

Morgan and Little Creeks Local Watershed Planning Initiative

Summary of the October 24th, 2002 opening meeting

Next meeting of the Morgan and Little Creeks Local Watershed Planning Team

We will meet from **2 to 4 pm** on **Thursday, December 5**, at the classroom in the **Totten Center**, which is in the UNC Botanical Garden on the South side of **Chapel Hill**.

Directions:

From I-40: Take exit 273 from the West, 273-B from the East. Turn right onto Highway 54 W, go 2.4 miles; turn left at the traffic light onto Finley Golf Course Road. Go .6 mile and curve right onto Old Mason Farm Road. Go .7 mile, see North Carolina Botanical Garden sign on left; turn left into parking lot.

From the 15-501 and 54 Bypass (Fordham Blvd.): Look for the brown landscaped wall on the south side of Fordham Blvd., .6 mile west of the Hwy 54 overpass. Turn onto Old Mason Farm Road at the east end of the wall. See North Carolina Botanical Garden wooden sign on immediate right and turn right into parking lot.

Two excellent maps can be found with these directions at the following web address:
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/ncbg/info.htm#Directions>

Please remember to take photos of intact and degraded functions, such as hydrology, water quality, and habitat in local streams and wetlands, and bring your cameras to Carrboro Town Hall where the front desk receptionist has a box for them.

Next meeting agenda items:

- Approve minutes
- Discuss consensus building
- Review charter
- Review photos, identified functions, and map

Group members/alternates present

Jim Blose, NC Division of Water Quality
Brent Bogue, USDA NRCS
Shari Bryant, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission
Ed Holland, Orange Water and Sewer Authority
Gail Hughes, Orange Soil and Water Conservation
Ren Ivins, Erosion Control, Orange County Planning and Inspections Department
Gary Jordan, USFWS
Sandy Maunz, Chapel Hill
Tina Moon, Orange County Environment and Resource Conservation District
Sharon Myers, Environment, Health & Safety, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Doug Nicholas, Triangle Land Conservancy
Phil Prete, Town of Carrboro
Johnny Randall, The North Carolina Botanical Garden, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Hollie Rennell, Erosion Control, Orange County Planning and Inspections Department
Fred Royal, Town of Chapel Hill
John Thomas, Jr., US Army Corps of Engineers

Support staff:

Deborah Amaral, Cape Fear River Assembly
Sarah Bruce, Cape Fear River Assembly
Don Freeman, Cape Fear River Assembly
Jason Doll, TetraTech, Inc.
Bonnie Duncan, NC Wetlands Restoration Program

MINUTES

The first meeting of the Morgan and Little Creeks Local Watershed Planning Team was held at the Homestead Community Center in Chapel Hill on October 24, 2002.

The meeting opened with a welcome statement by Deborah Amaral from the Cape Fear River Assembly. Then, everyone went around and introduced themselves and stated what organization they were there on behalf of. The list of meeting attendees can be found on page 1 of this document.

Overview of the NC Wetlands Restoration Program & the Importance of the Local Watershed Planning Process

Bonnie Duncan of the NC Wetlands Restoration Program (WRP) gave a PowerPoint presentation on the local watershed planning process. In brief, this process is how local watershed plans are created. These plans are designed to identify watershed degradation issues and threats to in turn identify strategies for watershed protection and improvement at the local level, and with local assistance. The WRP provides technical assistance and project management to watershed planning groups. Watershed plans are comprehensive and have broad-based participation. This is why lots of input is needed from our stakeholders. Currently, the WRP is able to implement traditional wetlands, stream, and buffer restoration

projects which will be identified through the Local Watershed Planning process. However, the assessment and watershed planning processes encompass much more than traditional wetlands, stream and buffer options. Through this process we are working toward resolving watershed problems through partnership based solutions which include, federal, state, local and other organizational resources and efforts.

For more information, please refer to the PowerPoint presentation hard copies that are provided in stakeholder notebooks, or contact Bonnie Duncan directly at (919) 733-5315 or via e-mail: Bonnie.Duncan@ncmail.net.

Technical Watershed Assessment

Jason Doll, of Tetra Tech, Inc. was hired by the WRP to act as the Project Manager for the technical watershed assessment associated with this planning effort. Jason gave a PowerPoint presentation on the assessment process and described how watershed health and degradation can be quantified. Then, the stages of the technical assessment process were discussed. Within the Scoping phase, project goals are developed and the primary threats to watershed functions are identified. Within the Preliminary Findings phase, existing data resources and available assessment information are gathered and evaluated, and the study area is delineated into more detailed subwatersheds. Within the Detailed Assessment phase, assessment tools (e.g. models, statistical analyses) are developed to evaluate the health of watershed functions under existing and future conditions. In the final phase, Targeting of Management, opportunities are identified for development of specific strategies to protect or restore key watershed functions. Through further application of the assessment tools the prospective strategies are tested as "what if" scenarios, and the scenarios predicted to provide the greatest watershed benefits are prioritized for implementation. Suggestions provided by stakeholders included:

- DWQ report: reviewed in Feb., data available sooner



- Interjurisdictional stormwater advisory committee (UNC, Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Orange County; part of NPDES Phase II) produced draft report of specific recommendations; summary available. Recommendations included increasing public participation and strengthening the water quality monitoring efforts currently underway
- Chapel Hill has low-flow stormwater data
- UNC has developed a stormwater strategy for new development
- DWQ has stormwater sampling data (but limited because of drought)
- UNC biology students have been doing sampling
- WRRI grant proposal to do nutrient and sediment sampling
- Lands Legacy/Orange County: land acquisition program (fee-simple or easements)
- Carrboro has done four quarterly baseline samples and wants to continue this annually. The newest data are not yet posted
- UNC Theses
- 24-hr hourly monitoring data of Meeting of the Waters (guage station, fish study, flow & rainfall data) (www.ehs.unc.edu, environmental affairs link)
- Orange County Inventory of Natural and Historic Resources: currently being revised (done within year) but old one is still available (Sather & Hall, 1998)
- TLC priority preservation areas, habitat plans
- Haw River Assembly data and biological monitoring on Bolin and Morgan Creeks
- State-listed species and natural areas along Morgan Creek
- 1998 Natural Areas Inventory - currently being updated
- University Lake Watershed Study

Jason then continued his presentation by giving examples of functioning and degraded watershed systems, like wetlands, streams, and riparian buffer areas. Functioning streams and riparian areas access their floodplains easily and often meander, dissipating storm flow energy, allowing for a riffle-pool sequence.

The riffle-pool sequence, using large rocks in various formations, allows for deep pools within the stream bed providing good aquatic habitat. Degraded waterways scour the stream bed and stream banks, providing little pollutant removal, stream bank protection, or habitat.

Jason then showed examples of stream restoration and best management practices that had been implemented on NCSU's campus along Rocky Branch. The best management practice projects included bioretention cells and structures used to dissipate water energy from stormwater discharge outlets.

Homework

Disposable cameras were then distributed to the group to photograph more examples of functioning and degraded areas within the specified local watershed. Stakeholders were also given a log to note the location and time at which photos were taken. The information and photographs collected through these efforts will help guide the technical watershed assessment and help develop specific watershed goals and objectives.

Attendees were asked to return cameras by Nov. 22. At the receptionist desk as you walk in the front doors of the Carrboro Town Hall, a box is provided for cameras and journal logs.

Group Charter

Last, Deborah Amaral briefly discussed the Group Charter. She provided draft copies and asked stakeholders to review the document for discussion at the next meeting.

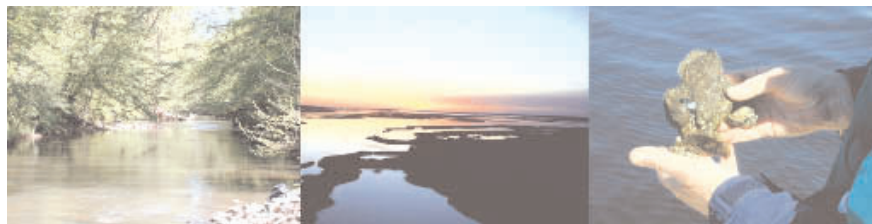


Tools Used to Identify Causes and Sources of Water Quality Degradation

- Land use/land cover
- Sub-drainage divides
- Stormwater outfall survey
- Stream/riparian zone Inventory
- Water quality investigations
- Water quantity model (total discharge, flooding and backwater)
- Water quality model (nitrogen and phosphorus loading -- land use driven model)

A note about expectations:

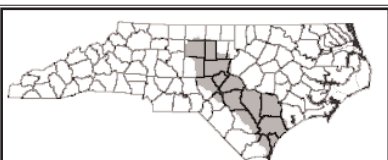
It is extremely critical that if you, as a primary stakeholder, cannot attend any of the scheduled meetings, that you designate and send a representative for your interest or organization in your place. We will not slow down the process because someone missed a meeting. We will distribute minutes following each meeting to keep you apprised of team activities and to allow you to comment prior to or at the beginning of the next meeting as minutes will be approved. Your time is valuable and we want to maximize it in every way possible to ensure we continue to make progress during our limited time together.



<http://www.cfra-nc.org/wrp>

Cape Fear River Assembly
P.O. Box 1089
Fayetteville NC 28302

Telephone: (910) 223-4920
Fax: (910) 486-9057
E-mail: cfra@faynet.com



One River Basin
represented by
Many Voices
with
One Mission