

UNRBA Technical Advisory Committee December 14, 2009 Meeting Summary

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 1:30 p.m. on Monday, December 14, 2009 at the Triangle J Council of Governments offices.

Meeting agenda:

- Announcements & Project Updates
- UNRBA Implementation Planning
- Spring UNRBA Local Government Presentations
- Falls Lake NMS: UNRBA Comments for Dec 23. Deadline

Meeting attendees are listed below.

Name	Organization	E-mail address
Chris Roberts	Durham County Engineering	croberts@co.durham.nc.us
Ed Buchan	City of Raleigh Public Utilities	Edward.Buchan@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Terry Hackett	Orange County Erosion Control	Thackett@co.orange.nc.us
John Cox	City of Durham Stormwater Services	John.Cox@durhamnc.gov
Paula Murphy	Person County Planning	pmurphy@personcounty.net
Melinda Clark	Wake County Environmental Services	melinda.clark@co.wake.nc.us
Melissa Hodges	Town of Butner Planning	planning@butnenc.org
Barry Baker	Granville County Planning	Barry.Baker@granvillecounty.org
Lindsay Mize	South Granville Sewer and Water Authority	lmize@sgwasa.org
Haywood Phthisic	LNBA/NRCA	Hmp3rd@aol.com
Karen Duke	City of Raleigh Planning	Karen.duke@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Martin Stankus	City of Raleigh Planning	Martin.Stankus@ci.raleigh.nc.us
Scott Miles	Town of Wake Forest Engineering	smiles@wakeforestnc.gov
Sandra Wilbur	City of Durham Stormwater Services	Sandra.Wilbur@durhamnc.gov
Mike Schlegel	Triangle J Council of Governments	mschlegel@tjcog.org
Heather Saunders	Upper Neuse River Basin Association	hsaunders@tjcog.org
Sarah Bruce	Upper Neuse River Basin Association	sbruce@tjcog.org

Announcements & Project Updates

Sarah noted that the next Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy (Falls Lake NMS) full stakeholder meeting will be Thursday, January 21st from 1-4 pm at the Durham Water Management & Maintenance Facility ([directions](#)). Sarah encouraged stakeholders to come prepared to provide feedback on the draft rules. Sarah also noted that draft rules are available for review on the wiki.

Heather noted that the Lick Creek Watershed Restoration Plan has been completed and is available online. Heather also provided an update on Phase IV Restoration efforts and noted that the UNRBA has been working with the local governments, land trusts, soil and water conservation districts, and advocacy groups to pair restoration opportunities with suitable implementing agencies. Heather encouraged stakeholders to call her if they have any questions about projects or project implementation.

Heather also provided an update on the development of a comprehensive monitoring plan for the Upper Neuse. The 205(j) proposal was not selected for funding in this year's funding cycle. We will be resubmitting the proposal to develop a monitoring plan in April for DWQ's Section 319 Grant program.

Sarah mentioned the need to find and/or initiate more accurate stream maps for the Upper Neuse. Sarah mentioned that Bill Holman is interested in this effort and that she has been in touch with the CGIA stream mapping coordinators. Sarah asked about local government stream network information. Melinda Clark said that Wake County was conducting stream cross sections but no stream mapping. John Cox said that Durham had locally generated stream maps.

Sarah noted that there is currently no Division of Environmental Health (DEH) Source Water Protection Plan for the Upper Neuse Basin or systems therein, but these plans are required to access Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. These funds have mostly gone to infrastructure improvements, but land acquisition is also possible. Source Water Assessment *Reports* are complete for each system as a whole, and these along with other basin plans (e.g., UNCWI, UNRBA's management plan) provide a good basis for Source Water Protection Plans; the SWAP Program has sent the reports to Sarah and she can provide them upon request. The focus of the SWPP might be somewhat flexible.

Implementation Planning

Sarah said that almost all of the recommendation sheets, which flesh out Upper Neuse Watershed Management Strategies, are finished and finalized. The LID Recommendation Sheet is the only one remaining; Sandi Wilbur, Terry Hackett, Barry Baker, Lindsay Mize, Chris Roberts, and Melinda Clark expressed an interest in helping with this.

The Point Source strategies do not have recommendation sheets. Lindsay and Mike said the Falls NMS rules would essentially take care of any point source issues and they are better defined. The TAC did not desire to see effort going toward developing recommendation sheets for point sources.

Local Management Strategy Reviews

Sarah described the TJCOG Mayors and Chairs meeting that took place December 8 at which Region J local governments discussed management of the Falls Lake watershed. Sarah thanked Raleigh, Durham, Durham County, and Wake County staff for mostly completing Local Management Strategy Review (LMSR) information for the memo prepared for the meeting. Sarah is working to complete remaining LMSRs for Region J; Mike Ciriello is working on remaining LMSRs in Region K. The TAC indicated that having the LMSRs viewable by other jurisdictions was acceptable.

Sarah noted that the compiled results were tabulated into a YES/NO format for memo for the Managers and Chairs and that this determination was based on self-reported data that had a highly variable degree of backing in the form of a comment or a reference. The TAC did not

feel that determination of whether the recommendation was being met overall was important and agreed that the nuances associated with having the steps shown were important to maintain.

Focus Areas

Sarah said that maps had been generated for each strategy showing where the strategy would be most crucial, such as environmental features or urbanizing areas. These are posted online at <http://unrba.wordpress.com/>. Sarah said that the blog was also a good place to submit Statements of Concern. Sarah said that the approach was becoming to apply the strategies wherever they apply, and trying to look at things on the jurisdictional level instead of prioritizing across the basin, and that the basinwide data on growth was very coarse (by 14-digit subwatershed). Some of the data is outdated and it would be helpful to acquire the DWQ Falls model data. Sarah indicated that she would like the UNRBA to be a better clearinghouse of data and information.

Watershed Management Plan Implementation Memorandum

A “gap analysis” memorandum would analyze which strategies are being done and which are needed where. Sarah stated the analysis will be presented by local government to lend appreciation for local efforts and approaches. The group suggested changing the name of the analysis to something more constructive to further emphasize that the focus is not on shortcomings. The memorandum and accompanying analysis is discussed further under the next heading/agenda item.

Dec. 8 TJCOG Mayors & Chairs Meeting

At the December TJCOG Mayors & Chairs meeting, the group had indicated that the region needed two things to help inform management of the Falls Lake watershed; one, an inter-jurisdictional assessment of ongoing efforts, and two, an inter-governmental body to coordinate management activities. The UNRBA is already set up to meet these needs. Sarah encouraged UNRBA members to submit agenda items for UNRBA Board of Directors’ meetings if issues arise over Falls Lake.

Drew Cummings said that the Mayors & Chairs group needs someone to synthesize and interpret the results of all the program assessment information for them into some meaningful take-home message. The TAC pointed out several challenges: strategies are implemented differently within each locality; many departments are usually involved; local governments define things differently and have different goals; and usually “the devil is in the details” (important information is lost when summarized).

The TAC suggested that Sarah put together a short summary of each strategy, highlight good programs, highlight common concerns (e.g., interdepartmental coordination is a challenge across the board), and recommend key steps to implement. Sarah indicated that ideally LMSRs would be updated BY local staff as programs evolve; she will create an online framework (e.g., FTP) that would allow local staff to provide the updates themselves. Sarah strongly emphasized the need for respondents to fill out the comment boxes for each step on the LMSRs so that the more meaningful qualitative analysis is possible.

Barry Baker inquired as to why other Upper Neuse communities had not been included in the meeting; staff had received questions based on the event’s media coverage as a Falls Lake meeting. Sarah said that the meeting was of TJCOG Mayors and Chairs, but this further underscores the need to have these conversations taking place under the UNRBA umbrella.

Spring Presentations to UNRBA Members

Sarah is planning to visit local government elected bodies this Spring. She will coordinate with staff ahead of time on subject matter, but in general, the topics will be: basics watershed processes, UNRBA organization and projects, Implementation memo, and the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy. Melinda Clark suggested also highlighting local government involvement with the UNRBA (projects and participants over the years).

Sarah will ask that advisory boards, Soil & Water staff and boards, and planning & engineering staff be invited.

Sarah also mentioned that the UNRBA newsletter needs to be getting disseminated better so that local governments are informed about the UNRBA and watershed events/happenings and solicited the TAC's assistance in this regard.

Falls Lake NMS Draft Rules Comments

Sarah said that she would write and distribute draft comments on the draft Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy (NMS) rules by Friday, December 18 and that the UNRBA would have until close of business December 22 to respond to their appropriateness. Comments were due to DWQ on Dec. 23.

Sarah presented a list of possible topics for the UNRBA to submit comments on the draft NMS rules and the TAC discussed some of them.

- The verbiage regarding adaptive management, staging, and assessment needs to be explicit
- The group felt that more accurate stream maps would be incorporated if available, and therefore no comment was necessary
- The TAC asked that the language allow for development of a nonpoint source trading program in the future
- Preservation of existing functions: Floodplain protection, headwater stream mapping/buffering, land conservation, land use management, opportunities for regional controls (don't disincen)
- Impervious area and built-upon area need to be clearly defined
- Need to balance local government objectives for redevelopment vs having consistency across basin.
- Close loopholes in existing Neuse Rules, e.g., requiring that local governments allow nutrient buydown at a specific level
- Scientific Advisory Board needs representation from other watersheds and/or mechanism for local input
- The TAC supported asking for mass caps for dischargers regulated by best available technology in the current draft rules