

UNRBA Technical Advisory Committee
DRAFT June 9, 2005 Meeting Summary

Prepared June 10, 2005

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 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, June 9, 2005 in the Triangle J Council of Governments conference room. The meeting objectives were to:

- Update the TAC on UNRBA projects;
- Inform the TAC about the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy and Falls Lake Land Protection Initiative;
- Decide how the UNRBA TAC can interact with both of the above efforts; and
- Present the draft outline of the Upper Neuse Watershed Implementation Plan.

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Organization	E-mail address or phone
Chris Dreps	UNRBA	dreps@tjcog.org
Sarah Bruce	Triangle J Council of Governments	sbruce@tjcog.org
Katie Ertmer	Franklin County Planning	Kertmer@co.franklin.nc.us
Shelby Powell	Kerr-Tar Council of Governments	spowell@kerrtarco.org
Deborah Amaral	NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program	Deborah.Amaral@ncmail.net
Nancy Newell	City of Durham, Water Mgmt. Dept.	Nancy.Newell@durhamnc.gov
John Cox	City of Durham Stormwater	jcox@ci.durham.nc.us
Mark Senior	City of Raleigh	Mark.senior@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Will Autry	Orange Co. Sed. & Erosion	wautry@co.orange.nc.us
Marti Gibson	City of Raleigh	Marti.gibson@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Margaret Hauth	Town of Hillsborough	Margaret.Hauth@hillsboroughnc.org
Amy Hathaway	City of Raleigh Stormwater	amy.hathaway@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Barry Baker	Granville County Planning	Planning@granvillecounty.org
George Rogers	Town of Wake Forest	George.Rogers@ci.wake-forest.nc.us
Tom Hill	Wake County Environmental Svcs.	Thill@co.wake.nc.us
Ben Hitchings	Triangle J Council of Governments	Benh@tjcog.org
Mike Jennings	Wake County Environmental Svcs.	Mjennings@co.wake.nc.us
Cherri Smith	Durham City Parks and Recreation	Cherri.smith@durhamnc.gov
Kathleen Snyder	Durham Planning Dept.	Kathleen.snyder@durhamnc.gov
Kelly Johnson	NC Division of Water Quality	Kelly.P.Johnson@ncmail.net
George Hunt	NC Division of Water Quality	George.hunt@ncmail.net
Reid Wilson	Conservation Trust for NC	Reid@ctnc.org
Rich Gannon	NC Division of Water Quality	rich.gannon@ncmail.net
Syd Miller	Triangle J Council of Governments	smiller@tjcog.org

Announcements

Next UNRBA Board meeting—June 15, 2005 at Rollingview Recreation Center, Falls Lake. See www.unrba.org/meetings for more information.

UNRBA Projects Update

Chris Dreps updated the TAC on UNRBA projects. (For details about specific projects, see the "Projects and Activities" page at www.unrba.org.)

Watershed Evaluation Tool (WET)

The WET is a GIS-based watershed delineation tool that UNRBA is developing in conjunction with the US Geological Survey (USGS) and the NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program. On May 3, the USGS released the draft WET to the task group. Task group members are now testing the tool, and the USGS will make revisions later this summer.

Critical Lands Protection Planning

The goal of UNRBA critical lands protection planning is to prioritize lands for protection in the Upper Neuse. The UNRBA is completing the Little River Riparian Corridor Conservation Plan, and the Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan includes a critical land protection component.

The UNRBA is a partner in the Falls Lake Land Protection Initiative, which seeks to identify and protect lands critical to water quality throughout the Basin. The Falls Lake Initiative is described in more detail later in this summary.

Watershed Restoration Plans

The UNRBA and partners have identified potential restoration projects as part of the Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan, funded by the NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program.

The City of Durham has proposed several innovative projects implementing the Ellerbe Creek Local Watershed Plan.

The UNRBA has proposed to the NC Division of Water Quality 319 grants program a restoration plan for Lick Creek, next to Little Lick Creek in Durham County. The Falls Lake Initiative Partners have proposed a restoration plan for Knap of Reeds Creek.

Site Evaluation Tool (SET)

The draft SET, User Guide, and Model Documentation are completed. The UNRBA and Tetra Tech have been beta testing the SET, and we have version 4. The UNRBA and Tetra Tech will conduct a training workshop for interested UNRBA TAC members and SET Task Group members.

The training location has yet to be determined. It should include 15 computer stations, and it should be in or very near the watershed. The TAC suggested some potential locations, including a room in the Durham City Hall (probably too small) and Durham Technical Community College (Chris will look into this location).

Linking Major Upper Neuse Management Efforts

The TAC heard presentations about two major efforts beginning in the Upper Neuse River Basin, the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy process and the Falls Lake Land Protection Initiative.

Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy Process

George Hunt, NC Division of Water Quality, spoke briefly about the monitoring, modeling, and stakeholder process. He also presented the proposed timeline. See the meeting power point presentation for more detail (www.unrba.org/meetings/...???)

The NC Division of Water Quality has held one stakeholder information meeting, and another is planned for July 8, 1 p.m. at the TJCOG offices. The NCDWQ is also forming a technical advisory committee to provide guidance for monitoring and modeling. After the July 8 meeting, George will meet with people interested in participating on the DWQ TAC.

Falls Lake Initiative

Reid Wilson, Conservation Trust for NC, spoke about the Falls Lake Initiative. The Conservation Trust for NC (CTNC) is land trust and umbrella organization for land trusts in North Carolina. CTNC helps facilitate strategic land conservation partnerships between trusts, local governments, and other partners.

The objective of the Falls Lake Initiative is to protect water quality through strategic conservation efforts. Partners include local trusts (Triangle Greenways Council, Triangle Land Conservancy, Eno River Association, Tar River Land Conservancy), national trusts (Trust for Public Land, ??), local governments (Raleigh, Wake County), regional councils (TJCOG, Kerr-Tar COG), and river protection groups (Neuse River Foundation, Upper Neuse River Basin Association).

The Falls Lake Initiative includes three phases:

1. Create comprehensive coordinated conservation plan in the Upper Neuse (to be done in 1 year);
2. Increase significantly the outreach to landowners, local government officials, and the general public; and
3. Acquire land or conservation easements on priority lands identified by the plan.

The partnership has applied for funding from various sources, including the NC Attorney General's Environmental Enhancement Grants program, the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and US EPA Section 319 Grant funding (administered by NC Division of Water Quality). In addition, CTNC and other partners are lobbying for a \$1 billion bond for land protection. This effort, called "Land for Tomorrow" has the sponsorship of 34 legislators.???

Tom Hill mentioned that Wake County is beginning new planning and land protection efforts around Falls Lake.

Cherri Smith announced that Durham City and County Planning is creating an open space protection plan for Lick, Little Lick, and Panther Creeks. The effort is tied to the UNRBA's Little Lick Creek Local Watershed Plan.

Integrating Falls Lake Efforts

Chris Dreps provided a handout describing several common components shared among the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan, the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy, and the Falls Lake Land Protection Initiative. There are several potential overlaps where coordination between the UNRBA TAC, the NC Division of Water Quality, and the Falls Lake Initiative partnership would be useful:

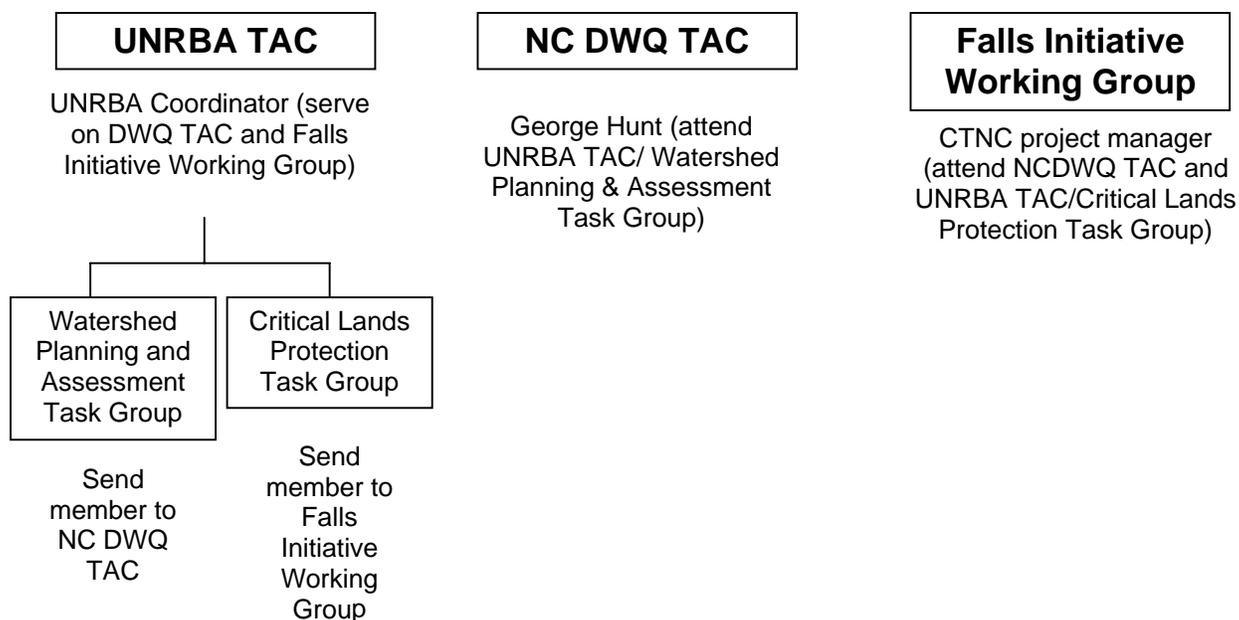
- Focus Area—Falls Lake (in addition, the UNRBA is concerned with other water supply watersheds in the Upper Neuse)
- Stakeholders—All efforts must include local government involvement
- Data—Data requirements overlap, and the Upper Neuse Watershed Evaluation Tool can provide much of these data.
- Watershed Modeling—pre-modeling data prep can be consolidated. Watershed modeling for the Falls Lake portion of the Upper Neuse Plan (version 2) and Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy could be one in the same and could model the priority lands recommended by the Falls Lake Initiative.
- Time Frame—All projects are in beginning stages now.

Chris Dreps also talked about the how the next version of the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan could integrate products from the various efforts.

1. The Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy
2. Nutrient management strategies for remaining water supply reservoirs
3. The Falls Lake Initiative's critical lands protection analysis (modeled as part of a "conservation management scenario")
4. Restoration plans for impaired and degraded watersheds
5. Additional strategies recommended for meeting the UNRBA's multiple management objectives (for example, aquatic habitat protection, recreation, flood damage prevention, drought, etc.)

The TAC then discussed approaches for integrating the planning processes. As John Cox mentioned, this will be necessary to avoid potential meeting burnout. The group also recognized that if we do not integrate these processes, local government staff on the TAC may be forced to decide between UNRBA TAC meetings and NC DWQ Falls Lake Stakeholder and TAC meetings. Since the state's Falls Lake efforts could lead to new nutrient management requirements, local staff would be forced to choose the latter.

Chris Dreps proposed an approach to maximize efficiency and minimize meeting time while meeting the objectives of the UNRBA, DWQ, and Falls Lake Initiative. He recommends that the UNRBA TAC should be the planning and management arm for providing local government input into both the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy and the Falls Lake Initiative. The manager of each major effort would attend relevant meetings of the other two projects. The UNRBA would use task groups to participate in these efforts and provide feedback to the UNRBA TAC and Board. The following diagram shows the proposed approach.



The Watershed Planning and Assessment Task Group would be a new task group meant specifically for sending UNRBA TAC representatives to the NC Division of Water Quality's Technical Advisory Committee and reporting findings back to the UNRBA TAC and Board. This task Group would also make recommendations to the UNRBA about how to best integrate the NC DWQ findings into the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan.

The Critical Lands Protection Task Group already exists, although they have not met for a while and would need reforming. This task group would serve on the Falls Lake Initiative's working group to help guide criteria selection, analysis, and implementation. The task group would also report recommendations back to the UNRBA for integrating the results from this major effort into the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Plan.

Both task groups would follow the basic UNRBA task group approach, which is to address technical issues in an efficient and effective manner. TAC task groups:

- Are objective or task oriented;
- Include folks with special interest or relevant expertise;
- Most exist only exist for the amount of time necessary to complete task;
- Potentially include expertise from partners outside the UNRBA;
- Report to UNRBA TAC and, if necessary, Board of Directors.

Examples of task groups that have been successful include the Site Evaluation Tool Task Group and the Watershed Evaluation Tool Task Group.

The TAC recommended that the UNRBA form the Watershed Planning and Assessment Task Group and re-form the Critical Lands Protection Task Group. Chris Dreps will send more information about each task group, it's responsibilities to TAC members. Interested TAC members will sign up.

Upper Neuse Watershed Implementation Plan

Chris Dreps updated the TAC on progress made on the Upper Neuse Watershed Management Implementation Plan. Chris reminded the TAC of the process that he presented to the UNRBA Board on September 30, 2004. The UNRBA, TJCOG, and Kerr-Tar COG have reviewed local government watershed-related regulations and programs. We have also created a proposed outline for the Implementation Plan. We have also begun drafting detailed descriptions for each of the 19 recommendations in the plan and “gap analyses” for each local government in the basin.

Chris presented the draft Implementation Plan outline. Shelby Powell then presented an outline of the 19 recommended management strategies. Shelby then presented an example of a detailed description sheet for recommendation #12: Targeted Land Protection and Conservation Easements. The detailed description sheet includes the following information necessary for implementing each strategy.

- Watershed management category (e.g., new development site management)
- Implementation Scale (e.g., regional or local)
- Applicable jurisdictions (where the recommendation applies)
- Detailed description of recommendation, including justification
- Basic implementation steps
- Implementation alternatives (other ways of meeting this recommendation)

The TAC agreed with this basic approach and liked the detailed recommendation descriptions. Barry Baker (Granville County Planning) commented that we need to provide cost considerations in the detailed description. UNRBA staff members agree that some detailed cost analysis will be necessary, especially for regional recommendations for which the local governments cannot consider costs individually. Chris recommends an incremental (learn as we work) approach to cost analysis because full cost-benefit analysis for each of the 19 recommendations may not be feasible. We will try to work out the details as we work through the recommendation presented today.

Sarah Bruce presented an example “gap analysis” sheet for county governments. The gap analysis spreadsheet will be provided as indices to the Implementation Plan. These spreadsheets tell each jurisdiction the strategies recommended, the approach currently taken, whether the current approach meets the recommendation, and what additional steps could be taken to meet the recommendation. The gap analysis spreadsheet is to be used in conjunction with the more detailed recommendation descriptions. The TAC agreed with this approach.

Next TAC Meeting

The TAC agreed to meet before the next Board meeting and to continue to tentatively schedule meetings for the Wednesday before UNRBA BOD meetings (UNRBA BOD meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of every other month). The next TAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday August 3rd or 10th. Chris will e-mail these two options to the TAC for response.