

Orange County Staff Review of Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan June 12, 2003 Meeting Summary

Prepared June 12, 2003

UNRBA 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.

On June 12, 2003, Chris Dreps of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met with staff from Orange County in Hillsborough. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Review the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan (the Plan);
- Discuss the management strategies proposed for Orange County; and
- Receive staff guidance for proceeding with the introduction of the Plan.

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Department/Program
Tom Altieri	Planning
Craig Benedict	Planning
Paul Thames	Engineering
Ren Ivins	Planning
Perry Sugg	Planning
Chris Dreps	UNRBA
Ben Bearden	UNRBA

Presentation

Chris Dreps summarized the Plan's analysis and the general recommendations. He then presented the recommendations specific to Orange County:

- Density Limits or nitrogen & phosphorous performance standards
- Ordinance revisions for 100-foot buffers (conservation zone only)
- Enhanced peak flow management
- Upper Neuse long-term monitoring program
- Septic system recommendations
- Enhanced construction site inspections and enforcement
- Enhanced animal operations inspections
- Stormwater quality BMP inspections and enforcement
- Education for "Low-Impact Development" and buffer maintenance
- Targeted lands acquisition
- Forestry/Agriculture BMPs
- General watershed education and adopt-a-stream program
- NPDES Program Requirements
- Stream, riparian, and wetland restoration projects
- Stormwater retrofits

A general estimate of the marginal costs of implementing the Plan in Orange County is \$6,600 per year in year 1. The cost of a septic system inspection and maintenance program would be

\$705,250 per year in year 1 (this cost could be borne by the system owners). Costs for all programs will increase with inflation and growth.

Discussion

Craig Benedict suggested that Chris tell the commissioners about meeting with the OC planning staff to discuss plan recommendations. The discussion involved addressing challenges to implementation as well as how the plan recommendations correlate with County goals.

Craig recommended that technical aspects of the plan be addressed before the commission.

Craig suggested changing terminology from "Drinking Water Safety" to Drinking Water Quality.

Craig wanted to know when the TAZ data used in the analysis were created.

Craig suggested that Chris refer to the CWP reports that correlating chlorophyll a to impervious surface.

Craig mentioned using a chart that graphically depicts a minimum "quality of streams" threshold level beyond which streams would become severely impaired, how Orange County is rapidly approaching that level, and how the plan recommendations can stabilize streams now prevent streams from exceeding this threshold.

Craig and Paul wondered why the West fork Eno had such high impervious surface under the buildout scenarios – there may not be any protection from conversion of farmland to residential.

Craig clarified that the Orange County Future Urban Development Zone is the 50-year sewer boundary. Also, the Critical Area Zones need to be updated for Orange County

Ren suggested adding another row that correlates percent impervious surface to lot density in the recommendations summary table. This will help the commissioners to better visualize the recommendations.

Craig mentioned that Orange County won't allow use of BMP's as a reason to allow increased impervious area, only to enhance current imperviousness.

Craig wanted to know why two overlapping river basins have different recommendations and what the justification is for more stringent recommendations in one over the other.

Craig also wanted to know the underlying assumptions for "major site" definitions.

Ren mentioned that the cost estimates for Orange County will be 0 for the inspections and that Orange County has no BMP inspections.

Paul mentioned that NC Forestry Service is not interested in insuring regulated BMPs are installed or inspected and are not interested in water quality.

Craig said that a Commission work session would be held in Late August/ Early September, and he would like to reference the watershed analysis in their comprehensive plan presentation to the Commission.

Next steps