

Upper Rocky River/Clarke Creek Local Watershed Planning Group

The Upper Rocky River Watershed Planning Team met on March 31, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to transition the Team from the planning phase of the project to the implementation phase, through public outreach and education. WECO has been asked to coordinate this portion of the project. The scope of the project includes presenting the plan and recommendations to local elected officials, targeting 1-2 communities for public education, increasing local awareness of water quality issues, and generating landowner interest. Since many of the identified projects in the plan are found on private land, WECO will be working with the Team through February 2006. WECO would like the group to help determine what should be presented, where, and to whom.

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This summary contains ideas for outreach of the local watershed planning team to the Upper Rocky River communities.

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| What should be included in outreach? | p 5 |
| Next Steps | p 6 |

The group was asked to weigh in on criteria for choosing where to do outreach. The resulting comments from this open discussion are listed here:

- Lake Howell
 - is the water supply for almost the entire county
 - an effort should be made to protect the water supply
 - development pressure is a big problem with surrounding land around
 - increase in development causes erosion, which ends up in reservoir
 - need to look at headwaters of Lake Howell because of erosion
- Interbasin transfers - there needs to be water quantity education - water conservation information
- Phase II requirements may parallel some of what we are doing here.
- Don't just be concerned with new development, but we need to teach the people who are in already developed areas.
- EEP is interested in getting projects on the ground. Municipal staff and officials may or may not help us reach landowners. Where does the group think the plan and its recommendations will be well received?
- Local civic clubs would be good places to give talks - they are usually looking for people to come and speak. In addition, they are probably local landowners.

The Team was asked: "Who should we target?"

- Kannapolis – the area is fast growing and the town needs to be fully informed
- Rowan County – local Cooperative Extension would like to see us there.
- Iredell County
 - Can we get some Mooresville people to come and speak
 - Get some Mooresville elected officials to come and help. The mayor was instrumental in the Dye branch project
- Cabarrus County- What about the building moratorium – how will that affect us?
 - The consultants are writing a draft land development ordinance now. Can we get them the plan recommendations so they can review them and maybe include them in the recommendations to Council? The current plan is to adopt the regulations by June. [Update: We were able to get the plan recommendations to the consultants. Most of the plan recommendations were already being considered in some format because of the work of the Cabarrus County Planning Staff.]
- Mecklenburg County is a big portion of Phase II. We should include someone from the county in the planning.
- Farm Bureau is organized by county. They are a good source of landowner contacts.

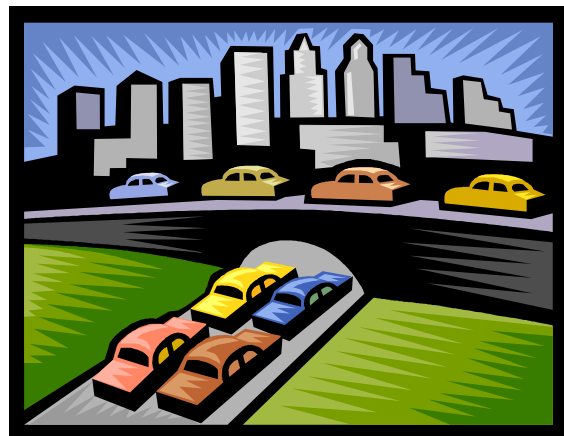
A matrix of the 6 watersheds was presented. It was partially filled in with known facts about each watershed. The Team was asked to fill in more information and discuss each watershed, the benefits or drawbacks to concentrating our efforts there, and any other information that might help EEP and the local agencies work in that area.

| Upper rocky River Watershed: Working Decision Matrix for Outreach/Education Efforts – March 31, 2005 | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| 14 digit HU Watershed | Projects Underway or high interest | Local Government jurisdiction | Other Partners | Comments |
| West Branch Rocky River Phase 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dye branch restoration • EPA 319 grant for stormwater BMP's | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mooresville | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowners of project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowners and town are aware of the project, have attended workshop. • Davidson Lands Conservancy (DLC) working w/3 developers in Clarke's Creek to protect stream bank corridors • DLC – Fisher Farm |
| Reedy Creek Phase 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential restoration in Clear Creek and McKee Creek (old dairy) • Potential restoration on tributaries to Reedy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabarrus County | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabarrus SWCD • Cabarrus WIC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not very rural anymore. It is being driven by development, from Charlotte, and 485. Water and sewer is moving into that area soon. Harrisburg is seemingly trying to catch up with Charlotte, etc. Land is very expensive there and costs rising. • Don't think there are any other projects in this area. • Natural heritage areas in Cabarrus county section. • Possible stream restoration project on a farm near RC09-1. • New Cabarrus Co. park on Pharr Mill Road |
| Main Branch Rocky River Phase 2 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabarrus County • Concord | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabarrus SWCD • Cabarrus WIC | |

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| Mallard Creek Phase 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grayson Development (MC03) • Toby Creek restoration (MC07) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrisburg • Cabarrus County • Charlotte • Mecklenburg County | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabarrus SWCD • Cabarrus WIC • UNC-Charlotte | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development pressure • Michael Wolfe worked on Toby Creek years ago - Mecklenburg County stormwater services floodplain manager would know about it. • Many projects were identified back in 94-95, but only one was done, probably due to money. |
| Coddle Creek Phase 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 restoration sites identified in Rowan County (CC04) • Afton Run restoration • Other potential projects in Concord | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rowan County • Cabarrus County • Concord | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Extension Rowan County • Cabarrus SWCD • Cabarrus WIC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headwaters of Coddle Creek • Need for increased awareness in Rowan County • Lots of calls come in from private landowners about flooding. • Opportunities for coordination and matching with SWCD and NRCS • It is a water supply II watershed (WSII) |
| Clarkes Creek Phase 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cato Farm restoration complete (demo) • Vermillion EEP project is upstream of Cato | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huntersville • Mecklenburg county • Davidson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davidson Lands Conservancy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEP has stream restoration projects at Cato and Vermillion. • This could be a good watershed to work in – there seems to be a bunch of things going on. • Development pressure • Preservation interest from Catawba Lands Conservancy • Open Space ordinance may be Hot button issue. |

The Team was asked: “What should be included in the presentation of the plan?”

- The complete interconnectedness of all these problems
- Interconnectedness of solutions is also something to point out.
- We live in a fishbowl – everything we do affects everything around us.
- The importance of headwater streams
- Cumulative and secondary impacts of urbanization
- We need to have good pictures needed
- Tell them what is in the plan for their area
- Better guidelines for stormwater management would be a great outcome of all this work
- Some economic value to characterize the cost of not doing anything – historically we’ve done nothing, but developers only see that they are losing a lot and spending money to put in BMPs.
- Success of BMPs
- Ask Bill Hunt, NCSU Dept. Biological and Agricultural Engineering to follow up after the presentation with a specific workshop on BMP success, maintenance, etc.
- Local pictures of a creek during the drought and not during normal flow years, at both low and high levels.
- Possibly link something to public health – as to why you would restore an area
- Involve developers. The Vermillion developer would be great to have involved.
- Someone needs to be able to answer the question, “What can different monies be used for? Can it be for matching?”
- Can we get a landowner who has a project on his property to come to a public meeting to talk?
- We need to educate people about what is normal for a stream and what is a bad stream.



Final Decisions and Next Steps

WECO will initially develop presentations based on the group's feedback for Iredell and Rowan Counties, and the Town of Kannapolis. This would address the criteria for highlighting headwater areas, drinking supply watersheds, and rapidly developing watersheds. We will work with group members to get on the agendas of their commissions this year. Other local governments may be targeted later if the team is interested.

WECO will provide a draft presentation for review and make it available for group members to review on the internet.

The group decided to focus a public outreach effort on the headwaters of Coddle Creek, in Rowan, Iredell and Cabarrus Counties. WECO will work with the group to determine how that effort should proceed. A public workshop could be held later in the year, following the presentations to local governments. A second public outreach effort may be added in the Clarke's Creek watershed, although this was not decided for sure.

The team will be kept up to date via email, and will meet as needed.

March Meeting Participants

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|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Patrick Beggs | WECO |
| Larry Boahn | City of Kannapolis |
| Jim Cowden | Rowan County Cooperative Extension |
| David C. Grant | Davidson Lands Conservancy |
| Ginny Harrison | NC Wildlife Resources Commission |
| Lee Menius | Rowan SWCD |
| George Norris | EEP |
| Christy Perrin | WECO |
| John Stevenson | Iredell SWCD |
| Nicole Storey | Cabarrus County Planning |
| Jim Summers | Iredell SWCD |
| Dennis Testerman | Cabarrus SWCD / WIC |
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www.ces.ncsu.edu/WECO

