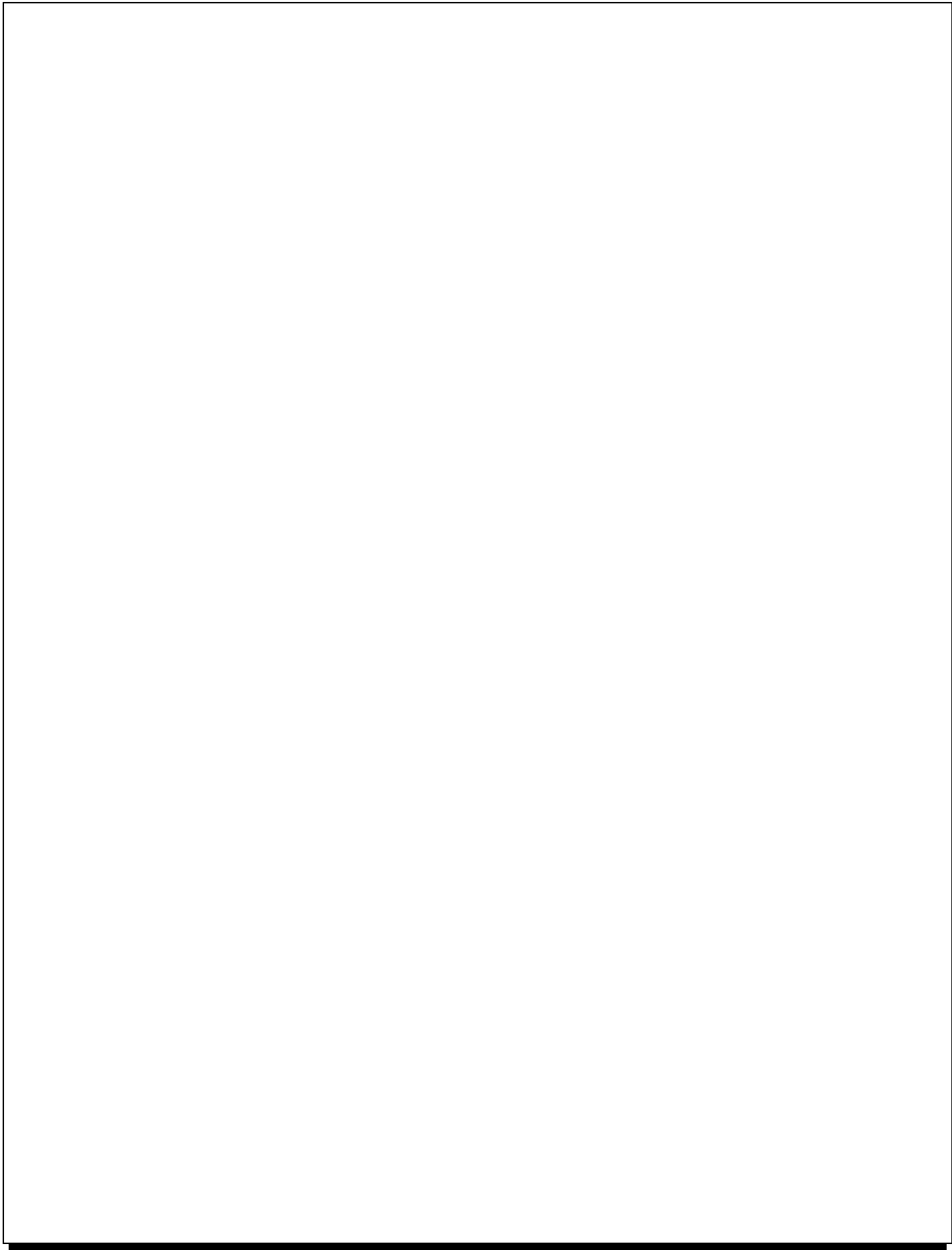
WECO and Steve Smutko, Natural Resources Leadership Institute, have recently received a small grant from the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service to make a training video on collaborative watershed groups and the principles that make them successful. We will be highlighting the efforts of the New Hanover Watershed Group in this video.

We will be filming footage for the video at our **July 10 meeting**, and hope to interview Group members individually (on camera) before the meeting. We will contact Group members prior to the meeting to provide the questions ahead of time and inform of the specifics of our shooting schedule.

We look forward to working with you on this exciting project! Contact Christy if you have any questions at (919) 515-4542 or christy_perrin@ncsu.edu.

**What does the New Hanover Local
Watershed Plan look like?!**

Good question! WECO is compiling a summary of the Group’s activities, decisions, recommendations, and actions to serve as their Watershed Plan. WECO will send drafts for the Group to review for accuracy and to help edit. The Plan will not be written in stone, but will act as a guidance document for agencies and the watershed community.



For more information about the New Hanover
County Local Watershed Planning Group, or to
be removed from this mailing list, contact
Christy Perrin or Jason Jolley at (919)515-4542
Email: christy_perrin@ncsu.edu