

UNRBA Board of Directors October 29, 2003 Meeting Summary

Prepared October 30, 2003

Our mission: To preserve and protect the water quality in the Upper Neuse River Basin through innovative, cost effective and environmentally sound strategies and to create a coalition of local governments and stakeholders in a water resources partnership.

Introductions and Meeting Objectives

The Board of Directors of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 1:30 P.M. on Wednesday, October 29, 2003 in the Triangle J Council of Governments conference room. Becky Heron, Chair of the Board, began the meeting by asking participants to introduce themselves. Chris Dreps presented the meeting objectives:

- UNRBA Update;
- Site Evaluation Tool Project; and
- Proposal for a Watershed Management Implementation Plan.

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Organization	E-mail address or phone
Board and Alternate Board Members Present		
Kenn Gardner	Wake County	Citizens4kenn@aol.com
Becky Heron	Durham County	Becymheron@nc.us.com
Joel Cross	Creedmoor	Jcross46020@aol.com
Tom McGee	Butner	t.mcgee@nc.mail.net
Kevin Martin	Franklin County	Kmartin@sandec.com
Ron Alligood	Granville County	Grancomrs@granvillecounty.org
Jimmy Clayton	Person County	Jimmyb31@Juno.com
Dale Crisp	City of Raleigh	Dale.crisp@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Steve Carpenter	Person County	Scarpenter@personcounty.net
Others Present		
Barry Baker	Granville County Planning	Planning@granvillecounty.org
Paula Murphy	Person County	Pmurphy@personcounty.net
Perry Sugg	Orange County	Psugg@co.orange.nc.us
Chris Dreps	UNRBA	Dreps@tjco.org
Mary Giorgino	USGS	Giorgino@usgs.gov
Sydney Miller	TJCOG	Smiller@tjco.org
Tom Altieri	Orange County	Taltieri@co.orange.nc.us
Nancy Newell	City of Durham	Nnewell@ci.durham.nc.us
Terry Rolan	City of Durham	Trolan@ci.durham.nc.us

UNRBA Update

USGS Watershed Evaluation Tool

Mary Giorgino updated the Board on the agreement between US Geological Survey, NC Wetlands Restoration Program, and UNRBA to develop a watershed evaluation tool (WET). This will be a GIS based tool that can be used by local governments, UNRBA, and resource agencies. The WET will automate many important watershed analyses

using the USGS National Hydrography Dataset for the Upper Neuse (Mary called this "smart streams"). Applications include TMDL planning, Phase II planning, local watershed planning (e.g., NC Wetlands Restoration Program), and evaluation of subwatersheds for monitoring and restoration potential.

The Board agreed that integrating the new (LIDAR-based) floodplain mapping into the WET will make it more useful for local governments. Mary agreed and explained that this can be done because the tool will already integrate LIDAR data, the base for the floodplain mapping.

Chris will provide an electronic copy of the USGS proposal to the UNRBA Board.

Natural Heritage Inventories

Steve Carpenter, Person County Manager, updated the Board on the pending National Heritage Inventories for Person, Granville, and Caswell Counties. National Heritage Program hired a person to oversee natural heritage inventories and will hire a staff member to conduct inventories in Person and Granville Counties. Person County is partnering by providing office space and landowner contacts. This effort will be an important basis for critical land protection programs.

TAC Task Groups

The UNRBA's Technical Advisory Committee has formed four task groups to deal with specific issues facing the UNRBA. These are the Watershed Evaluation Tool Task Group, the Site Evaluation Tool Task Group, the Critical Lands Protection Task Group, and the Supplemental Funding Task Group. Chris will provide a short description of these groups for the UNRBA Board and TAC.

LID Pilot Project

Wake County School – Wetlands Restoration Program is considering funding Martin Middle School as potential site next year. If this occurs, the UNRBA will use the site as a pilot to test the Site Evaluation Tool (described below).

Neuse River Basin Conference

Chris Dreps will attend the November 19-20 Neuse River Basin Conference in New Bern. For more information on the conference, see www.soil.ncsu.edu/swetc/neuse/neuse.htm.

Watershed Restoration Institute

Chris attended the Center for Watershed Protection Institute in September. The CWP provides nationally recognized guidance on watershed restoration planning and implementation. For those considering watershed restoration projects, the information gathered at the institute offers a wealth of information.

Upcoming Presentations

Chris will present the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan to the Clean Water Management Trust Fund's Board of Directors on January 12, 2004.

Chris requested approval of the board to present the Plan to the N.C. House Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources. The Board unanimously approved the decision for Chris to present to this committee.

Site Evaluation Tool (SET)

The UNRBA has received notice that we will receive a \$40,000 grant from the State Nonpoint Source Grant Program (319 Program) to create a "Site Evaluation Tool" for use by developers and local governments in the Upper Neuse. The main purpose of the SET is to help the development community and local governments to meet performance standards for new development in the watershed.

Kimberly Brewer summarized the SET (for more details on the SET, see notes from the 3-12-03 and 10-2-03 TAC meetings at www.unrba.org). The SET is a pre-design evaluation and screening tool, helps a site developer to consider site BMP requirements early in the process, and can facilitate stormwater "low-impact development" and retrofits. The SET is not a tool that will determine stormwater design for the site designer. Tetra Tech has worked with Mecklenburg County on development of their SET and is currently working with Cary using the SET to create a town stormwater plan.

Ms. Brewer discussed the project tasks. Although the grant award will not arrive until 2004, the UNRBA Site Evaluation Tool Task Group will get started on the early project tasks before year's end.

Watershed Management Plan Implementation Strategy

Chris Dreps discussed the need for creating an Implementation Plan for the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan. The N.C. General Statutes (GS 143-214.14(g)) state that coalition plans shall include implementation plans and performance benchmarks.

What is an implementation plan?

- Details how the watershed plan will be put into action.
- Is a means for measuring the plan's success (milestones)
- Is a means of measuring the effectiveness of management strategies
- Holds us to a schedule
- Estimates costs & explores funding mechanisms
- Meets EPA funding guidelines

Chris handed out two draft implementation matrices, one showing the possible components of an Upper Neuse Implementation Planning Process and one showing the possible components of a local government watershed management plan implementation strategy.

Local watershed plans can be used to define implementation strategies. Wetlands Restoration Program has targeted 8 local watersheds in the Upper Neuse for local plans. This can add up to a significant investment in implementing the Upper Neuse Plan, and we should work hard to make sure plans are begun in the coming year. The Wetlands Restoration Program's investment in the Upper Neuse Watershed Evaluation Tool is a significant first step in this direction. We may need to approach Ron Ferrell (NCWRP director) with proposals.

Chris proposed to the Board to release up to \$50,000 for the creation of an Upper Neuse Watershed Management Implementation Plan. Chris would work with the TAC to outline the necessary project tasks and develop alternative approaches to accomplishing these tasks.

The Board unanimously agreed with the decision to release up to \$50,000 of the original state appropriation to begin work on the Watershed Management Implementation Plan.

Next Steps

The UNRBA TAC should meet before the year's end to work on implementation planning. The Watershed Evaluation Tool Task Group and the Site Evaluation Tool Task Group will begin working on their respective projects.

Next Board Meeting

The Board decided to meet again after the TAC and Chris Dreps have had a chance to define alternative approaches to developing the Implementation Plan. This meeting should be in January or early February.