

UNRBA Board of Directors May 19, 2004 Meeting Summary

Prepared May 19, 2004

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 9:45 A.M. on Wednesday, May 19, 2004 in the Triangle J Council of Governments conference room.

Becky Heron, Chair, began the meeting by asking Board members and others to introduce themselves.

Chris Dreps presented the meeting objectives (decision items marked with *):

- UNRBA Projects Update
 - New UNRBA Projects
 - Little River Riparian Corridor Conservation Plan
 - Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan
 - Progress on the Watershed Evaluation Tool
 - Progress on the Site Evaluation Tool
 - Watershed Plan Implementation
 - Proposal to Kerr-Tar COG: support on Plan Implementation*
- Budget Amendment for FY 2004–05*
- Duke Public Policy Study: Water Quality Protection in the Flat River

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Organization	E-mail address or phone
Becky Heron	Durham County	beckymheron@nc.rr.com
Nancy Newell	City of Durham	nancy.newell@durhamnc.gov
Jimmy Clayton	Person County	jimmyb31@juno.com
Steve Carpenter	Person County	scarpenter@personcounty.net
Paula Murphy	Person County	pmurphy@personcounty.net
Kevin Martin	Franklin County	kmartin@sandec.com
Jack Day	Town of Stem	jackielday@aol.com
Vivian Jones	Wake Forest	joyce.wilson@ci.wake-forest.nc.us
Kenn Gardner	Wake County	citizens4kenn@aol.com
Rick Rowe	Wake County	rrowe@co.wake.nc.us
Marti Gibson	City of Raleigh	Marti.Gibson@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Barry Baker	Granville County	planning@granvillecounty.org
Andrea Reese	Duke University	andrea.reese@duke.edu
Drew Cummings	Duke University	drew.cummings@duke.edu
Marissa Archibald	Duke University	mna6@duke.edu
Chris Dreps	UNRBA	dreps@tjcog.org
Sarah Bruce	UNRBA	sarah@tjcog.org
Sherry MacQueen	NC DENR Public Water Supply	sherry.macqueen@ncmail.net
Mary Giorgino	USGS	giorgino@usgs.gov

UNRBA Projects Update

For more information, please see the detailed agenda that was handed out at the meeting, also available at <http://www.unrba.org/> on the "Meetings" web page.

New UNRBA Projects

Chris Dreps briefly discussed the two new planning projects UNRBA has won. Both projects are state-funded, come with promises of additional funding for implementation, and will help UNRBA protect water quality in the Upper Neuse basin.

- UNRBA was contracted by the Eno River Association with funding from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund to create the ***Little River Riparian Corridor Conservation Plan***. UNRBA hopes to begin working on the plan in June and complete it by the year's end. The plan will help identify areas that should be prioritized for riparian corridor restoration and preservation in the Little River watershed.

Becky Heron (UNRBA Chair, Durham County) stated that Durham and Orange County are opening the 400-acre Little River Regional Park in the fall of this year. The counties, with the help of the Eno River Association, the Triangle Land Conservancy, and the State of NC, acquired the land partially to prevent a landfill from being sited there.

The NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program will contract with UNRBA to do the ***Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan*** to address impairment in that water body. UNRBA proposes to work in partnership with USGS, Durham Stormwater Services, Durham City and County Planning, and the Center for Watershed Protection. The plan will help identify restoration and preservation priorities and should be completed by late spring 2005.

Becky Heron mentioned that Durham Soil and Water Conservation may have begun some stream restoration projects near Cheek Road. Chris will contact Eddie Culberson about the project.

Other Announcements

Sherry MacQueen mentioned Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) reports and wellhead protection guidelines for use of state revolving funds, wondering if the same thing could be developed for surface waters in the Upper Neuse. The UNRBA will ask Ms. MacQueen to present information about the SWAP reports to the UNRBA TAC.

Progress on Existing Projects

For more information, please see the detailed agenda that was handed out at the meeting, also available at <http://www.unrba.org/> on the "Meetings" web page.

1) Upper Neuse Watershed Evaluation Tool (WET)

Chris updated the Board on the progress of the WET project. This national pilot project is a GIS-based tool for local governments, UNRBA, and resource agencies that will automate many important watershed analysis functions such as subwatershed delineation. Mary Giorgino (USGS) added that one of the reasons that the Upper Neuse was chosen for the pilot is because of UNRBA's long history of proactive efforts to protect the watershed. The draft tool will be

complete by late summer 2004. To learn more about the tool, see the "Projects and Activities" page of the UNRBA website (www.unrba.org).

Becky Heron inquired about the scale at which the tool applies, to which Chris replied that the tool can be used at different watershed scales.

The group also commented on the need to ensure that the tool is kept current and updated.

2) Site Evaluation Tool (SET)

Chris Dreps provided an update and a handout on the SET (for more details on the SET, see notes on the "Projects and Activities" web pages). The SET is a pre-design evaluation and screening tool that helps a site developer consider BMP configurations, effectiveness, and costs early in the process. The SET can also help community planners evaluate development impacts. The draft tool will be ready for beta testing in July.

Kevin Martin pointed out that innovative approaches are not often implemented by developers even if allowable by code and DWQ stormwater regulations because they require additional review under Clean Water Act section 401 requirements. He recommended that UNRBA petition DWQ to include innovative BMPs in their list of allowable practices. Kevin offered to give Chris specifics via email and also referred him to John Dorney for more information. Kevin prefaced his comments by saying that the process of working on the SET had encouraged the state to give credence to BMPs they would normally have been slow to consider.

3) Watershed Plan Implementation

Chris Dreps presented an update of progress implementing the recommendations of the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan. Most all of the jurisdictions in the Upper Neuse Basin have been contacted regarding Plan recommendations. Chris has communicated with both staff and governing bodies of these jurisdictions. Jurisdictions have also identified "implementation teams" to guide UNRBA Plan implementation. UNRBA's new intern, Sarah Bruce, will be contacting local government staff to obtain more detailed information on their activities.

4) Proposal to Kerr-Tar COG for Plan Implementation Support

Chris has proposed to Neil Mallory, Executive Director of the Kerr-Tar COG, to receive staff support (5-10% FTE) from a Kerr-Tar COG planner. The nature of the work would be to support implementation efforts on the UN Watershed Management Plan. Chris discussed the past precedent for having staff support at KTCOG for UNRBA activities and attested that this relationship proved very fruitful. This support is especially necessary now due to the demand for his attention in other jurisdictions.

Jack Day (Stem) volunteered to help get the word out about UNRBA in the KTCOG area.

Jimmy Clayton (Person County) asserted that efforts that promote cooperation are desirable.

Becky Heron called for a motion to express Board support for Chris to draft and present a proposal to KTCOG to obtain a portion of a KTCOG planner's time. Jimmy Clayton so moved, seconded by Jack Day. The motion passed unanimously.

FY 2004-2005 Budget Amendment

For more information on the interim budget that was approved at the meeting, please see the detailed meeting agenda that was handed out at the meeting, also available at <http://www.unrba.org/> on the "Meetings" web page.

Chris Dreps proposed an amendment to the budget to reflect full participation of all existing members of the UNRBA and to add the two new projects (the Little River Riparian Corridor Conservation Plan and the Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan). The new projects are fully funded by outside sources.

Vivian Jones (Wake Forest) moved to approve the amended budget as an interim budget until further amendments are needed. The motion was seconded by Kenn Gardner, and passed unanimously.

Chris will update the Board on further budget amendments once the UNRBA has the two new projects under contract.

Duke Public Policy Study: Water Quality Protection in the Flat River

For more information, see the detailed agenda that was handed out at the meeting, also available at <http://www.unrba.org/> on the "Meetings" link. The full report will also be available on the website under "Downloads."

Students from the Terry Sanford School of Public Policy have completed a policy study of water quality protection in the Lake Michie Watershed. The study addresses the following policy question "What can Durham County, Durham City, Person County, and Orange County do to protect water quality in the Lake Michie (Flat River) watershed in a manner that is fair to communities in the watershed?" Marissa Archibald, Andrea Reese, and Drew Cummings presented the findings of the study.

- In general, voluntary approaches are most likely to be politically feasible, and cooperative approaches confer the most benefits at the least cost. However, cooperative approaches are challenging due the spatial mismatch of costs and benefits between jurisdictions.
- In any case, actions taken sooner are more likely to be cost effective than actions taken after significant degradation has taken place, particularly due to the quasi-permanent nature of land-use development. Actions that can be taken immediately should be identified.
- Drew Cummings emphasized that he believes that NC growth projections for Person County underestimate the growth pressures that I-85 and Guess Road expansions will bring.

Chris Dreps pointed out that the basic questions and findings of the Lake Michie study can be generalized to many watersheds in the Upper Neuse.

The Board agreed with the students' recommendation that education and outreach are very important policy options for both BMPs and land protection. Grants and matching funds to compensate landowners exist, but local governments need to publicize and facilitate these programs within their communities.

Becky Heron asked that Chris send a letter to Professor Art Spengler thanking him for the student support, their professionalism, and their willingness to make this presentation to us.

Next Steps

The next meeting of the UNRBA Board will be scheduled after the next Technical Advisory Committee Meeting.