Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan
Summary of Technical Team Meeting #7
November 9, 2005

Prepared November 10, 2005

Introductions, Agenda, and Announcements

The Technical Team guiding the Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan met at 2:00 P.M. on Wednesday, November 9, 2005 in the Rolling View Community Center on Falls Lake.

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Technical Team or Community Stakeholder	Organization	E-mail address or phone number
John Cox	TT	Durham Stormwater Services	John.cox@durhamnc.gov
Chris Outlaw	TT	Durham Stormwater Services	Chris.Outlaw@durhamnc.gov
Bobby Louque	TT	Durham Stormwater Services	Robert.Louque@durhamnc.gov
Laura Webb Smith	TT	Durham Stormwater Services	Laura.smith@durhamnc.gov
Eric Alsmeyer	TT	US Army Corps of Engineers	Eric.c.alsmeyer@usace.army.mil
Joe Pearce	TT	Durham County Engineering	jpearce@co.durham.nc.us
Joe Albiston	TT	Durham County Engineering	Jalbiston@co.durham.nc.us
Allen McNally	TT	The Crossings Golf Club	Amcnally2@nc.rr.com
Chris Mankoff		NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program	Chris.mankoff@ncmail.net
Linda Johns	TT	Department of Transportation	lmjohns@dot.nc.state.us
George Rogers	TT	City of Raleigh	George.Rogers@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Shari Bryant	TT	NC Wildlife Resources Commission	bryant5@earthlink.net
Chris Dreps		UNRBA	dreps@tjcog.org
Sarah Bruce		UNRBA	sbruce@tjcog.org

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

2:00 Announcements
2:15 Prioritizing Restoration Projects*
3:30 Watershed Management Strategies*

Announcements

1) Chris Dreps said that he had begun to work on convening a meeting of onsite wastewater managers and affiliated personnel who may be able to help address the problem of failing sandfilter onsite wastewater treatment systems in Durham and Durham County. He has conferred with Robert Brown, who has been attempting to find funding for removing failing sand filter and other systems, and has learned that the funding problem is quite complex. Chris was not sure if Mr. Brown had exhausted potential funding opportunities, however. John Cox and Joe Pearce emphasized the importance and potential water quality benefits (nutrients and pathogens) of addressing the failing onsite wastewater treatment system problem in Little Lick Creek.

2) Chris Dreps announced that UNRBA and EEP are working on an extension to the Little Lick Creek project that will allow another public meeting to be held early in 2006 and a few more technical team meetings. EEP is also considering conducting a fourth phase to the planning project, which would focus on implementation and community outreach. Chris

Mankoff said that UNRBA would likely fare well in EEP's decision of who to award the contract to because of UNRBA's previous work in the watershed.

Prioritizing Restoration Projects

Chris Dreps showed a map of 3 types of potential restoration projects that have been identified during the fieldwork: stream repair, buffer restoration, and stormwater retrofits. In August, the Technical Team agreed on a general approach and a weighting system to prioritize each potential project according to three types of criteria: environmental benefits, community benefits or support, and implementation feasibility. Chris showed the example of buffer restoration scores to show how the three critieria determined project ranking.

Other potential restoration projects identified in fieldwork (wetlands restoration, homeowner education, inspection and enforcement, maintenance, trash clean-up, and hotspots) will not be ranked, but will be provided as recommendations to Durham and Durham County. Wetlands restoration is not ranked because there is only one potential project.

Chris Dreps showed results from the third model run for project prioritization. Projects are classified as "priority," "high priority," and "highest priority." Chris showed the highest-scoring potential buffer project, located on The Crossings golf course in subwatershed 5. The highest-scoring potential stream repair project is also located at The Crossings.

Chris Dreps then showed the highest scoring stormwater retrofit projects, both of which are public parks used for active recreation. It is still unclear whether EEP willl be able to get credit for implementing stormwater retrofits and whether their method of calculating nutrients offset will facilitate stormwater BMP implementation.

The Technical Team agreed that we should use the State's standard format to identify the nutrient removal benefits of selected high-priority retrofits. Joe Pearce offered to provide recent Durham County Annual Reports and nutrient offset calculation forms as examples. Durham and Durham County also have their lists of potential retrofit projects prepared for the Neuse NSW requirements. The group strongly felt that this plan should reference these documents.

The Technical Team discussed how the terminology used to geographically locate potential projects may be problematic. Staff have been using the term "reach;" however, this term may be misconstrued if it is thought to have a specific hydrologic meaning. The group thought that a different term ("segment," perhaps) should be used, since streams have been broken up by land use and other geomorphological characteristics.

Chris Dreps then led the group in a discussion of whether and how to combine restoration priorities. That is, should potential projects in close proximity be considered differently from potential projects that are more isolated from other potential projects? Chris said that the subwatershed assessment committee had concluded proximity of other projects is as important as, or possibly more important than, subwatershed restoration need in prioritizing projects. For this reason, the analysis should identify "clusters" of restoration opportunities. Chris then showed several examples of such clusters.

The group also discussed whether critical lands protection opportunities should be considered in the clusters, and if so, where. Several members said that upstream and headwater lands should be higher priority for protection in relation to clusters of projects.

The Technical Team agreed that we should prioritize stream restoration projects that are combined with stormwater retrofit projects. However, there was disagreement about emphasizing the clustering approach with buffer restoration projects. On one hand, Joe Pearce emphasized the pollutant removal benefits of replacing in-stream stormwater outfalls with level spreaders that convert concentrated runoff to sheet flow and allow it to travel through the riparian buffer before entering the stream. However, Shari Bryant and Eric Alsmeyer feel that the secondary benefits of buffers (bank stabilization, habitat, temperature regulation) are as important as their pollutant removal functions and that buffer restoration should be prioritized regardless of the stormwater retrofit situation. Joe Pearce added that discharging outfalls can cause significant lateral movement of a stream bed, which can undermine both stream and buffer restoration attempts.

The group discussed how important it is that clusters of projects be undertaken in conjunction with a monitoring effort to quantify improvements. Even if the monitoring and restorations were only done in one pilot catchment area, data linking restorations to water quality improvements would be extremely valuable to justifying future projects.

The next steps to prioritizing restoration projects are to finalize project prioritization, revise technical memorandum #3 ("Setting Priorities for Watershed Restoration Projects") to include the prioritization results, and to draft technical memorandum #4 ("Priorities for Watershed Restoration Projects in Little Lick Creek").

Little Lick Creek Management Strategies

Chris Dreps asked the group to start thinking about how to organize the management strategies that will be presented in the Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan. The plan will be comprehensive, in that it will consider multiple management strategies. Chris proposed to organize these strategies into three categories: 1) restoration strategies; 2) strategies to prevent future degradation; and 3) strategies to strengthen stewardship of the watershed.

Watershed restoration strategies would include

- Stream repair projects
- Buffer restoration projects
- Stormwater retrofit projects
- "Hot spot" detection & elimination (including onsite sand filter wastewater systems)

Strategies to prevent future degradation may include

- Critical lands protection (includes acquisition, easements, ordinance changes recs.)
- Better site design and construction

Strengthening watershed stewardship may include

- Improved enforcement of existing rules
- Watershed outreach and education
- Adopt-A-Stream programs
- Stream monitoring

The group discussed numerous recommendations that might be included under these headings. Chris will work with partners to draft the recommendations, and Technical Team members will identify the recommendation summaries that they hope to review.

The entire Technical Team will of course have another opportunity to review the compiled text of the entire section on recommended watershed management strategies.

Next Steps

The next Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Planning Technical Team meeting will be on Wednesday, December 14 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.