

CHOWAN RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Martin Co. Community College
Bertie Co. Campus
Granville St.
Windsor, NC

October 12, 2000
4:00pm

AGENDA

4:00PM	Welcome and Call to Order	Brewster Brown, Chairman
4:05	Roll Call	Joan Giordano, APNEP
4:10	Approval of Minutes from June 8 th Meeting in Windsor	Chairman Brown
4:15	<u>OLD BUSINESS</u>	
	1. Demonstration Projects Update Q&A	Billy Griffin B.Brown for D. Hodges
	2. Status of Nucor facility Q&A	Nucor Representative
5:00	<u>NEW BUSINESS and Public Comment</u>	All
	1. GIS Workshops	Joan & Guy
	2. APNEP Coordination with Va. New Liaison Position	Noah Hill Va. DCR
5:25	Plans for Next Meeting	All
5:30	ADJOURN	



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MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Brewster Brown at 4:05pm. Joan Giordano called the roll and self-introductions were made around the table. A quorum was determined to be present, and by motion of Cpt. Howard and second by Billy Griffin, the minutes from the previous meeting were accepted as mailed.

Chairman Brown asked that Billy Griffin present a report on the progress of the Chowan River Basin Regional Council demonstration project pertaining to precision farming. Using overheads to assist in his presentation, Mr. Griffin arrayed the demonstration site s and explained the procedure used in soils sampling. He felt the project was making good progress, especially with the reduction of phosphorous applied to the crops, and he shortly expected results of the analyses of the soil samples to bear that out.

Chairman Brown (for David Hodges) then gave a report on the subsoiler project. He described the project as being in transition because, while the subsoiler was in place, the participants were in need of tractors to pull the subsoiler. He said modification of the proposal to allow for renting tractors (by the hour) to pull the subsoiler was being considered. It is thought that using the subsoiler will reduce soil compaction and allow better water infiltration, thereby reducing runoff of nutrients into streams.

Insofar as Nucor was concerned, Chairman Brown reported that they were not yet in operation, but were testing. He reiterated Nucor's General Manager's invitation to the group to visit the Nucor site for a tour when they were up and running. Chairman Brown also said that he asked Giff Daughtridge (Nucor's General Manager) to appoint a representative to the RC. Additionally, it was reported that the ocean going barges which will deliver the scrap steel to Nucor are now anticipated to dock at the Morehead City port instead of the port at Norfolk which was originally planned.

Gary Purvis expressed concern about debris being thrown overboard and because of that he wondered about peripheral industry being located near to the Nucor site. He hoped that they would accept their environmental responsibility for ensuring against such practices.

Chairman Brown added that a rumor was circulating regarding the siting of a Ford plant in Hertford, which would make steel bumpers out of the Nucor steel.

Joan Giordano described the upcoming GIS workshops and encouraged all respondents to seriously abide by their decision to attend. The workshops were intended to be "hands-on" in approach, and arrangements for appropriate equipment, software and trainers were based upon the number responding. She added that space was limited because one-on-one tutoring was expected.

Ernie Brown introduced Noah Hill, the newly hired watershed field coordinator, who will perform liaison activities between the State of NC and the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is anticipated increased sharing of data and other environmental information between the two states will be enhanced because of Noah's involvement. He hoped particularly, that there would be a sharing of GIS info between states and that Round Table committees, similar in structure and purpose to the Regional Councils would be established shortly. Additionally, Mr. Brown mentioned the status of the Memorandum of Agreement between the two states and felt a date for signing the agreement was nearing, and that there was going to be a Watershed Management Conference held in Williamsburg, Va. and that the APNEP was a sponsor.

Chairman Brown mentioned that Frank Harris, formerly with Union Camp in Va., was not employed at the Roanoke-Chown Community College and that while at Union Camp he had produced a handbook entitled "*A Profile of NC and Va. Environmental Organizations, State Agencies and National Organizations.*" He passed a copy of the document around and said it was time to update the piece and that there should be mention of the RCs and other NC programs/activities included.

NEW BUSINESS:

Guy Stefanski mentioned the upcoming Monitoring Workshop to be held in Raleigh. He explained that it was being held to comply with the EPA requirement that all NEPs have a comprehensive monitoring plan. Because this was not required when our CCMP was developed, EPA offered the services of one of their contractors, Battelle, in assisting us with this requirement. The workshop will be held on December 12th & 13th at the Hilton in Raleigh. He also reported that there was a survey being circulated by Battelle to determine the level and type of monitoring that existed in NC so that in the end, a more comprehensive approach to monitoring could exist.

Cpt. Al Howard mentioned that the chlorophyll readings resulting from the volunteer water quality-monitoring group at Holiday Island for July and August were very desirable, especially when compared to those of the Neuse. In the Chowan he said the bottom could be seen in 6' of water, and the dioxin scare had been lifted.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on January ²⁵19th at the same location or at the Nucor Plant depending on availability.

Attendance
CABRC
10/12/00
Windsor

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Jean Giordano	APNEP staff
Brian Sturton	Chowan River Basin
Guy Stefanick	APNEP -
Alfred Howard	Chowan River Basin
Roger Spivey	Chowan - Tree Farmer
Billy J. Siffin	CEFS - Bertie Co.
Liz Noble	NC Division of Marine Fisheries
[Signature]	Inclalex Aluminum
Ernie Brown	VA DUT
North Hill	VA DCR
Lee Wynns	Chowan River Basin

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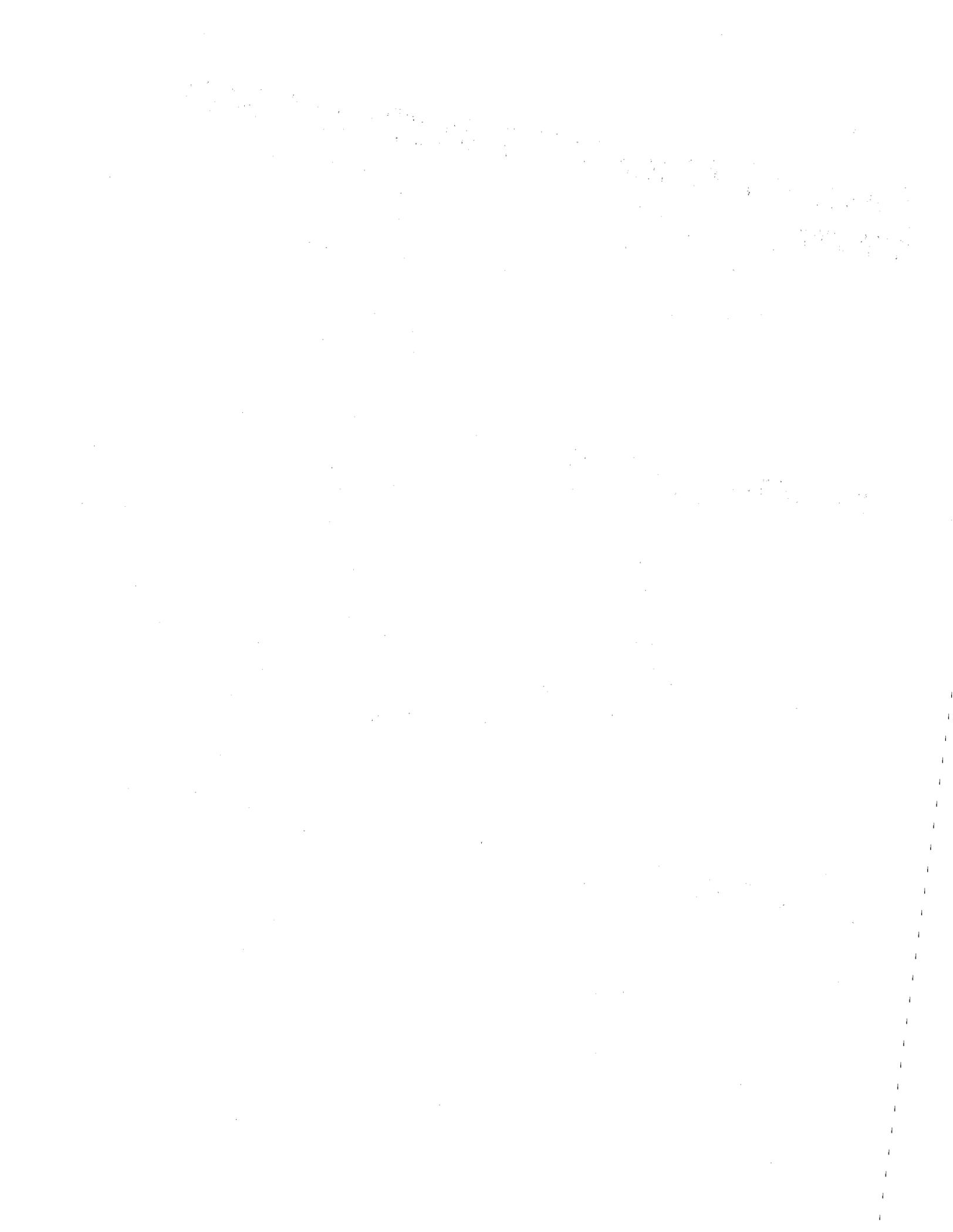
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****Denotes perspective council member pending formal appointment/approval process. Individuals have been attending meetings, but are not "official voting members".**

CHOWAN RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Albemarle-Pamlico Regional Councils
"Kick-off" Meeting
September 25, 1997 -- Plymouth, NC

Results of Regional Councils break out sessions

During a break out session at the September 25th Regional Councils "Kick-off" Meeting, members of the Chowan River Basin Regional Council were asked to respond to the following question:

What are the priority environmental concerns in your river basins?

Below are the results/answers given by members who participated in the break out session.

Concerns:

- leakage from fertilizer plant on river
- Ahoskie Creek
- Potecasi Creek
- Merchant's Mill Pond
- irrigation water
- Union Camp Company (Virginia paper mill)
- Nonpoint source pollution (agriculture, forestry and septic tanks)
- population and landowner increases

Hopes:

- pro-active state agencies in the field
- don't lose the quality of our groundwater
- Rethinking of channelization/drainage practices
- Technology: wastewater treatment improvements
- reduced population density in some areas
- all bear costs fairly
- recycle, reduce & reuse nutrients
- Education
- remove dioxin health advisory
- recognition of area



Chowan River Basin Regional Council Workshop: Designing a Two-Year Program of Work

April 23, 1998
Edenton, NC

Introduction

The Chowan River Basin Regional Council held a workshop on April 23, 1998 in Edenton, NC, to begin to develop a two year program of work for the Council. At this and earlier sessions, members identified a number of issues of major concern in this Basin.

- quality of water flowing in from Virginia
- paper, fertilizer and dye plant discharges
- nonpoint source impacts from agriculture, forestry and septic tanks
- pfiesteria outbreak potential
- household use of fertilizers and other chemicals
- municipal waste treatment and land application
- pollution potential from septic systems
- herbicide use in utility corridors
- planning capacity at the local level.

Major themes that emerged from the group's discussions about water quality concerns included the need for better understandings and working relationships between Virginia and North Carolina, and better public understanding of the effects of various activities on water quality. The Council also expressed concern that a rural area like the Chowan Basin may become a location for siting facilities that threaten water quality and the environment, resulting in a form of environmental discrimination. Finally, they expressed interest in the possibility of establishing a wetland mitigation bank for small landowners in the area.

After reviewing all the possible action areas, the Council selected several areas to focus on:

1. a citizen monitoring initiative
2. local partnerships to protect and restore water quality
3. pollution from non-agricultural chemical use
4. selected policy issues.

The following is a summary of the Council's first round of discussion on these 2-year workplan agenda items.

2-Year Program of Work

1. Citizen Monitoring Initiative

Council members believe a citizen monitoring initiative can help accomplish two important objectives in the basin. It can supplement data collected by the state to maintain a profile of water quality conditions in the basin. It also can be a useful tool for educating the public and involving them in river conservation efforts.

Council members brainstormed about what such a monitoring program should include and who might participate. They agreed one of the first things that needs to be done is to identify specific river or tributary segments to focus on. They also want to learn what monitoring is already being done, including other citizen monitoring efforts. The Council imagines using both citizens and students to do the monitoring. They agreed it would be important to select the right equipment and protocol to produce the best data possible.

The Council identified a four step process for developing and implementing this initiative.

Step 1: Get briefed on what is already going on. The Council wants to be briefed by state agency representatives and others on what kind of monitoring information is available from the state of North Carolina, from the state of Virginia, from major industries in the basin, and other citizen monitoring efforts, to know what kind of information already exists, where monitoring is already occurring, and where the gaps may be.

Step 2: Design and implement the program. Building on what they learn from the briefing and from the experience of other citizen monitoring efforts, the Council will design their program, identifying specific stream segments, designing a monitoring protocol, and recruiting partners and citizen monitoring teams. They see opportunities for partnerships with Chowan College and others who may have lab equipment to do testing.

Step 3: Provide information and alerts on specific problems. Once data has been collected, it will be passed along to the state and used to alert them to specific problems that arise. It can also be used to help inform the public about what is going on in the river.

Step 4: Identify opportunities to stimulate additional monitoring and research. In addition to launching its own citizen monitoring initiative, the Council will continue to look for opportunities and sources of funding to promote monitoring and research in the Chowan Basin.

Timeframe and Implementation

The Council Chairman appointed an ad hoc committee to work with staff to identify existing monitoring efforts and develop an agenda for the next meeting which will focus on this topic. Staff and the ad hoc committee will work together to invite selected individuals to provide briefings and respond to questions. Following the briefings and the ad hoc committee report, the Council will determine the best way to proceed with the citizen monitoring initiative and will establish a timeline and responsibilities for this part of the workplan.

2. Local Partnerships to Protect and Restore Water Quality

The Council decided the best way to approach many of their major concerns is to build partnerships with local governments and organizations. Their goals are to learn from local governments and organizations what is already being done to protect water quality, and share information that can help maximize the benefits communities receive from maintaining a clean river, including economic and recreational opportunities. Local government members on the Council will provide ongoing guidance on this initiative to be sure it is seen as a collaborative effort, not as an effort to evaluate or challenge what is happening at the local level.

The Council identified a number of steps that will be involved in implementing this initiative.

Step 1: Learn what is already out there. The Council wants to start by learning what is already being done at the local level. They want to learn:

- what kinds of provisions exist in local plans
- whether counties are part of the state's Coastal Management Program
- what the local health departments are doing that affect water quality, including programs for permitting septic systems
- what kinds of activities the Cooperative Extension Service and Forest Service are involved in at the local level, including cost share programs
- what local groups are working on riverfront trails, buffers, or other initiatives that play a role in protecting and enjoying the Chowan and its tributaries.

Special emphasis will be placed on finding success stories and identifying where leadership is coming from on these efforts.

Step 2: Launch an information exchange process. Once they have learned what is out there, the Council wants to develop ways to help localities exchange information, learn what can be done to integrate

water quality and habitat protection into local planning and decision making, and find ways to capitalize on the opportunities the river and its resources offer communities in the Basin. They considered such things as fostering one on one exchanges between communities, and developing a newsletter that could share ideas and successes.

Step 3: Enhance local capacity to deal with environmental planning issues. The Council would like to work cooperatively with localities to help them find ways to increase staff and strengthen their capacity to address environmental planning issues. For example, the Council might explore funding sources for a small team to be shared among localities. The goal is to help local governments be more pro-active in addressing issues related to protecting water quality and the environment.

Timeframe and Implementation

The Council Chairman appointed an ad hoc committee to research what is going on in local communities related to water quality protection and environmental planning today. The ad hoc committee will conduct an initial inventory and report back at the Council meeting following the one dedicated to the citizen monitoring initiative. The ad hoc committee on local partnerships will be looking particularly at what problems local governments are facing in the areas of water quality and environmental protection, what is being done to address them, and where the greatest success has been achieved. The committee may invite a few people to report to the group on local experiences and activities. Once they have had this briefing, the full Council will explore the best way to proceed with this initiative, including designing a communication plan tailored to the audiences they hope to reach.

3. Nonpoint Source Pollution from Non-Agricultural Chemical Application

The Council identified this as a third initiative they would like to undertake if time permits. Areas they are interested in pursuing include homeowner use of chemicals on lawns and gardens, chemical applications in parks and on golf courses, and chemicals being sprayed in highway and utility corridors as an alternative to mowing. They agreed to wait until they had more specific workplans for their first two initiatives before proceeding further with this.

4. Policy Issues

In addition to the Basin specific initiatives the Council wants to pursue, they identified several policy issues they want to bring to the attention of the CCMP Coordinating Council.

- **Cooperation with water quality agencies in Virginia.** The Council wants to be kept informed about state efforts to work with Virginia on monitoring and water quality issues of mutual concern.

- **Use of spraying in highway and utility corridors.** The Council would like the Coordinating Council to review state policies in this area and see if they need to be changed to minimize nonpoint source pollution going into rivers in all river basins.

- **Land Application of wastewater effluent.** The Council is interested in learning more about state programs and policies for land application of wastewater and implications for water quality.

- **Establishing a wetlands mitigation bank.** They want to learn more about how landowners in the Basin could participate in some type of wetlands mitigation bank when only small areas of wetlands are involved.

CHOWAN RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

What are the priority environmental concerns in your river basin?

Members of the Chowan River Basin Regional Council have developed a list of priority environmental concerns for the Chowan River Basin. This list was determined by members during their regular meeting on March 19, 1998.

Below are the CRBRC's priority environmental concerns as correlated to the main goals, objectives and management actions of the CCMP. *NOTE: Concerns are ranked in order of importance.*

PRIORITY CONCERNS:

- 1- What is coming from Virginia? Baseline water quality monitoring at state line and sharing of information with Virginia.
- 2- Union Camp discharges.
- 3- Leakage from fertilizer plant on river.
- 4- Nonpoint source pollution impacts (agriculture, forestry, septic tanks) on Ahoskie Creek, Potecasin Creek and Merchant's Mill Pond.
- 5(tie)- "Intensive livestock operations" as a nonpoint source of pollution.
- 5(tie)- Dye plant discharge into the river.
- 5(tie)- Pfiesteria outbreak potential?

WATER QUALITY PLAN

Goal: Restore, maintain or enhance water quality in the Albemarle-Pamlico region so that it is fit for fish, wildlife and recreation.

Primary Concern #1. What is coming from Virginia? Baseline water quality monitoring at state line and sharing of information with Virginia.

Objective A: Implement a comprehensive basinwide approach to water quality management.

Management Action 5: Improve the scientific models for understanding the estuarine system, the effects of human activities on the system, and the viability of alternative management strategies.

Management Action 6: Continue long-term, comprehensive monitoring of water quality in the APES system, collecting data to assess general system health and target regional problems.

The CRBRC is concerned with what is being discharged into the Chowan Basin attributed to activities in the State of Virginia. They are very interested in the monitoring data being collected at the state line and would like to learn more about Virginia's environmental management efforts. Representatives from the Crater Planning District Commission and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (from Virginia) are members of the CRBRC. Also- the Coordinating Council (Implementation Plan, Objective A, Management Action 2, Critical Step #1 (pg. 166) will be working with Virginia to develop an MOA between the states to ensure cooperation and coordination in implementing the CCMP. The CRBRC should be encouraged to discuss these issues with Virginia through this Coordinating Council format.

Primary Concern #2. Union Camp discharges.

The CRBRC is concerned with the concentration of nutrients being discharged from Virginia's Union Camp Company paper mill on the Chowan River. Again, the focus is better coordination and information sharing with the State of Virginia regarding environmental management. Communication between the CRBRC and Virginia officials will be enhanced through the Coordinating Council and through the Planning District Commissions participation on the CRBRC.

Primary Concern #3. Leakage from fertilizer plant on river.

Objective A: Implement a comprehensive basinwide approach to water quality management.

Management Action 6: Continue long-term, comprehensive monitoring of water quality in the APES system, collecting data to assess general system health and target regional problems.

Objective D. Reduce the risk of toxic contamination to aquatic life and human health.

Management Action 1: Increase efforts to assess and monitor the extent of estuarine sediment contamination, fish and shellfish tissue contamination, and water quality violations, and to identify the causes and sources of these problems.

Management Action 3: Remediate toxic contamination where necessary and feasible.

Primary Concern #4. Nonpoint source pollution impacts (agriculture, forestry, septic tanks) on Ahoskie Creek, Potecasin Creek and Merchant's Mill Pond.

Objective B: Reduce sediments, nutrients and toxicants from nonpoint sources.

According to the CCMP (pg. 42), Objective B, Management Action 1, Critical Step #1:

"The Department of Environment & Natural Resources, in cooperation with state and federal agencies, the Regional Councils, universities, and other members of the public and private sector, will develop a comprehensive nonpoint source control plan specific to each river basin".

This action should be considered as the overall theme theme in addressing the NPS pollution in these specific areas of the Chowan Basin.

Management Action 2: Expand funding to implement nonpoint source pollution controls, particularly agricultural best management practices through the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program, and also to develop a broader Water Quality Cost Share Program. Expand the cost share programs to include wetlands restoration. Increase cost share funds to problem areas.

Management Action 3: Continue to research and develop alternative septic systems and new best management practices to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Management Action 4: Strengthen current enforcement to detect and correct ground and surface water quality violations from nonpoint sources.

Management Action 5: Strengthen implementation of forestry best management practices through training, education, technical assistance and enforcement.

Management Action 6: Enhance stormwater runoff control by strengthening existing regulations and developing new ones, if needed, by 1995. Improve enforcement to ensure that stormwater management systems are properly installed and regularly maintained.

Primary Concern #5 (tie). "Intensive livestock operations" as a nonpoint source of pollution.

Objective B: Reduce sediments, nutrients and toxicants from nonpoint sources.

Management Action 3: Continue to research and develop alternative septic systems and new best management practices to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Management Action 4: Strengthen current enforcement to detect and correct ground and surface water quality violations from nonpoint sources.

Primary Concern #5 (tie). Dye plant discharge into the river.

Objective C: Reduce pollution from point sources, such as wastewater treatment facilities and industry.

Management Action 1: Promote pollution prevention planning and alternatives to discharge, where feasible, for all point sources to reduce the volume and toxicity of discharges.

Management Action 2: Expand and strengthen enforcement of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits. Increase site inspections and review of self-monitoring data to improve facility compliance by 1995.

Primary Concern #5 (tie). Pfiesteria outbreak potential?

Objective E: Evaluate indicators of environmental stress in the estuary and develop new techniques to better assess water quality degradation.

Management Action 1: Continue to track and evaluate indicators of environmental stress, including algal blooms, fish kills, and fish and shellfish diseases.

Management Action 2: Improve the techniques for evaluating the overall environmental health of estuarine waters.

OTHER CONCERNS:

- * tapping into creeks and streams for irrigation purposes
- * population and landowner increases
- * abandoned wastewater treatment plants/municipal dumps
- * use of pesticides/fertilizers by government agencies
- * NPDES sources
- * coordination & enforcement in WWTP operation

- * the need to remove fish consumption advisory signs warning of dioxin
- * whereabouts of federal money (1992-93) dedicated to "snagging" of Meherrin River

The CRBRC also produced a list of "Hopes":

- State funding for a Chowan River Keeper
- decentralization of state agencies so they can spend more time in the region
- development of a volunteer monitoring program
- don't lose the quality of our ground water
- rethinking of channel/drainage practices
- technology: wastewater treatment improvements
- reduced population density in some areas
- all bear costs fairly
- recycle, reduce & reuse advisory
- education
- remove dioxin fish consumption advisory currently in effect
- recognition of the area

April 8, 1998