

## Survey shows public wants environment protected

A survey conducted recently among 831 randomly-selected residents of the Albemarle-Pamlico region produced some results that may surprise many officials. Among the results are the following:

—87 percent of respondents think the state government is doing "too little" to control wastewater discharges.

—82 percent agreed that "There are limits to growth beyond which our industrial society cannot expand."

—And 67 percent would be willing to pay at least \$25 per year in extra taxes to help control water pollution better in coastal areas.

The survey was funded by the A/P Study and conducted by Drs. Tom Hoban and Bill Clifford of N.C. State University. The results will help policy makers and managers better understand what the public thinks about environmental issues and government efforts to deal with those issues.

Respondents consistently supported strong environmental protection and consistently expressed concerns that the health of our environment is declining. For example, 79 percent said fishing in the A-P region is "fair" or "poor" now, while 81 percent felt it was "good" or "excellent" five years ago. And 63 percent believed water pollution is a "serious" problem in the A-P watershed.

The widespread perception that the environment is declining also translated into widespread

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support for better protection, even if that protection meant possible restrictions on various activities.

When asked, "If there is a conflict between housing and recreation on a stretch of shoreline, which should be controlled?", 64 percent said housing.

And when asked, "Do you think long range solutions to environmental problems depend more upon changing our lifestyles to fit into nature, or upon developing better technology to make nature fit our lifestyles?", 64 percent said our lifestyles that must change.

But while such broad concerns were expressed, there was also a tendency among respondents to feel that problems close to home were less serious than problems elsewhere in the region. For example, while 65 percent of respondents believed water pollution was a "serious problem" in North Carolina and in the the A-P region as a whole, only 15 percent felt pollution was a serious problem in their own drinking water supply.

Another notable finding was that respondents most often named industrial waste and litter as serious problems in the region, while more than three-quarters did not mention agriculture or sewage. This may be related to the fact that respondents said they get most of their information about pollution from the media, which usually focus on the most visible problems.

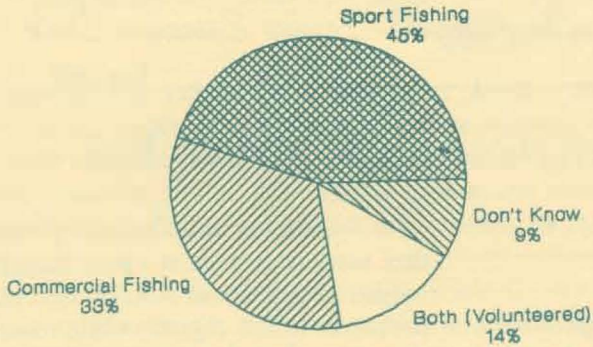
But general support for the environment is strong enough in enough different ways, according to Hoban and Clifford, that, "When asked to choose between management of resources for the common benefit and management for private benefit, most respondents believed that public benefits need to be protected... When these results are coupled with the strong environmental values and beliefs respondents expressed, we can definitely conclude that respondents will support environmental protection even at the expense of economic growth and private land owners' rights."

The most important element of any regulatory program is public support. This survey indicates that a clear majority of people here want strong environmental regulatory programs. What is left now is for the policy makers to listen to the public's voice: Protect the Albemarle-Pamlico.

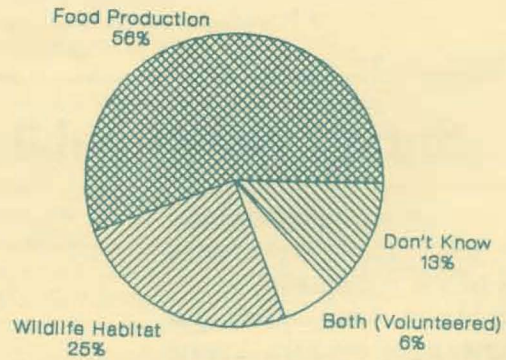
For a look at other survey results, turn to Page 2. The full survey can be obtained by calling Joan Giordano at (919) 946-6481.



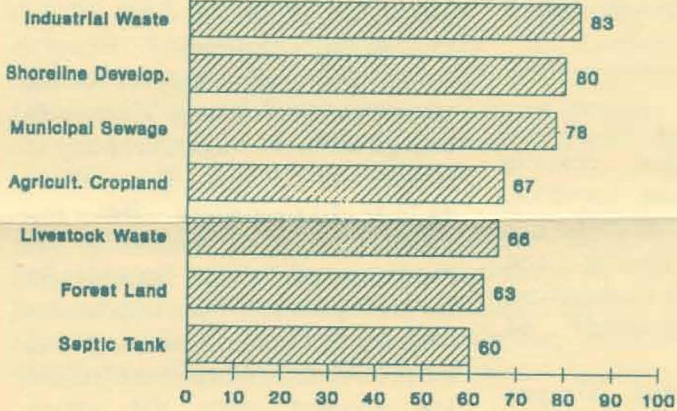
## A sampling of results from the Public Attitudes Survey



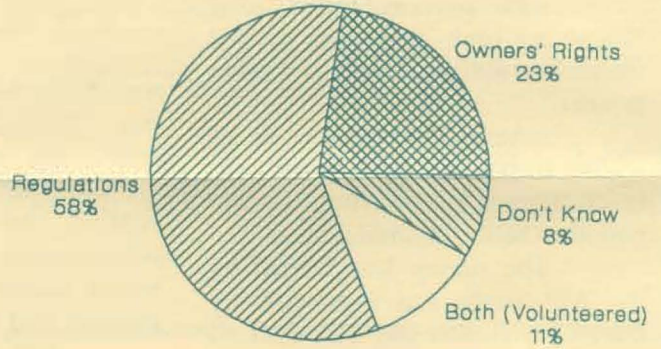
*"If there is a conflict between sport fishing and commercial fishing in an area, which should be controlled?"*



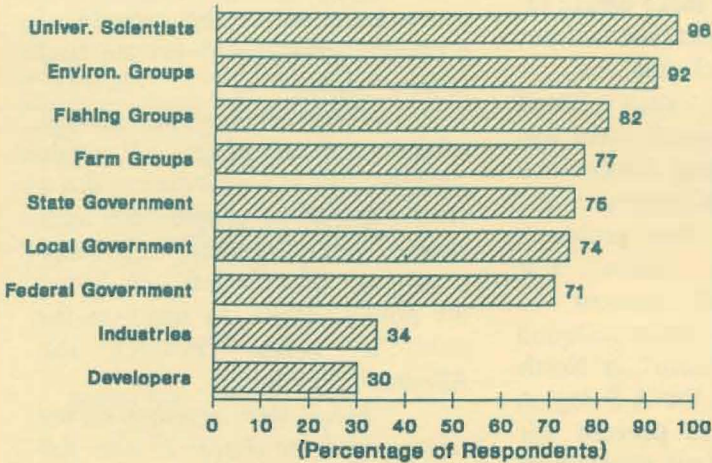
*"If there is a conflict between food production and wildlife habitat in wetlands, which should be controlled?"*



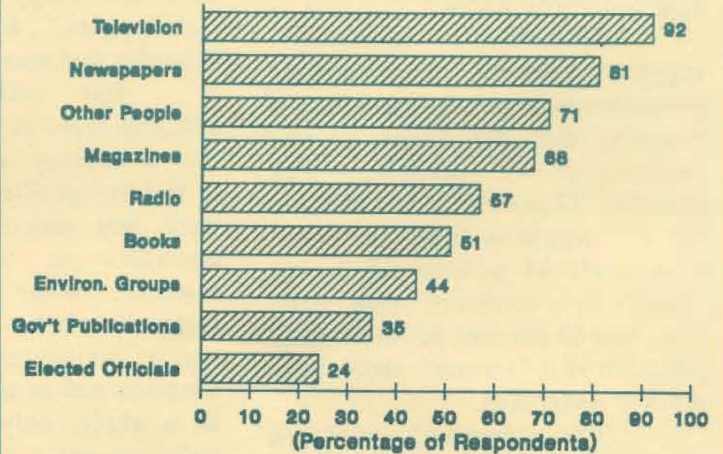
*Percentage of respondents who feel state government is doing "too little" to control these threats to water quality.*



*Which do you consider most important, landowner's right to use land as he wants, or water pollution control regulations?*



*Sources respondents have "some" or "a lot" of trust in regarding statements about water pollution.*



*Sources where respondents got "a lot" or "some" information about water pollution.*





## A/P STUDY RESEARCH FOCUS

**Project:** Upper Bennett's Creek Nutrient Management - Early Action Plan

**Project Leader:** Dennis Utt, NC Div. of Soil and Water Conservation (Gates Co.)

**Project Goal** - As one of five A/P Study Early Action Plans, the Upper Bennett's Creek (UBC) Nutrient Control Project is designed to serve as a model for dealing with an identified environmental problem in the A-P watershed, in this case, nutrient overenrichment.

**Problem** - Merchants Millpond was created over a century ago by a dam built to power a grist mill on Bennett's Creek, a tributary of the Chowan River in Gates County. Through the decades, nutrient-laden fertilizers and livestock waste have washed into Bennett's Creek upstream and become trapped in the millpond, creating in it a condition of accelerated eutrophication. This condition exists in many A-P waterways.

**Project Operation** - In order to demonstrate the value of farming "Best Management Practices" (BMPs), the Study funded the DSWC to initiate an intensive BMP program in the UBC watershed, an area where agricultural pollution is heavy.

BMPs are farming methods that save topsoil, reduce needs for agricultural chemicals, and utilize animal waste, all of which have benefits for the environment as well as for farmers. Like the state's regular cost-share program, farmers who sign on with the project get matching funds for BMP installation costs.

**Program Achievements** - Over 90 BMP contracts totalling some \$90,000 have been written with farmers in the UBC watershed since 1988 (over 35 percent are now operational). The BMPs include:

\*\* Soil analysis - nearly 60 farm operations reduced fertilizer applications by an average of 11 percent after having soil analyzed.

\*\* Using waste as fertilizer - over 1600 tons of dry animal waste and 2 million gallons of liquid animal waste have been applied to cropland as fertilizer, thus keeping that waste out of waterways and reducing chemical fertilizer applications.

\*\* In-place BMPs - 3 solid-set waste control systems and 6 water control structures are or soon will be in operation.

**Implications for Management** - Virtually all BMPs benefit both the farmer and the environment. If adequate funds are available for cost-sharing, BMPs could be implemented extensively enough to result in widespread reductions of nutrient loading, freshwater runoff, and sedimentation in waterways.

Possible management initiatives include: (1) increasing funding for cost-share program; (2) requiring BMPs for farm operations; and (3) putting the emphasis of the cost-share program on water quality instead of soil conservation.

### Seminar kicks off Study's financial planning efforts

Thirty citizens attended the A/P Study's first Financial Planning Seminar on June 12. The meeting marked initial efforts to identify potential funding sources for implementing the Study's Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) in 1993.

Apogee Research, a Maryland-based consulting firm, will help develop a framework of the CCMP's funding needs and possible ways to address those needs. Apogee has done similar work with other National Estuary Programs (NEPs), including the Puget Sound and Long Island Sound studies.

Like all NEPs, the A/P Study receives federal funds only for research, education, and public involvement -- it will be primarily up to the state to fund CCMP implementation. Given current budget struggles, however, that will be no easy task. For example, the funding package sought for the Puget

Sound management plan was \$88 million, not including capital improvements needed for sewage plants. And a \$5 billion price tag has been put on the Long Island Sound Study's implementation plan.

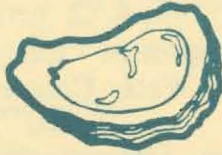
Though an implementation plan for the A-P Sounds is likely to be far less expensive, finding funding will still take creativity. Among the variety of sources that may be considered are: (1) A "Green Stamp" that people can purchase like Duck Stamps; (2) toilet paper tax; (3) income tax return check-off like the current Non-Game Wildlife Fund; (4) industrial and individual water use fees; and (5) marine fuel taxes.

The Financial Planning Committee is composed of representatives from various interest groups. There are still vacancies on the committee -- persons interested in serving should call Joan Giordano at (919) 946-6481.



## Sound Bites

notes on the A/P Study



**DIFFERENT TONE FOR ANNUAL MEETING** - This year's A/P Study Annual Meeting will be much more festive than in the past. Plans are for this year's meeting to include environmental booths, games, and educational activities for children, in addition to exhibits and updates on the Study's progress.

The NC Coastal Federation, Dare County, and the Town of Manteo are assisting in planning the meeting. It is scheduled for Saturday, October 12, in Manteo. All events will be free and open to the public.

**SWINE WASTE TO FERTILIZER** - A workshop, "Swine Manure as Fertilizer: An Environmentally Sound Approach," will be held Wednesday, August 21, at the Tidewater Research Station in Plymouth. The NC Cooperative Extension Service, USDA Soil Conservation Service, and NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation are sponsors.

Contact Gerda Jones, Cooperative Extension Agent, (919) 793-2163, for details.

**FOR MORE A/P STUDY INFORMATION** - To get on the *A-P Advocate* mailing list, or for information on research projects or other aspects of the A/P Study, contact: Joan Giordano, Public Involvement Coordinator, POB 1507, Washington, NC, 27889, (919) 946-6481.

### THE ADVOCATE...

is the newsletter of the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study, a five-year project funded jointly by the US EPA and the State of North Carolina, intended to develop an environmental management plan for the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system. The Study, which will conclude in 1992, is part of the EPA's National Estuary Program. It is being conducted within the N.C. Dept. of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, POB 27687, Raleigh, NC, 27611-7687.

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## A/P Committee News

### Policy Committee

Met: June 11, Chesapeake, VA

Attending: 9 of 11

\*\* Policy Committee (PC) met in Virginia for the first time to discuss Virginia's role in A-P management with state officials.

Keith Buttleman of the VA Council on the Environment told the PC that his state is interested in working on "points of mutual concern" regarding the Albemarle Sound watershed. VA currently has a management plan in place for areas that drain toward the Chesapeake Bay, though the plan does not apply to adjacent areas that drain toward the Albemarle. The plan resulted from the Chesapeake Bay Study, a forerunner of current National Estuary Programs like the A/P Study.

The states will continue to work on management issues.

\*\* PC approved final version of the Status and Trends Report. It was agreed, however, that all sections are subject to updating.

\*\* After considerable discussion, PC decided not to name a standing Steering Committee for writing of CCMP, but rather to use ad hoc committees to deal with specific sections of the plan. The goal is to involve all 90 members of the Study's major committees (Policy, Technical, and two Citizen Advisory).

**UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS AUG.-SEPT.**  
**CITIZEN ADVISORY (JOINT):** Aug. 6, Williamston

**TECHNICAL:** Aug. 20, 10 a.m., Archdale Building, Raleigh.

**ROUNDTABLE (ALL COMMITTEES):** Aug. 28, Manteo

**POLICY:** Aug. 29, Manteo

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