

March 29

Meeting Summary

# Tar-Pamlico

## Local Watersheds Planning Team

### NEXT MEETING

Tuesday,

May 24, 2005

12:30- 3:00

**Please RSVP for lunch, graciously provided by Pitt County Planning Dept.**

**Agriculture Subcommittee will meet separately on June 15 from 11:30-1:30.**

**Directions to Pitt Co. Emergency Op. Ctr:**

From Raleigh. Take 264 E to Greenville. 264E turns into Stantonsburg Rd. Take a left at the 5th stop light (Moye Dr.) At the 2nd stop light, take a right (5th Street). Go approx. 1/4 mile to 1717 West Fifth Steet (Old Hospital Building on the right). The EOC is in the basement.

Call Stephen Smith for help with directions:

(252) 902-3257

### Next Meeting Agenda

- Determine which projects are highest priority to implement

*Watershed Education for Communities and Local Officials*

[www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/agecon/WECO/tar\\_pamlico.htm](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/agecon/WECO/tar_pamlico.htm)

## Agricultural Subcommittee meets for first time

The Agricultural Subcommittee and the Tar-Pamlico Local Watersheds Team both met on March 29 at the Edgecombe County Building in Tarboro. The Agricultural subcommittee met first to discuss issues pertinent to the Cow Swamp and Crisp Creek watersheds. Edgecombe County Cooperative Extension graciously provided lunch.

The entire watershed team then met to review and discuss draft maps indicating potential restoration projects. This Newsletter contains summaries of both meetings (ag subcommittee on page 3-4) and the results of the group's discussion.

Remember you can post anonymous suggestions or comments on our website.

A listserv has been set up as well- the email address to post to the entire group is: [tarpamwatersheds@lists.ncsu.edu](mailto:tarpamwatersheds@lists.ncsu.edu)

If you are not subscribed but would like to be, send an email to: [mj2@lists.ncsu.edu](mailto:mj2@lists.ncsu.edu) with the following in the body of the email: subscribe tarpamwatersheds  
[J\\_DOE@ADDRESS.COM](mailto:J_DOE@ADDRESS.COM)

If you have any questions about the planning process, feel free to call Christy Perrin at 919-515-4542 or email her at [Christy\\_perrin@ncsu.edu](mailto:Christy_perrin@ncsu.edu). Or Contact Rob Breeding with NCEEP at [rob.breeding@ncmail.net](mailto:rob.breeding@ncmail.net)

## Restoration Strategies for Watersheds



The Tar-Pamlico Local Watershed Group met to review potential restoration sites that have been identified through the watershed assessment being conducted by BLWI, and to provide initial feedback for them to consider as they compile potential projects for the watershed plan.

The Group split into two subgroups. One group reviewed maps for the Crisp Creek and Hendricks Creek watersheds, while the other group reviewed the Green Mill Run and Cow Swamp watersheds. Amber Coleman and Melissa Ruiz, BLWI, provided an overview of the strategies suggested for subwatersheds. Then participants were asked to consider the following questions:

*Overall, do the projects make sense? Do you think you know any of the landowners? If so how amenable may they be to participating? Are there reasons why some projects may be better than others?*

- Potential partnerships?
- Difficulties?

*Is anything missing?*

## Restoration Strategies for Watersheds continued...

### Greenville Mill Run/Cow Swamp Discussion Group

This group discussed general policy issues that impact the identified projects, rather than specifics about particular project sites. These discussions included:

#### *Riparian Buffer Restoration Projects*

- Amber, BLUE LWI, clarified that buffer projects were highlighted as areas to potentially install a woody vegetation community where it has been denuded. EEP may be able to pay for buffer restoration if it meets their program's criteria. Riparian buffers are protected by the Tar-Pamlico rules.
- When EEP works on a project, they plant 50 feet from the creek. With cooperation from the CREP Program (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program), a buffer could possibly be planted up to 300 ft.
- ECU tried not to use artificially created streams in the watershed assessment, and tried to include only DWQ-recognized streams. A comment was made that the artificial streams are still included on the map. If NC Division of Water Quality (NCDWQ) recognizes it as a stream, it could qualify for stream restoration. Potential joint credit EEP – Greenville (Phase II).
- Greenville requires the developer to determine whether it is a blue-line stream. Alteration is allowed if unclassified, otherwise proper authorization is needed for alteration.

#### *Stormwater Best Management Practices and Phase II Stormwater Regulations*

Greenville must identify 3 retrofits annually. Stormwater retrofits and BMPs would provide many benefits – EEP would like to get alternative mitigation credit for these types of projects. With Tar-Pam nutrient rules, if you can demonstrate nutrient removal, you may be able to get credit from DWQ. It may help if this group makes that as a recommendation.

Since Cow Swamp is developing those stormwater projects, this will be relevant there, too (Pitt Co. is on the Phase II list).

#### *Potential Partnerships with ECU and City of Greenville*

Participants noticed that a lot of property in this watershed is owned by ECU and Greenville. Amber commented that BLUE LWI did not



identify many projects on ECU property, yet. They were considering that it is difficult (expensive) to implement projects in areas with high imperviousness. A participant pointed out the benefit to partnering with public entities like ECU, since it may be easier to work with them than private landowners.

#### *Drainage District and Riparian Buffer Protection*

The group discussed the pine plantation in the drainage district. The plantation owners pay assessments- the amount is based on how much benefit you get from the drainage district, and the plantation pays the lesser amount. EEP did not assess the drainage within since it is not classified as a stream. Charles Vandiford was asked to provide information about the drainage.

With urbanization occurring in the district, there are many ownership changes to keep up with. Problems occurs when the developer sells land, and the new lot-owner destroys buffer. NCDWQ is responsible for enforcing the Tar-Pam rules here. The City of Greenville notifies the state if an infraction is noticed.

#### *Preservation Projects and Habitat Connectivity*

In response to a question, EEP clarified that preservation projects are an option here. The NCWRC suggested that larger riparian areas are best for habitat. There is a good flood plain area upstream of Green Mill Run (N East in Watershed). In Cow Swamp areas w/wide buffers preserved are likely high priority. EEP staff responded that wildlife habitat is a function of the watershed, and that habitat connectedness is important.

## Agricultural Subcommittee Meeting Summary



The Agricultural Subcommittee of the Tar-Pamlico Local Watersheds Group met for the first time. The committee first discussed the watershed planning process because some of the participants were new to the process, then moved on to Drainage Districts. They spent the last half of the meeting brainstorming the concerns and needs of agricultural landowners and agencies regarding the watershed plan.

### ***Drainage District Discussion***

The participants shared information about how the drainage districts operated. The following summarizes their discussion.

Rob Breeding and Kevin Miller, NCEEP, informed the group that they recognized the local needs for drainage, and want to work with this subcommittee to hear how they may meet the local needs while improving the watersheds. NCEEP is preparing to contract with NCSU's Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering to develop a demonstration project to provide an example of how this may work.

#### *Maintenance of ditches*

The districts have an easement for performing maintenance only – otherwise the property is owned by the landowner. The landowner is responsible for any damage to the ditch if they allow others' access.

Maintenance is funded through assessments placed on the landowners. In Crisp Creek (Drainage District #2), Landowners have an annual assessment that is channeled through the county and added to their tax bill.

Forest, agricultural, and residential landowners all pay. According to a participant, drainage maintenance projects have been federally and landowner funded. In Pitt County, the US Army Corps of Engineers completed a project which is now maintained locally. Maintenance is expensive—finding funding to assist with maintenance could help provide incentives for participation in some kind of restoration activities.

#### *Changes to Ditches*

Drainage districts are managed in perpetuity, even as the land around it develops. The ditches saved money and prevented damage from hurricanes. The process to change the structure and channel of a drainage ditch involves a review by NRCS, if expertise is available, and approval by the District's Commission. In Pitt County, any changes require approval of 100% of upstream landowners. The NCSU demonstration project proposed by NCEEP could provide information to back up a request for a restoration project.

### **What may be the concerns and needs of agricultural landowners, agencies regarding the watershed plan?**

Participants' answers to this question include:

- Be clear regarding the timeline, the level of landowner participation in projects, and how projects will be chosen. Keep in mind the potential to disappoint people who want to participate.
- Do something to maintain drainage while improving stormwater flow (less flooding will satisfy landowners)
- With changes, who is responsible for future maintenance?
- Don't create problems with future maintenance and leave it for landowners.
- Protection of buffer zones on developed property. New landowners often cut the buffer—easier to ask forgiveness. (They ignore the 50-ft. easement that is on their lot)
- Buffer and drainage
- Sensitivity to agricultural landowners
- (from marine biologist) fresh water in a primary nursery is a pollutant. Ex: The freshwater line is moving further downstream in some streams—salinity and productivity are directly related
- Development causes increased runoff.

## Agricultural Subcommittee: Concerns and Interests of Stakeholders continued...

- Need to find common ground and include everybody
- Projects should be designed to remove sediment and nutrients rather than directly discharging runoff into streams.
- Economics of farming is tight, federal and state programs for cost share may not apply to every project. (Ex – CREP ) If farmer loses cropland, he may not qualify for cost shares, so offset losses that may occur.
- Rules are changing for CREP. There are places where CREP cannot cost share which would have water quality benefits.
- Make sure there is a contingency plan for a project that is not working satisfactorily. Don't leave a problem for someone else.
- Offset financial losses for lost timber or agriculture production.
- Is the project going to make access to the project site public?
- Concern that projects might conflict with effective drainage and increase flooding potential.

These concerns will need to be addressed while developing restoration plans in the agricultural watersheds. Thanks to everybody for helping make the first agricultural subcommittee meeting so productive!

At the next subcommittee meeting on June 15 they will hear from Dr. Robert Evans, NCSU Dept. of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, and discuss an approach for a proposed demonstration project.

### Agricultural Subcommittee Meeting Participants

Patrick Beggs, WECO; NCSU  
 Gail Bledsoe, NCDFR  
 Art Bradley, Edgecombe CES  
 Rob Breeding, NCEEP  
 Amber Coleman, BLUE LWI  
 Tim Etheridge, Pitt NRCS  
 Greg Griffin, Edgecombe SWCD  
 Jennifer Johnson, NCDFR  
 Chiquita McDowell, Edgecombe SWCD  
 Christy Perrin, WECO; NCSU  
 Connell Purvis, Martin County  
 Melissa Ruiz, BLUE LWI  
 Bill Swartley, NCDFR  
 Charles Vandiford SE Drainage  
 Jimmy Worsley, Edgecombe Drainage District

## Restoration Strategies for Watersheds continued...

### Crisp Creek/Hendricks Creek Discussion Group

#### *Crisp Creek Issues*

Nothing was identified for the pine plantation in North, but BLWI proposed capturing the sediment from there. A participant asked where the sediment came from, but since stakeholders informed BLUE about the sediment they are unsure.

A participant commented that it will be hard to get farmers to give up land for wetland projects.

#### *Hendricks Creek Discussion*

The Long manufacturing site, a Brownfield Site, was discussed. Since it is in a floodplain there is likely not much that can be developed.

Participants discussed whether it was a "hazardous waste site". Participants (including those from Town of Tarboro) felt that it could be a good site for stream & wetland restoration.

Run off from Highway 64 is bad at a site between lower and Upper Holly. It was mentioned that this be a good place for DOT Stormwater Phase 2 retrofit project. This flooding may be due to the borrow pit fill site from building the road. The site now has spines on it.

Other comments from the group about projects:

- Don't let BMP's mess up existing riparian wetlands just above W. Wilson St. –they currently look good
- The city of Tarboro is already looking at many projects.
- Social Services BMP project is outside this watershed.
- Bill Hunt, NCSU Dept. of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, been down there talking to David from Tarboro (NCSU Dept. of BAE has a contract with NCEEP)

Participants gave a positive response to:

- Public Housing Project (redevelopment committee has an agreement w/EEP already)
- Sprint parking lot project (they have an employee garden and may be amenable to BMPs)
- Mall BMPs for capturing parking lot runoff
- Tarboro HS/Cemetery Project (already working on these)
- Indian Reach Lakes
- Howard Avenue housing development is probably good place for BMP's (on town property)



Watershed  
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We're on the Web!

*See us at:*

**[www.ces.ncsu.edu/](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/)**  
**WECO**

## Tar-Pamlico Local Watershed Team March Meeting Participants

Nancy Baldwin, Edgecombe Co. Planning  
Patrick Beggs, WECO; NCSU  
Art Bradley, Edgecombe CES  
David Brown, City of Greenville  
David Cashwell, Town of Tarboro  
Amber Coleman, BLUE LWI  
Greg Griffin, Edgecombe SWCD  
Troy Lewis, Town of Tarboro  
Chris Lukasina, Upper Coastal Plain COG  
Chiquita McDowell, Edgecombe SWCD  
Kathy Paull, NCDWQ  
Christy Perrin, WECO; NCSU  
Ola Pittman, Edgecombe Co. Planning  
Melissa Ruiz, BLUE LWI  
Rob Breeding, NCEEP  
Stephen Smith, Pitt Co. Planning  
Maria Tripp, NCWRC  
Charles Vandiford, S.E. Drainage

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