

NEXT TICK CREEK MEETING IS TUES., MAY 26

1:00 P.M.-3:00 P.M

Chatham Agricultural Building,
Pittsboro. Snacks provided.

Meeting objectives are to:

- See Final GIS maps
- Discuss strategies & subwatersheds
- Review RRHF educational presentation
- Share activities you are working on



MANY WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

For announcements by email send your email address to Christy_perrin@ncsu.edu or call Christy Perrin at (919) 515-4542 to receive paper copies.

Tick Creek Watershed meetings are open to the public- feel free to join us! We meet as needed- meetings are announced on the listserve. All documents will be posted on the project website:

www.ncsu.edu/weco/rocky



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Tick Creek in the Spring

Since the Tick Creek Watershed Group's last meeting on January 27, the project team has been researching incentives for landowners to participate in projects, and finishing up the geodatabase and maps. The team is also working on finding a demonstration project site to implement a suite of riparian best management practices.

A summary of discussion from the January meeting and of the final maps are included within this issue of the Tick Times. Presentations and documents relating to this project are posted online at the project website www.ncsu.edu/weco/rocky

Agricultural BMPs in Chatham Co

Thanks to Sam Groce, Chatham County Extension's Livestock Agent, for providing a presentation on riparian BMPs at the last meeting. Sam works closely with the County Soil and Water Conservation District to help landowners get projects in the ground. BMPs are not a new idea in Chatham County. Between 2004-2008, landowners fenced out 133,000 linear feet of stream, installed 10 stream crossings, and 30 wells on beef cattle farms, and 90 watering systems (see above picture). Poultry producers installed 19 dry stacks (a waste management BMP). These projects were funded partially by NC Agricultural Cost Share and federal funds through the Farm Bill.

Chatham is a leading county for these projects in the nation. Marketing projects requires discussing how the activities improve production, make money, and make the farm nicer. Projects would provide multiple benefits for landowners and Tick Creek, and should be advertised as such.

Agricultural BMPs in Tick Creek

(Continued from page 1)

Sam provided an example of installing fencing and a watering system— on his own land. He did a stream exclusion project— fencing his cattle out of the stream with funding assistance. His project was cost effective since he did the labor himself. A subsequent watering system cost him \$550, and additionally he had to pay somebody to help him install it.

Landowners experience benefits of the projects. For example, if you install a watering system, most cattle will use it immediately, preferring it to a creek. The water is cleaner and at a better temperature. Cattle are documented as healthier.

Other upland BMPs address pasture , crop, and waste management. Rotational grazing is an example. Extension and SWCD are teaching that cattle are mowers – by moving them around you can keep the grass short without removing it. Fences allow farmers to subdivide paddocks; providing water allows more flexibility.

Questions and discussion:

Can federal funds (EPA) be used to pay for the NC Agricultural Cost Share match of 25%?

The application process for Ag Cost Share happens at a certain time of the year in the County, and the cost share does not apply to restoration activities. It complicates the application if restoration or riparian enhancement is completed before the landowner's application moves forward.



Stream crossings provide hardened, protected areas for cattle to cross

Comment— if a EPA319 grant application proposed doing agricultural BMPs, you need to document that the need exceeds the supply of ag cost share.

Participants briefly discussed how you would do this, and are unsure of how to document it. This will be important if the group decides to apply for more EPA319 funding in early 2011.

How much fencing and stream stabilization will we be able to fund with the EPA grant?

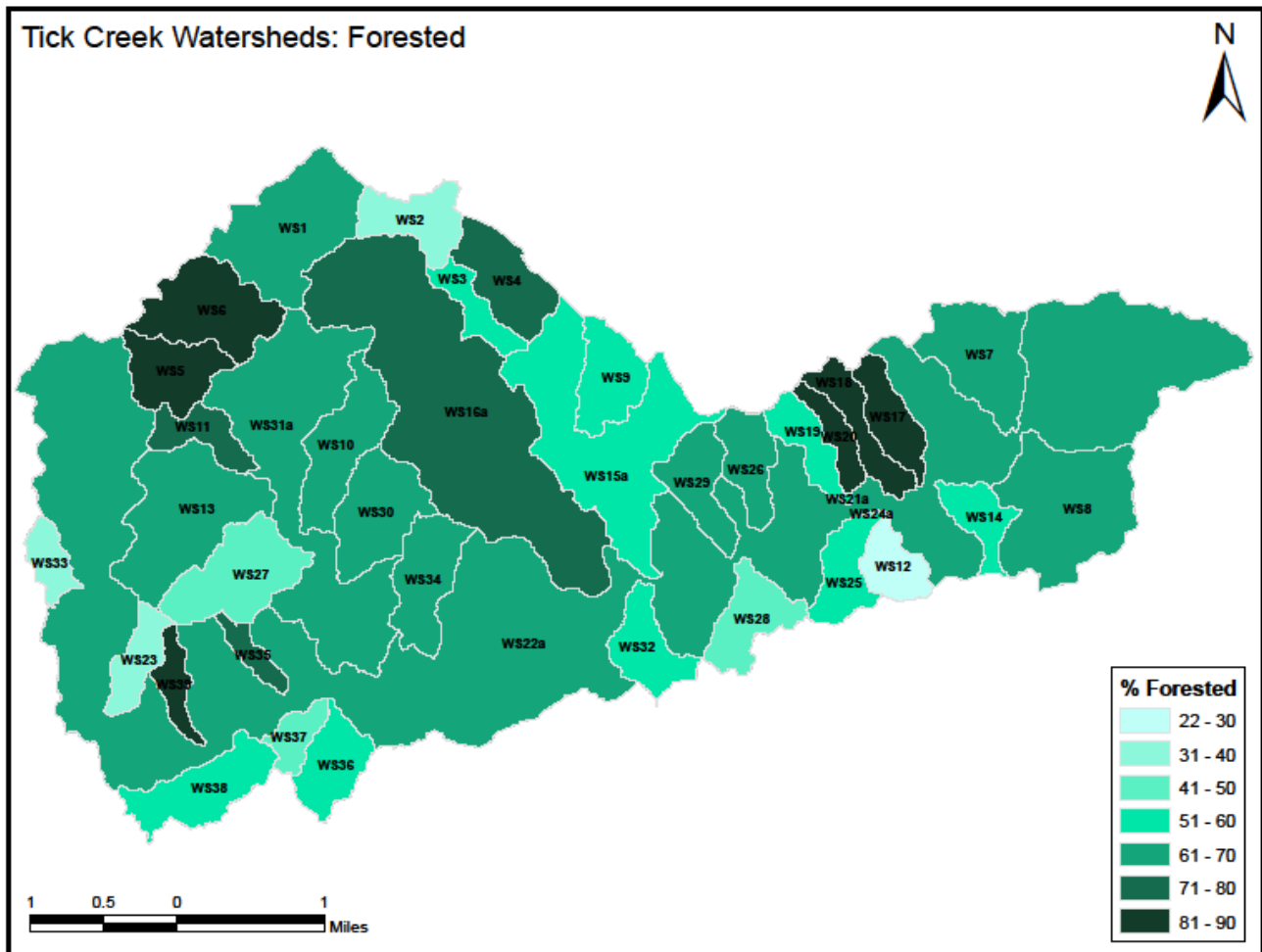
Christy responded— not a lot, our funding is essentially “seed funding” to get a few projects in the ground.



Final Mapping Products to Help with Tick Creek Strategies

Raj Butalia has finished compiling data from Tick Creek into a geodatabase, and has created maps from this data to help increase understanding of the Tick Creek watershed. The maps can help stakeholders to think about what strategies might be applied in different areas. For example, the team may want to contact landowners of forested areas that contain important species for voluntary conservation easements. PDFs of each of the maps are posted on the project website— look to the right hand side of the page under “Resources” and click on “Tick Creek Mapping project results 2010”. The watershed was divided into smaller subwatersheds of streams longer than 1 mile for comparison purposes. Also, applying strategies at a smaller watershed level enables the project team to track changes better. Participants at the last meeting mentioned the need to monitor a pilot restoration area for changes. The Team will discuss the maps and potential strategies for the subwatersheds at the May 26 meeting. Maps include:

- Forested land cover (shown below)
- Forested land cover in hardwoods
- Forested land cover in pine
- Forested land cover regrowth (recently harvested or ag land allowed to grow)
- Open land (agriculture, grass)
- Aquatic animals_survey occurrences
- Aquatic animals_watershed rankings
- Impervious cover (roads, parking lots, rooftops)
- Existing agricultural BMPs
- Existing riparian agricultural BMPs
- Existing upland agricultural BMPs
- Percent of intact riparian buffers_25 foot buffers
- Percent of intact riparian buffers_50 foot buffers



Partner projects in the Rocky River

Many overlapping activities are underway within the Rocky River watershed. Stakeholders suggested that we increase coordination and information sharing about the various efforts, to reduce confusion and improve collaboration. We've created an online BLOG where we can post organizations' activities. To see it go to the project page and click on "**Rocky River/Tick Creek Blog**" in the right hand upper corner .

The Chatham Conservation Partnership (CCP)

The mission of the CCP is to develop and implement strategies for a community conservation vision that builds awareness, protection and stewardship of Chatham County's natural resources and working lands. CCP meetings are open to anyone that has an interest in Chatham County's natural resources. The CCP next meets on Thursday, July 15 , 2010 at CCCC Building 2 Multipurpose Room.
<http://chathamconservation.wikispaces.com>

Triangle Land Conservancy is working on a Rocky River Conservation Plan to prioritize areas for conservation

efforts– the Tick Creek watershed area is included in this plan. Priority will go to properties along the main stem of the Rocky River and headwaters. TLC staff have met with landowners along the Rocky River to discuss voluntary easements on agricultural lands.

Rocky River Heritage Foundation hosted a springtime Rocky River fair for Chatham County high school students. They asked Dr. John Fountain and Catherine Deiniger to submit an EPA319 Grant proposal for the watershed that drains the upper reservoir on the Rocky River. RRHF's partner group, The Friends of Rocky River, decided not to go forward with any more appeals on the Siler City Wastewater Treatment permit.
www.rockyriverchatham.org/aboutrrhf.html

Please send us information on your organizations' efforts in the Rocky River watershed if you would like those posted, too.

January Tick Creek Meeting Roster

Patrick Beggs, NCSU WECO
 Raj Butalia, NCSU
 Bill Causey, Rocky River Heritage Foundation
 Lee Anne Cienek, Triangle Land Conservancy
 Al Cooke, Cooperative Ext.-Chatham County
 Paul Clark, NC Division Water Quality
 Catherine Dieninger, Biocenosis
 Sam Groce, Extension Chatham County
 Robert Monk, NCSU WECO
 Henry Outz, Chatham SWCD
 Christy Perrin, NCSU WECO
 Tabitha Roberson, Triangle Land Conservancy
 Fred Royal, Chatham County Env. Resources
 Mike Shaffer, NCSU Dept. BAE
 Allison Weakley, RJG&A
 Brenda Williams, Chatham SWCD



A tributary to Tick Creek near Mt. Vernon Springs

