

August 24

Meeting Summary

Tar-Pamlico

Local Watersheds Planning Team

Watershed Field Trip!

Tuesday,

October 18,
2005

10:00- 4:30

Please RSVP

Meet at 10:00 a.m.
at the Edgecombe
County Center in
Tarboro

(in the parking lot).

Watershed Education for Communities and Local Officials

www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/agecon/WECO/tar_pamlico.htm

Hitting the Home Stretch with Watershed Planning

The Tar-Pamlico Local Watersheds Team met on August 24 in Tarboro. The group discussed existing watershed programs and policies that will help achieve the goals of the watershed plans. They then identified issues that may hinder them from reaching the watershed goals, and brainstormed some ways to begin removing those hindrances.

- WECO/ EEP will send CDs with the Watershed Plans and Site Atlases (1 to each organization). Please contact Christy if your organization did not receive a CD and you would like one.
- Project team will write a summary of the plans and send to group to review and discuss via the listserv
- Project team will draft FAQs regarding restoration projects, to guide local government staff when

working with landowners.

- NCEEP will be contracting with BWLI to bridge the gap between the planning process and project implementation, through contacting landowners and educating groups of landowners.

Remember you can post anonymous comments on our website, or email the entire group at:

tarpamwatersheds@lists.ncsu.edu

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. Or Contact Rob Breeding with NCEEP at rob.breeding@ncmail.net

Existing Watershed Policies and Programs

The Tar-Pamlico Local Watershed Group reviewed a matrix summarizing policies and programs that impact the watershed. They clarified some programs and pointed out where programs were missing.

The Town of Tarboro, City of Greenville, and Edgecombe and Pitt Counties participate in the FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). This voluntary incentive program recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. As a result, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community actions.

Tarboro

- stormwater management ordinance requires detention of up to the 10-year storm, which is beyond that required by state regulations.
- member of the CWEP (Clean Water Education Partnership), a Triangle JCOG program that shares educational materials. See www.nccwep.org.

Greenville has two grant-funded projects:

- DWQ grant for riparian buffer education
- DWR grant for bioretention construction in a park

Existing Watershed Policies and Programs (continued)

Pitt County

- Water Supply Watershed rules
- Educational after school programs on buffers, runoff, and other water quality topics.
- Educational Environmental Website
- Environmental Excellence Award (a program to highlight good BMPs, construction, etc.)

The matrix will be revised and included in the watershed plan summary.

Smoothing the Skids for Watershed Plan Implementation

The Big Picture

The group was presented with the goals for watershed management in the four watersheds, and the tools currently available to achieve those goals. These tools include:

- The existing watershed policies and programs as summarized in the matrix and discussed
- The Tar-Pamlico Local Watersheds Plan, which consists of the following documents:
 - Watershed Characterization (Jan 2004))
 - Watershed Rehabilitation Plans for each watershed
 - Watershed Project Site Atlas for each watershed
 - Watershed Plan Summary (to be completed)

Potential Hindrances

Within the context of the tools available (see *Big Picture* above), the group identified potential hindrances to achieving the watershed goals, and organized them into categories for discussion.

Landowner buy-in (12 comments- some were identical to those listed below)

- Landowner reluctance to provide easements
- State property office undervaluing potential project land
- If the public perceives that a restoration project negatively impacts the flow capacity of a stream, thus causing flooding
- Uncooperative landowners
- Difficult land acquisition
- Lack of interest by landowners in participating
- Lack or paucity of available property

Funding (5 comments)

Project Management

- Disjointed efforts (need partnerships-larger/regional scale projects)
- Lack of effective project management, including communication of implementation plans, adjustments in actions, funding and timelines to landowners and stakeholders
- Poor planning and design; actions need to be implemented on the ground by competent contractors who are held accountable to deliver as designed
- Project management in rural areas could be a problem
- Bad science- a project that doesn't work in the real world

Need to market successes

- Marketing of interim and final successes internally & externally- avoid the black hole!

Long Term Maintenance

- Maintaining long term interest in a project by a landowner
- Landowner changes result in no long-term maintenance after project implemented
- City/county staff will be strained trying to complete the identified projects

Political and citizen support

- Lack of governing board support
- Citizen buy-in

Development

- Money- political efforts versus land development.
- Rate of development

Smoothing the Skids for Watershed Plan Implementation continued...

The group discussed how local regulations may hinder working towards the goals. Properties smaller than 10 acres are required to apply subdivision regulations. Nash County uses a special purpose lot provisions to address this.

The group discussed how to address the shortcomings that they identified.

Project Maintenance Discussion

Q: Who maintains restoration projects?
EEP monitors and maintains their projects for 5 years. Stream and wetland restoration projects should only need short-term maintenance. Any easements would include maintenance terms. Best Management Practices, however, need regular maintenance to function correctly.

Participants commented that maintenance should be the responsibility of NCSU, EEP, or another organization with expertise and not the landowner.

The group decided that maintenance, project management and funding issues were aspects of the watershed plan that would be addressed by NCSU and NCEEP as the implementation went forward. They chose to focus the remainder of their discussion on the challenge of educating landowners, and increasing acceptance and participation.

Landowner/Developer Education

Participants discussed potential landowner concerns that would need to be addressed:

- Apprehension about maintenance
- The value of their land- it may not be worth what they think it is
- There may be restrictions already present on their land that may impede their ability to participate, or at least their perceived ability (buffers, etc.)
- Are there expected lifetimes of these BMPs. (sunset date). Why give a perpetual easement if this BMP has a limited lifespan?
 - "in perpetuity" scares people off

- Landowners will want to know how they can benefit from participating
- Landowners will want to know if an easement will hinder sale of their property

Suggested solutions for addressing landowner concerns:

- Need a "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) document for local professionals, and for landowners (unsure yet if this is one document or two)
- A marketing strategy is very important
 - o Suggestion of "marketing toolbox"
 - o Include pictures to show landowners comparable project (before and after)
 - o Include FAQs
- Landowners should be spoken to face to face.
- EEP & NC Div. SWC have an agreement about "subcontracting" SWCD's to assist in site search and selection. Could this be an option here?

Suggested solutions for involving developers where land uses are changing

- Bring in the development community and get them up to speed in what is happening. Present the pros & cons of participating.
- Make involving them in projects a process that won't slow them down (streamline their project participation)
- Suggest EEP purchases land or easement right at the start, maybe before the development is designed- before the planning has even been done.
- Being set up to identify streams in local govt. planning offices could allow for funneling developers right to EEP.

Smoothing the Skids for Watershed Plan Implementation continued...

Next Steps:

Staff from EEP, WECO and BLWI agreed to work together to develop a "marketing toolkit", which would contain Frequently Asked Questions and pictures of projects before and after construction.

They will also create draft summaries of the watershed plan targeted towards layperson audiences and send to the group for their review and editing.

The group was offered the opportunity to participate in a field trip of potential and/or completed restoration sites in October and agreed upon October 18 as the field trip date.

Tar-Pamlico Local Watershed Team August Meeting Participants

- Patrick Beggs, WECO; NCSU
- Gail Bledsoe, NCDFR
- Art Bradley, Edgecombe CES
- Rob Breeding, NCEEP
- David Brown, City of Greenville
- David Cashwell, Town of Tarboro
- Robert Cheshire, City of Greenville
- Amber Coleman, BLUE LWI
- Robert Evans, NCSU- Dept. BAE
- Greg Griffin, Edgecombe SWCD
- Brian Hassell, Edgecombe County Planning
- Jonas Hill, Pitt County Planning
- Troy Lewis, Town of Tarboro
- Chiquita McDowell, Edgecombe SWCD
- Kathy Paull, NCDWQ
- Christy Perrin, WECO; NCSU
- Lee Perry, Town of Tarboro
- James Rhodes, Pitt County Planning
- Nancy Sasser, Edgecombe Co. Planning
- Lisa Smith, City of Greenville
- Bill Swartley, NCDFR

