

ALBEMARLE-PAMLICO NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

Pasquotank River Basin Regional Council

Columbia Town Offices
Main Street
Columbia, NC
May 24, 2001

AGENDA

4:00pm	Welcome and Call to Order	Chairman Haste
4:05	Roll Call	Joan Giordano APNEP
4:10	Consideration of Minutes	Chairman Haste
4:15	SWAMP and Va. Beach Outdoor Plan	Noah Hill Va. DCR
4:30	NC Wetlands Restoration Program	Bonnie Duncan NC DWQ
4:40	Smithfield Agreement	Joan Giordano
4:55	COE Letter - Currituck Sound Study	Joan Giordano
5:00	Pasquotank River Basin - Revisit Issues and Concerns	Joan Giordano
5:50	New Business & Public Comment	All
5:55	Plans for Next Meeting	All
6:00	Adjourn	



PASQUOTANK RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Columbia Town Offices

Columbia, NC

May 24, 2001

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 4:15pm by Vice Chairman Yates Barber, in the absence of Chairman Erie Haste, Jr. He asked that Joan Giordano call the membership roll, and determine that a quorum was present. The quorum requirement being satisfied, he asked for a motion of approval for the minutes from the previous meeting held on February 15, 2001. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Lloyd Griffin and seconded by Carlyle Harrell. Motion passed.

The next order of business consisted of a presentation by N.C.-VA. liaison, Noah Hill. Noah focused on the "Virginia Outdoors" and "Swamp" programs, reporting that \$100 million for land acquisition and \$50 million for improving Virginia's state parks had been secured through the "Outdoors" program. He further reported that intended-use MOAs had been entered into between the cities of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach as part of the Swamp program. He added that another MOA would imbed the Va. Round Table format in the Swamp program, and following that an agreement between them and the Pasquotank River Basin Regional Council (PRBRC) would be secured relative to CCMP implementation coordination and cooperation. Discussion ensued.

Following Noah's report, Joan Giordano outlined the Smithfield Foods agreement between the NC Attorney General's Office and Smithfield Foods. She focused on the portion of the Agreement that mentioned the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program by name.

Bonnie Duncan gave a presentation on the NC Wetlands Restoration Program. She reported that this program had entered into a MOA with the NC Department of Transportation relative to wetland stream buffer needs,

stormwater and sharing of technical resources. Ms. Duncan, a native of Elizabeth City, is interested in hearing PRBRC members' opinions concerning wetlands as is focused upon in the Wetlands Restoration Program. Ms. Duncan can be contacted at: bonnie.duncan@ncmail.net or at Bonnie Duncan, NC Wetlands Restoration Program, 1617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1617.

Joan Giordano referenced a letter she authored for Chairman Haste concerning support for the Currituck Sound study and for the necessary "state match" required by the grant. She passed around the letter and asked for comments from those present, as the request for writing and sending it allowed for very little turn-around time. Comments were made and Mrs. Giordano Fax'd the letter on behalf of Chairman Haste. NOTE: there has been a response from NC House Representative Bill Owens to Chairman Haste. See Attachment.

The agenda item dealing with revisiting original issues and concerns expressed by PRBRC members, and the PRBRC Program of Work derived from them, was tabled until the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mention was made that the Currituck Co. program associated with the Farmland Preservation Enabling Act, had its committee appointed, but had not yet met. For further information regarding this, contact Yates Barber.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for July 12th, beginning at 4:00pm, at the Edenton Fish Hatchery in Edenton.



Attention:
Joan
Gordano

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
J. Owen Etheridge, Chairman
Eldon L. Miller, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Ernie Bowden
Gene A. Gregory
S. Paul O'Neal

COUNTY OF CURRITUCK

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Currituck, North Carolina 27929-0039
Telephone (252) 232-2075 / FAX (252) 232-3551
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County Manager D5
JOHN S. MORRISON
County Attorney
GWEN H. TATEM, CV
Clerk to the Board

May 22, 2001

Senator Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore
2007 State Legislative Office Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Dear Senator Basnight: *Mr*

I am writing to urge that you support the \$300,000 which has been proposed to be included in the 2001 North Carolina Budget of the Division of Water Resources for the State's participation in the currently proposed Corps of Engineers study of Currituck Sound.

As you know, it has taken several years of our proposing and supporting to get the Corps of Engineers' authority for this study.

Currituck Sound has been in ecological difficulty for many years now. Our once profitable sport fishery for Black Bass is almost non-existent, and the same applies to our once grand waterfowl population and hunting industry.

The Corps and North Carolina cooperative study can determine the cause of our water quality problems, thus setting the stage for our rehabilitation of this great Sound and the industries which it can once again support.

We need your support in this time of limited funds and sincerely ask for your help.

Sincerely,

William S. Richardson
County Manager

WSR/mg

Cc: Board of Commissioners
Representative Bill Owens
Yates Barber



North Carolina General Assembly
House of Representatives
State Legislative Building
Raleigh 27601-1096

REPRESENTATIVE BILL OWENS
1ST DISTRICT: CAMDEN, CURRITUCK, PASQUOTANK, PERQUIMANS
OFFICE ADDRESS: ROOM 632 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
RALEIGH, NC 27601-1096
TELEPHONE: (919) 733-0010
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ELIZABETH CITY, NC 27907
(252) 335-1067

COMMITTEES:

- AGRICULTURE
- APPROPRIATIONS, VICE CHAIR
- APPROPRIATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATURAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES, CHAIR
- EDUCATION, SUBCOMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITIES
- JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
- LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT II
- STATE GOVERNMENT
- TRAVEL AND TOURISM

June 18, 2001

Mr. T. Erie Haste, Jr., Chairman
Pasquotank River Basin Regional Council
200 West Grubb Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Dear ~~Mr. Haste~~: *Erie*

I am in receipt of your letter of June 7, 2001 concerning the funding of the Currituck Sound Study. I have contacted Mr. John Morris, Director, Water Resources Division, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and it is my understanding that President Bush has proposed \$200,000 and that this is a 50/50 matching fund. The Division of Water Resources has in their budget the \$200,000 to match the federal amount and should Congress increase this to \$300,000, the State is prepared to match the increased amount. Staff at Water Resources has this as a high priority item.

Thank you for contacting me. Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts and concerns anytime I may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Bill

Bill Owens
Representative

1.252.995-3716

BO:lj

6-27-01 - 5:00

*Joan
This looks encouraging
EW*



Landowner's Options for Participating in the NC Wetlands Restoration Program

Option 1: Donation or Sale of a Permanent Conservation Easement

The donation or sale of a permanent conservation easement to the North Carolina Wetlands Restoration Program, (NCWRP) allows the landowner to retain title to their property. *The NC Wetlands Restoration Program prefers to pursue this option.* A permanent conservation easement must be conveyed for participation and project implementation. A landowner may elect to sell rather than donate a conservation easement to the NCWRP. The NC State Property Office will work with the landowner to offer payment based on fair market value for the conservation easement.

The NC Wetlands Restoration Program uses perpetual conservation easements. The easement will forever preserve the acquired land area. The conservation easement transfers with the land if it is sold, inherited, or otherwise conveyed. An easement conveyed to the NCWRP is held by the State of North Carolina to ensure that restoration efforts and practices put in place remain intact for the improvement and protection of water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and flood water retention.

Advantages of Conveying a Permanent Conservation Easement to the NCWRP

- If donated, permanent conservation easements can provide financial benefits through the Federal Income Tax Benefits Program, the NC State Conservation Tax Credit Program, Estate Planning, and reductions of County real estate taxes.
- If a permanent conservation easement is sold to the State of North Carolina, the landowner receives payment.
- The wording of a conservation easement can be adapted within certain guidelines to fit the needs of the landowner.
- The conservation easement will allow the NCWRP the opportunity to rebuild deteriorated streams, address excessive erosion along stream banks, and replant stream banks and wetlands for the protection of water quality.
- There is flexibility in the use of the easement area to satisfy possible zoning regulations for greenways, buffers, or density ratios in the future development of the remaining property not affected by the conservation easement.
- A majority of the areas covered by an easement through the NCWRP are wetland and stream areas. These areas are generally not permitted or suitable for development or agricultural purposes.

Option 2: Donation of Property in Fee Simple

The NCWRP can accept donations of property by deed of gift. A deed of gift grants full title and ownership to the State of North Carolina through the NCWRP. Property donations must meet certain criteria outlined in NCAC 15A: 02R.0403. Additional information may be found at the NCWRP website: <http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/> click on Wetlands Restoration Program.

Advantages of Donating Property to the NCWRP in Fee Simple:

- A property donation is an excellent way to provide total protection for wetlands and streams and to ensure that wetlands and streams will be maintained and enhanced.
- Landowners may benefit from Federal income tax deductions, estate planning advantages, North Carolina State Tax credits, and reduction in County property taxes.
- Outright donation is simple, eliminates most negotiations, and can be conducted quickly.
- Donations could grant the NCWRP vital wetland and riparian corridor areas the program may not be able to otherwise purchase.

Option 3: Sale of Property in Fee Simple

The NCWRP may purchase a qualifying property in fee simple, based on current fair market values. The sale of the property in fee simple would also be guided by the possibility for restoration opportunities on the property to address water quality concerns as a critical component of watershed restoration. Due to the current costs of conducting restoration activities, this is the NCWRP's least preferred option.

Advantages of Selling Property to the NCWRP in Fee Simple:

- Landowner would receive payment based on current fair market value.
- Could be beneficial in estate planning.
- Reduction in County property taxes.

For more information concerning the NC Wetlands Restoration Program please contact:

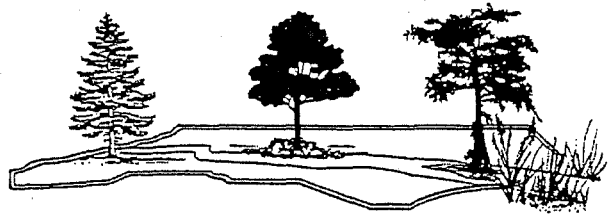
Larry Hobbs
NCWRP
Pasquotank Project Implementation Coordinator
1619 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1619
E-mail: Larry.Hobbs@ncmail.net
Phone: (919) 733-5313

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Phone: (919) 733-5315

For specific questions regarding the options described above please contact:

Blane Rice
NCWRP Real Property Agent
NC State Property Office
E-mail: blane.rice@ncmail.net
Phone: (919) 733-4346

The North Carolina Wetlands Restoration Program: An Overview of the Local Watershed Planning Initiative



N.C. Wetlands Restoration Program
NCDENR DWQ

What is the North Carolina Wetlands Restoration Program?

The North Carolina Wetlands Restoration Program (NCWRP) was created by the NC General Assembly in 1996, for the purposes of restoring, creating, enhancing and preserving wetlands, streams and streamside buffers throughout the state. The NCWRP is a **nonregulatory** program housed in the Division of Water Quality, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. NCWRP goals include: improvement of water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, floodwater retention, pollution prevention, recreational resources and overall watershed functions within North Carolina's 17 major river basins.

What is a Local Watershed Plan?

Local Watershed Plans (LWPs) identify all factors contributing to water quality degradation within a watershed and provide strategies to address nonpoint sources of pollution. One component of a LWP is the identification of sites for wetland, stream and streamside buffer restoration. However, this is just one piece of the water quality puzzle. In most watersheds, wetland, stream and streamside buffer restoration alone will not be sufficient to improve water quality. Other nonpoint sources of pollution, such as stormwater runoff and failing septic systems, must be located and addressed through other types of water quality improvement projects. Accordingly, the solutions identified in LWPs include not only wetland, stream and streamside buffer restoration projects, but a comprehensive package of initiatives needed to successfully improve and protect water quality in the long term.

Why Participate in Local Watershed Planning?

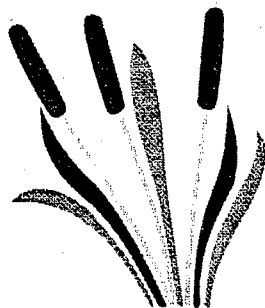
Local Watershed Plans (LWPs) are developed cooperatively with representatives of local governments, nonprofit organizations, and local communities. They provide an important opportunity for local stakeholders including residents, community groups, businesses, and industry to play a role in shaping the future of their watershed. Through the LWP planning process, these groups work cooperatively to identify issues, set priorities, develop strategies, secure funding, and implement protection and restoration projects within their communities. By encouraging stakeholders to participate in identifying solutions to address water quality, habitat, flooding, and recreational needs, the LWPs become blueprints for strategically implementing local projects through partnerships between local governments, citizens, non-profit organizations, and state and federal agencies.

Why Develop Local Watershed Plans?

Although communities across the state face many of the same issues when dealing with water quality problems, each community has its own unique characteristics, concerns, and priorities. For this reason, it is important that communities take part in assessing the conditions of the resources in their watershed and developing a customized strategy to address their own goals and objectives. Most importantly, by developing LWPs and identifying solutions to meet local resource needs, community members have a greater interest in the implementation of the plan and the benefits implementation will provide. Some of the benefits of the planning process and the production of LWPs are outlined below.

Benefits of the Planning Process

- The process promotes locally-driven, interactive restoration planning that can address the specific watershed concerns of local communities.
- The process enables local knowledge to be combined with technical support and resources to identify specific sources of water quality degradation and develop appropriate solutions.
- The process enables local communities to guide implementation of strategies developed through the planning process cooperatively with the NCWRP.



Benefits of the Plans

- LWPs describe the conditions of local watersheds, issues of importance to local communities, objectives set by local plan participants, and the necessary measures needed to achieve those objectives.
- LWPs describe the tools to be utilized to address watershed issues. These tools are identified by local plan participants and may include voluntary landowner assistance programs, education and outreach, drinking water supply protection measures, stormwater best management practices, model ordinances, water quality improvement projects, and habitat protection plans.
- LWPs identify the funding sources needed to implement each component of the plan. Funding identification is made more effective by the cooperative nature of the process which brings together public and private organizations and local community members to work as a watershed team.

Steps to Developing a Local Watershed Plan

The development of LWPs involves many steps needed to achieve three main goals: 1) the identification of the specific causes of water quality degradation in a watershed, 2) the development of a strategy for addressing water quality degradation that is supported by the local community, and 3) the implementation of restoration projects and other water quality initiatives identified in the plan. To ensure the success of LWPs and the planning process, it is important to gain the support, backing, and participation of local governments, community groups, and citizens. The steps outlined below are designed to provide the level of education and outreach necessary to develop and implement a LWP.

Phase I: Plan Development Steps

1. Obtain stakeholder participation and involve the public.
2. Build a watershed planning team and identify a local watershed planning team leader.
3. Select and implement a kick-off project to generate interest in local watershed planning and restoration activities.
4. Identify watershed issues such as water quality, habitat, flooding, and recreational access.
5. Inventory and analyze existing natural resource information in GIS and other formats and identify information gaps.
6. Perform a watershed assessment to fill information gaps and determine sources of water quality problems.
7. Provide technical assistance to the local government and watershed team on interpreting assessment results and developing needed solutions.
8. Prioritize watershed issues and set goals and objectives.
9. Maintain support and interest in the planning process through education and outreach.

10. Categorize and prioritize actions to meet goals and objectives (including stream, wetland, and riparian buffer restoration).
11. Develop criteria for measuring success.
12. Develop cost estimates for each action and identify suitable funding sources.
13. Document the planning process.

Phase II: Plan Implementation Steps

1. Build Project Teams for project implementation.
2. Pursue and obtain funding and technical assistance from available resource programs.
3. Conduct outreach and education to sustain support and participation in the implementation of LWP.
4. Implement projects.
5. Measure success and adjust strategies as needed.