

UNRBA Technical Advisory Committee

March 14, 2007 Meeting Summary

Prepared March 15, 2007

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.

Introductions and Meeting Objectives

The Technical Advisory Committee of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) met at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 14, 2007 in the Triangle J Council of Governments conference room.

Meeting agenda:

- UNRBA updates
- Local involvement in implementation planning
- Recommendation Sheet #6: Enhanced Septic System Maintenance and Inspections Program*
- Recommendation Sheet #10: Enhanced Animal Operations
- Recommendation Sheet #15: Agricultural BMP Education & Outreach
- Recommendation Sheet #16: Stream and Wetland Restoration
- Recommendation Sheet #17: BMP Retrofits

* Approved, contingent on TAC email approval of amendments agreed upon at meeting.

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Organization	E-mail address
Nancy Newell	City of Durham Water Management	nancy.newell@durhamnc.gov
Lynwood Faison	Durham Soil & Water Conservation	lynwoodf@durhamcountync.gov
Eddie Culberson	Durham Soil & Water Conservation	eculberson@co.durham.nc.us
Robin Watson	NCDA & Consumer Services	robin.watson@ncmail.net
Terry Hackett	Orange County Planning	THackett@co.orange.nc.us
Brent Bogue	Orange Soil & Water Conservation	brent.bogue@nc.usda.gov
Joe Albiston	Durham County Engineering	jalbiston@co.durham.nc.us
Chester Lowder	NC Farm Bureau	chester.lowder@ncfb.org
Tom Hill	Wake County Environmental Services	tom.hill@co.wake.nc.us
George Rogers	City of Raleigh Public Utilities	george.rogers@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Barry Baker	Granville County Planning	planning@granvillecounty.org
Paula Murphy	Person County Planning	PMurphy@personcounty.net
Shelby Powell	Kerr-Tar Council of Governments	spowell@kerrtar.org
Chris Dreps	Upper Neuse River Basin Association	dreps@tjcog.org
Sarah Bruce	Upper Neuse River Basin Association	sbruce@tjcog.org

UNRBA Updates

Chris Dreps reported that the stakeholder team for the 319-funded Lick Creek local watershed restoration plan has met twice and that the project team has completed fieldwork. Information on the Lick Creek Watershed Restoration Plan is online at www.unrba.org/lick.

Chris Dreps said that UNRBA will be receiving funding from the NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program to implement local watershed plans in the Upper Neuse Basin under an EEP Phase IV contract.

Chris Dreps mentioned that the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy stakeholder process has been funded and would commence in March of 2008.

Chris Dreps summarized the UNRBA's application for an EPA Targeted Watershed Grant to implement watershed restoration strategies in the Little River and East Durham. We should know if it was approved in April.

Local Involvement in Implementation

Sarah Bruce passed out a timeline table and pointed out the greater emphasis on public participation (per guidance from the Implementation Steering Committee), particularly in the stages we are currently engaged in: drafting the recommendation sheets and identifying the focus areas. UNRBA staff will be visiting local governments to build interest in the Implementation Plan and obtain input from member government staff, elected officials, and advisory boards ("localities"). She said that the TAC has some critical responsibilities in this process, specifically to:

- 1) Be a technical resource to localities on watershed management strategies and implementation issues;
- 2) Facilitate communication and feedback between localities and UNRBA; and
- 3) Assist with Local Management Strategy Reviews.

Sarah Bruce and Shelby Powell are conducting this process and will be contacting TAC members to coordinate the meetings with their local governments.

Recommendation Sheet #6: Enhanced Septic System Maintenance and Inspections Program

The TAC approved this recommendation sheet at the last meeting; however, Tom Konsler of Orange County Environmental Health had submitted some additional comments in the meantime (see email from Sarah Bruce 3/8/07 with documents for this meeting). The group approved the revisions for Tom Konsler's comments and offered the following additional comments:

1. If Above & Beyond Step 1 is indeed required by state statute, it should be listed under Basic Implementation Steps. Sarah will follow up with Tom Konsler on this point and include the applicable statutory reference.
2. Fines may not be a good funding opportunity; some fines are dedicated to other purposes. Sarah will follow up on this point and delete that funding source from the list if necessary.
3. We should include a statutory reference for the septic installer certification law in a footnote for the text quoting the strategy as stated in the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan.

The group agreed to approve these revisions to the recommendation sheet via email.

Recommendation Sheet #10: Enhanced Animal Operations

The group read over the text of the recommendation sheet and discussed the following (see also comments for #15, some of which also apply):

1. The threshold for permitting poultry operations depends on whether they are “wet” (flushed with water) or “dry” operations. Thresholds may be affected by proposed amendments to the non-discharge regulations (the “2T”, or 15A NCAC 2T, amendments).
2. Operators must track where waste is applied.
3. There is a gap in regulations for residential developments that include an animal component, such as subdivisions designed for horse owners, that may have an excessive density of animals. Soil & Water Districts are often not notified when such developments are undergoing review & permitting.
4. Every county should have an operational agreement or MOU with their Soil & Water District to clarify responsibilities and provisions for different situations. Counties that already have something like this may need to update them. Orange County has such an MOU and is considering an ongoing workgroup as well.
5. It would be helpful to provide citizens with a contact list for particular issues that they may encounter so they know who to call with problems.
6. Local Soil & Water Districts can be very helpful in PREVENTING problems, in addition to helping correct them after they happen.
7. In addition to notifying DWQ, the county should notify its Soil & Water District whenever it issues a notice of violation to an animal operation.

Sarah will revise the recommendation sheet in light of the discussion and share it with interested parties.

Recommendation Sheet #15: Agricultural BMP Education & Outreach

The group read over the text of the recommendation sheet and offered the following comments (see also comments for #10, some of which also apply):

1. The title of the recommendation sheet should be Agricultural Best Management Practices Education and Outreach.
2. Counties should participate in priority area determinations.
3. The description should state that Soil & Water follows up with farmers to check up on the BMPs they install.
4. Clarify the language about the digital mapping efforts; a basic step might be to match up local data with the FSA's information on farms/fields.
5. Encourage counties to preserve farmlands. VADs are an important first step in this process. Mention how a transfer of development rights program could be a valuable way to maintain working farms.
6. Emphasize how local investments in farmland protection leverage a great deal more value.
7. Counties should consider generational and other nonpermanent easements; many more farmers might be willing to enter into less binding agreements.

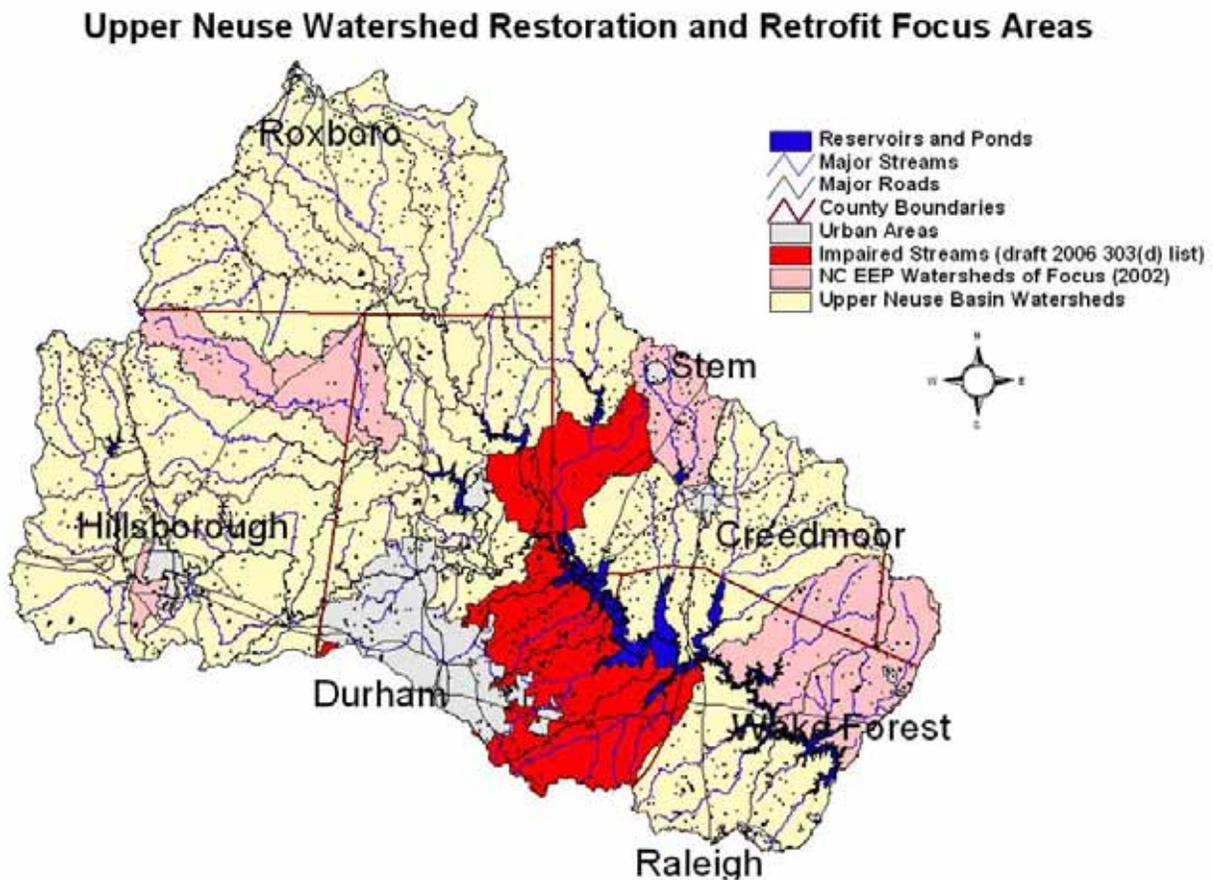
Sarah will revise the recommendation sheet in light of the discussion and share it with meeting participants and other reviewers.

Recommendation Sheet #16 (Stream and Wetland Restoration) and #17 (BMP Retrofits)

Due to time constraints, the group elected to not discuss these in detail.

Chris Dreps briefly went over how Focus Areas might be determined for these recommended strategies. For #16, the criteria include:

1. Impaired streams
2. NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program (NC EEP) Watersheds of Focus



Next Meeting

Sarah Bruce will solicit availabilities and announce the next meeting via email.