CHOWAN RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

March 19, 1998

MINUTES

Attending:

Lee Wynns	Billy Griffin
John Stallings	Roger Spivey
Nan Laughton	Nancy Nichols
G D Perry	Joe Stutts
Joan Giordano	Guy Stefanski
Victor Liu	

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman, Joe Stutts. Mr. Stutts thanked G. D. Perry for hosting today's "covered dish" meeting at his river cottage and also thanked everyone for bringing food for the cookout.

SPECIAL GUEST:

Chairman Stutts commented that since 75% of the water entering the Chowan River comes from Virginia, it is very important that we know how Virginia is impacting the river and also what they are doing in terms of regulations, etc. He then introduced Mr. Victor Liu, Principal Planner for the Crater Planning District Commission in Petersburg, Virginia. The Crater Planning District is comprised of 10 local governments in south central Virginia. Mr. Liu discussed the major focus of the commission, populations within the Chowan River Basin area, and the point-sources and non-point sources that effect us further downstream. He shared (handout attached) the results of a non-point source watershed assessment for the Chowan River and Dismal Swamp Basins. In response to a question concerning intensive livestock operations, Mr. Liu responded that most of these operations are on the Chowan Watershed. Virginia Legislators have passed a "right to farm" act which states that as long as an operation is in the "agricultural zone" it is not regulated. Concern was expressed that this will probably have some water quality impact in the future as more and more large hog operations move into that area. Mr. Lui stated that the commission is willing to work with the CRBRC and help in whatever way they can.

BUSINESS SESSION

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

Billy Griffin motioned that the minutes of the January 8, 1998 meeting be accepted as presented. Motion was seconded by Roger Spivey and the motion carried.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The following nominations were presented for consideration from the nominating committee:

Chairman	Joe Stutts (Business/Industry - Hertford Co.)
Vice-Chairman	Brewster Brown (Conservation - Hertford Co.)
Secretary	Nan Laughton (SWCD - Chowan Co.)

There were no nominations from the floor. Billy Griffin made a motion that this slate of officers be accepted. Second was received from John Stallings, motion carried.

PRIORITIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

Guy Stefanski and Joan Giordano lead the group through a process to prioritize the environmental concerns that this group would like to focus on. The initial list was developed at the September 25, 1997 "kick-off" meeting and has been added to during the last two meetings of the council (copy attached). The following is the list of priorities for this council:

1. Need to know what's coming out of Virginia (corresponds with item #21 on concerns list).
2. Union Camp Corp. (corresponds with item #6).
3. Leakage from fertilizer plant (corresponds with item #1).
4. Non-point source pollution (corresponds with item #7).
5. Ahoskie Creek, Potecasi Creek and Merchant's Millpond (corresponds with items #2, #3 and #4).
6. Municipal dumps (corresponds with item #9) and abandoned wastewater treatment plants (corresponds with item #10).
7. Coordination and enforcement in the operation of WWTP (corresponds with item #13).
8. Population (corresponds with item #8).

Guy and Joan will take these priorities back, fit them in with CCMP guidelines and get them back to the council members for action.

Concern was expressed over C F Industries (formerly Farmer's Chemical) located between Petty Shores and Tunis. Bill Griffin will get information on nitrogen rates found in the soil at the site and will report back a next meeting. He stated it will probably take five or six years to complete the site clean-up. Joan commented that this site is on the Super Fund list and that they should have a clean-up plan on record. She and Guy will try to locate the plan. Discussion was also held on the water quality impacts of Union Camp. Nutrient loading of the river is still a concern; however, they are doing a good job with reducing their dioxin discharge.

John Stallings stated a need for more ambient water monitoring stations that will monitor the water continuously. This is the only way we will truly know the quality of the water and what is impacting it. Guy will get together a list of where monitoring stations are currently located in Virginia and North Carolina. Through this list we will be able to see where the "holes" are and then make specific requests to the Secretary of ENR that monitoring stations be installed where needed.

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS:

Chairman Stutts will write a letter to those who have not attended (15 members) meetings asking if they plan to attend meetings or would like to be taken off the council. He will report on responses at next meeting.

COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING:

Chairman Stutts will be attending a meeting of the APES Coordinating Council on March 31st. Lee Wynns and Emmett Winborne are the additional representatives that are to attend with him.

MEETING WITH FACILITATOR:

Joan announced that Bitsy Waters, a professional facilitator from Charlottesville, VA, will be leading us in developing our Program of Work. The meeting will be held on April 23rd in Edenton. Nancy Nichols volunteered to reserve the seminar room at the College of the Albemarle-Edenton Campus (or other location if this is not available) and work with Joan on setting up this meeting.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

After "calendar checking", May 19th was chosen as the date for the next regular meeting. The group expressed a desire to have a tour of an interesting project or area of concern at this meeting. Nan shared that a constructed wetland for water quality, funded through an EPA 319 grant, has been completed in Edenton and would probably make an excellent tour stop. Chairman Sutts asked Nan to make arrangements for the group to see this project on the 19th. Nancy stated that she would also reserve the COA-Edenton seminar room for this meeting.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

_____

Nan Laughton, Secretary

Attachments

ACTION ITEMS

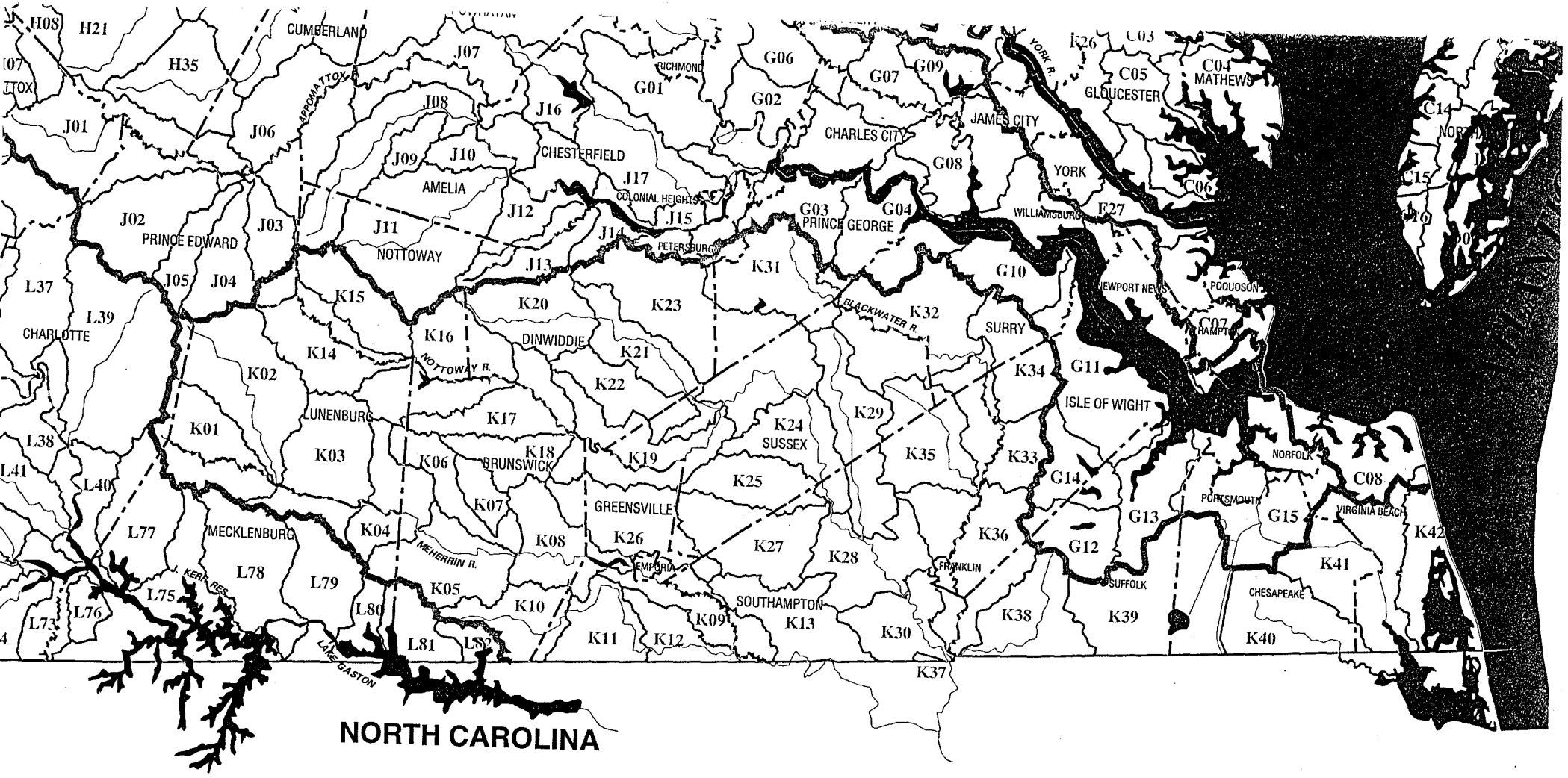
ITEM	RESPONSIBLE	DATE DUE/DEADLINE
Correlate priorities with CCMP	Guy Stefanski and Joan Giordano	April 24, 1998
List of water monitoring stations currently in place in NC and VA.	Guy Stefanski	Report at May 19th mtg.
Letter to council members not attending meetings.	Chairman Joe Stutts	Report at May 19th mtg.
Reserve location in Edenton for facilitator meeting.	Nancy Nichols	By April 1st
Meeting with facilitator re: Program of Work.	All Council Members	April 23, 1998
Reserve location in Edenton for May 19th meeting.	Nancy Nichols	By May 1st
Make arrangements for council to tour Edenton Constructed Wetland during May 19th meeting.	Nan Laughton	By May 1st
Attend regular Council meeting.	All Council Members	May 19, 1998

3/19/98

Chowan RC Meeting

NAME	
VICTOR LIU	CRATER PLANNING DISTRICT COMM.
Lee Wynns	Mayor Town of Colerain NC
Billy GRIFFIN	COOP. EXT - BERTIE CO.
JOHN STALLINGS	Ch. Stat Dept Bertie
Roger Spivey	Chowan Forestry + Silviculture
Nan Laughton	Chowan SWCD
Nancy Nicholls	Chowan County TDA
Brewster W. Brown	Hertford Co
G D Spivey	Bertie Co
Joan Giordano	DWQ Supv
Joseph H. Stutts	Murfreesboro, NC
Guy Stefanski	DWQ Staff

CHOWAN RIVER AND DISMAL SWAMP BASINS



CHOWAN RIVER AND DISMAL SWAMP BASINS

NONPOINT SOURCE WATERSHED ASSESSMENT

HUC 03010201 Nottoway River Subbasin

This subbasin contains seventeen watersheds (K14-K30). Only one of these watersheds, K30, has a high ranking for nonpoint source pollution potential due primarily to cropland sources. Two of the watersheds, K28 and K30 have a high ranking for agricultural sources of nonpoint pollution. Additionally nine watersheds have a medium ranking for agricultural sources of nonpoint pollution. Watershed K16 has a high pollution potential for urban sources. In addition, twelve of the watersheds have a medium pollution potential for urban sources of nonpoint pollution. Three watersheds, K13, K14, and K23, are rated as high priority for agricultural nonpoint source pollution concerns, with watersheds K13 and K23 ranking high for agricultural animal operations. Watersheds K19, K26, and K29 have a high ranking for forestal nonpoint source pollution potential.

Department of Environmental Quality monitoring data indicate that phosphorus and nitrogen levels in watersheds in this subbasin are generally rated as good.

HUC 03010202 Blackwater River Subbasin

This subbasin contains six watersheds (K31-K36). None of these watersheds has a high ranking for nonpoint source pollution potential. As well, none of the watersheds have a high rank for agricultural or urban nonpoint source pollution potential. However, five of the watersheds (K32-K36) have a medium ranking for agricultural pollution potential. Similarly, five of the watersheds (K31-K34 and K36) have a medium ranking for urban pollution potential. In addition, watershed K35 has a high ranking for forestal pollution potential. Watersheds K33, K34, and K56 have a medium ranking for forestal pollution potential.

Department of Environmental Quality monitoring data indicate that phosphorus levels in watersheds in this subbasin are generally rated as good. With regard to total nitrogen, most of the watersheds in this subbasin have a fair to good rating.

HUC 03010203 Lower Chowan River Subbasin

This subbasin contains only two watersheds, K37 and K38. Both watersheds have a low overall pollution potential ranking. However, watershed K37 has a medium pollution potential ranking for agricultural, urban, and forestal sources of nonpoint pollution.

Department of Environmental Quality monitoring data available for watershed K38 indicates that phosphorous and nitrogen levels are rated as good.

HUC 03010204 Meherrin River Subbasin

This subbasin encompasses watersheds K01-K13. None of these watersheds have a high nonpoint source pollution potential ranking. Agriculture and forestry are the predominant land uses in this watershed and eight of the watersheds have a medium pollution potential ranking for agriculture and seven of the watersheds have a medium ranking for forestal pollution potential ranking. Watershed K09 has a high ranking for urban pollution potential, and six watersheds have a medium ranking for urban pollution potential.

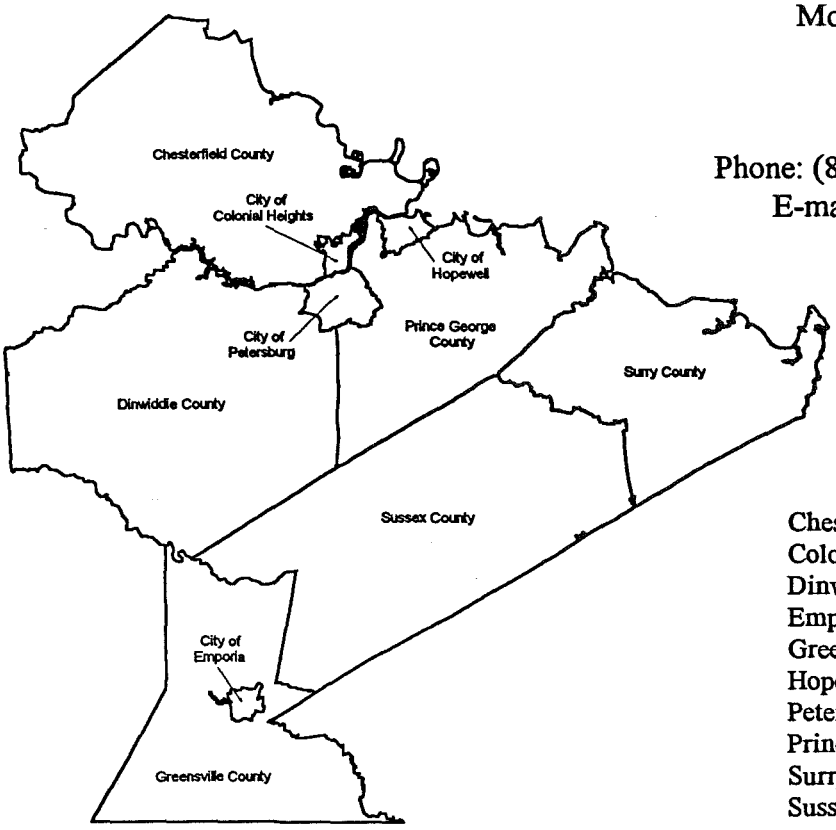
While Department of Environmental Quality monitoring data indicate that phosphorus levels in watersheds in this subbasin are generally rated as good, watersheds K08 and K12 have a significant percentage of samples rated as poor. With regard to total nitrogen, most of the watersheds in this subbasin are rated as good.

HUC 03010205 Dismal Swamp, Northwest River, and Back Bay Subbasin

There are four watersheds within this subbasin (K39-K42). Watersheds K41 and K42 have a medium composite ranking and watershed K40 has a high ranking for nonpoint source pollution potential. Watersheds K40 and K41 have a high agricultural nonpoint source pollution potential due to cropping sources. In addition, watersheds K41 and K42 have a high pollution potential ranking for urban sources of nonpoint pollution. Watersheds K39 and K40 have a medium ranking for urban pollution potential.

Department of Environmental Quality monitoring data indicate that phosphorus levels in watersheds in this subbasin are generally rated as good and nitrogen levels are generally rated as fair. However, nitrogen levels in watershed K39 are rated as poor and watershed K42 has a significant percentage of samples rated as poor.

CRATER PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION



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1990 Census Populations

Chesterfield County	209,274
Colonial Heights	16,064
Dinwiddie County	22,319
Emporia	5,479
Greensville County	8,630
Hopewell	23,101
Petersburg	37,027
Prince George County	27,394
Surry County	6,145
Sussex County	10,248

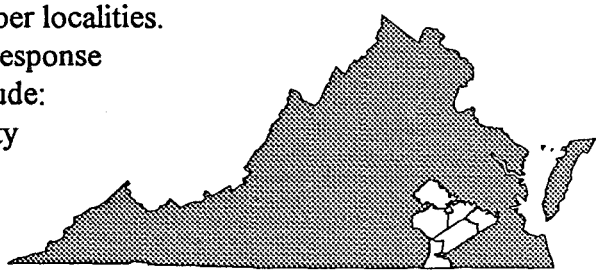
The Crater Planning District is comprised of 10 local governments in south central Virginia. These are: the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and Petersburg, and the counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex.

The Commission was established in May, 1970, after the Virginia General Assembly adopted the Virginia Area Development Act and divided the state into 22 planning districts.

The policy board is comprised of twenty-six individuals representing the member local governments. Thirteen of those members are local elected officials. The other members are citizens, some of whom serve on the staffs of the local governments.

The Commission's purpose, as stated in the Charter, is to, "promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social and economic elements of the Planning District by planning, and encouraging and assisting governmental subdivisions to plan for the future."

The major focus of the Commission's Work Program is economic, industrial and small business development, reflecting the priorities which have been established by the member localities. Another important work area involves environmental issues, in response to local needs, as well as increasing state regulation. These include: Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act - local ramifications, air quality standards and solid waste management. The Commission also addresses regional transportation issues and assists localities in their transportation planning efforts.



CHOWAN RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

What are the priority environmental concerns in your river basin?

Members of the Chowan River Basin Regional Council have developed a list of priority environmental concerns for the Chowan River Basin. This list was determined by members during their regular meeting on March 19, 1998.

Below are the CRBRC's priority environmental concerns as correlated to the main goals, objectives and management actions of the CCMP. *NOTE: Concerns are ranked in order of importance.*

PRIORITY CONCERNS:

1- What is coming from Virginia? Baseline water quality monitoring at state line and sharing of information with Virginia.
2- Union Camp discharges.
3- Leakage from fertilizer plant on river.
4- Nonpoint source pollution impacts (agriculture, forestry, septic tanks) on Ahoskie Creek, Potecasin Creek and Merchant's Mill Pond.
5(tie)- "Intensive livestock operations" as a nonpoint source of pollution.
5(tie)- Dye plant discharge into the river.
5(tie)- Pfiesteria outbreak potential?

WATER QUALITY PLAN

Goal: Restore, maintain or enhance water quality in the Albemarle-Pamlico region so that it is fit for fish, wildlife and recreation.

Primary Concern #1. What is coming from Virginia? Baseline water quality monitoring at state line and sharing of information with Virginia.

Objective A: Implement a comprehensive basinwide approach to water quality management.

Management Action 5: Improve the scientific models for understanding the estuarine system, the effects of human activities on the system, and the viability of alternative management strategies.

Management Action 6: Continue long-term, comprehensive monitoring of water quality in the APES system, collecting data to assess general system health and target regional problems.

The CRBRC is concerned with what is being discharged into the Chowan Basin attributed to activities in the State of Virginia. They are very interested in the monitoring data being collected at the state line and would like to learn more about Virginia's environmental management efforts. Representatives from the Crater Planning District Commission and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (from Virginia) are members of the CRBRC. Also- the Coordinating Council (Implementation Plan, Objective A, Management Action 2, Critical Step #1 (pg. 166) will be working with Virginia to develop an MOA between the states to ensure cooperation and coordination in implementing the CCMP. The CRBRC should be encouraged to discuss these issues with Virginia through this Coordinating Council format.

Primary Concern #2. Union Camp discharges.

The CRBRC is concerned with the concentration of nutrients being discharged from Virginia's Union Camp Company paper mill on the Chowan River. Again, the focus is better coordination and information sharing with the State of Virginia regarding environmental management. Communication between the CRBRC and Virginia officials will be enhanced through the Coordinating Council and through the Planning District Commissions participation on the CRBRC.

Primary Concern #3. Leakage from fertilizer plant on river.

Objective A: Implement a comprehensive basinwide approach to water quality management.

> Management Action 6: Continue long-term, comprehensive monitoring of water quality in the APES system, collecting data to assess general system health and target regional problems.

Objective D. Reduce the risk of toxic contamination to aquatic life and human health.

> Management Action 1: Increase efforts to assess and monitor the extent of estuarine sediment contamination, fish and shellfish tissue contamination, and water quality violations, and to identify the causes and sources of these problems.
>
> Management Action 3: Remediate toxic contamination where necessary and feasible.

Primary Concern #4. Nonpoint source pollution impacts (agriculture, forestry, septic tanks) on Ahoskie Creek, Potecasi Creek and Merchant's Mill Pond.

Objective B: Reduce sediments, nutrients and toxicants from nonpoint sources.

According to the CCMP (pg. 42), Objective B, Management Action 1, Critical Step #1:

"The Department of Environment & Natural Resources, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, the Regional Councils, universities, and other members of the public and private sector, will develop a comprehensive nonpoint source control plan specific to each river basin".

This action should be considered as the overall theme theme in addressing the NPS pollution in these specific areas of the Chowan Basin.

> Management Action 2: Expand funding to implement nonpoint source pollution controls, particularly agricultural best management practices through the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program, and also to develop a broader Water Quality Cost Share Program. Expand the cost share programs to include wetlands restoration. Increase cost share funds to problem areas.
>
> Management Action 3: Continue to research and develop alternative septic systems and new best management practices to reduce nonpoint source pollution.
>
> Management Action 4: Strengthen current enforcement to detect and correct ground and surface water quality violations from nonpoint sources.

Management Action 5: Strengthen implementation of forestry best management practices through training, education, technical assistance and enforcement.

Management Action 6: Enhance stormwater runoff control by strengthening existing regulations and developing new ones, if needed, by 1995. Improve enforcement to ensure that stormwater management systems are properly installed and regularly maintained.

Primary Concern #5 (tie). "Intensive livestock operations" as a nonpoint source of pollution.

Objective B: Reduce sediments, nutrients and toxicants from nonpoint sources.

Management Action 3: Continue to research and develop alternative septic systems and new best management practices to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Management Action 4: Strengthen current enforcement to detect and correct ground and surface water quality violations from nonpoint sources.

Primary Concern #5 (tie). Dye plant discharge into the river.

Objective C: Reduce pollution from point sources, such as wastewater treatment facilities and industry.

Management Action 1: Promote pollution prevention planning and alternatives to discharge, where feasible, for all point sources to reduce the volume and toxicity of discharges.

Management Action 2: Expand and strengthen enforcement of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits. Increase site inspections and review of self-monitoring data to improve facility compliance by 1995.

Primary Concern #5 (tie). Pfiesteria outbreak potential?

Objective E: Evaluate indicators of environmental stress in the estuary and develop new techniques to better assess water quality degradation.

Management Action 1: Continue to track and evaluate indicators of environmental stress, including algal blooms, fish kills, and fish and shellfish diseases.

Management Action 2: Improve the techniques for evaluating the overall environmental health of estuarine waters.

OTHER CONCERNS:

* tapping into creeks and streams for irrigation purposes
* population and landowner increases
* abandoned wastewater treatment plants/municipal dumps
* use of pesticides/fertilizers by government agencies
* NPDES sources
* coordination & enforcement in WWTP operation

* the need to remove fish consumption advisory signs warning of dioxin
* whereabouts of federal money (1992-93) dedicated to "snagging" of Meherrin River

The CRBRC also produced a list of "Hopes":

- *State funding for a Chowan River Keeper*
- *decentralization of state agencies so they can spend more time in the region*
- *development of a volunteer monitoring program*
- *don't lose the quality of our ground water*
- *rethinking of channel/drainage practices*
- *technology: wastewater treatment improvements*
- *reduced population density in some areas*
- *all bear costs fairly*
- *recycle, rduce & reuse advisory*
- *education*
- *remove dioxin fish consumption advisory currently in effect*
- *recognition of the area*

April 8, 1998