P-CAC PUBLIC AWARENESS SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES
3-5-88

Present: Alton Ballance - Chair
Dr. Tom Quay, Billy Schimming,
Dr. Billy Jackson, Dr. Don Ensley,
Fred Bonner, Dawn Parks, Joan Giordano

Chairman Ballance called the meeting to order at 1:15 P.M. Introductions were made, and Chairman Ballance thanked those present for their participation.

Concern was expressed by Chairman Ballance regarding an article that appeared in The Virginian Pilot on March 4, 1988. (See attached.) The thrust of the article, "What is happening with the APES'program?" led to discussion of how the results of the study could be gotten out on the street, as public awareness is crucial to the project. Discussion ensued with emphasis being placed on the APES newletter; the preparation of a special edition publication focusing on marketing the program suitable for widespread public distribution (probable target date -- summer-fall 1988); Dr. Billy Jackson's suggestion of expansion of the APES newsletter mailing list to include those persons not otherwise affiliated with organizations having knowledge of the APES, i.e., targeting the uninformed reader to bring issues of concern in front of the public; encouraging public participation; and adequate funding for public awareness.

In other discussion, the suggestion of convening a meeting to initiate a funding proposal by the CACs for the special edition publication was made. Chairman Ballance requested participation from the A-CAC and asked Mrs. Giordano to organize it for Tuesday, May 22, 1988, in Manteo, at 4:00 P.M.

The subcommittee adjourned at 3:00 P.M. for participation in the full P-CAC meeting.

UIP 3-4-88

Estuarine study frustrates citizen panels

by MARCIA STUTTS
Correspondent

CURRITUCK — The citizen committees associated with the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study say it's time to let the public know what is going on.

At its quarterly meeting held Wednesday night at the Currituck Court House, the Albemarle citizen's group approved a statement expressing concern about the lack of information the public is receiving about the study.

"The program is at a critical point in its development, one where public is expecting more visible and concrete results from its activities," the committee said in a resolution that will be transmitted to the state Department of Natural Resources and Community Development and the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

■ THE STUDY PANEL'S DOUGLAS N. RADER IS LEAVING STATE GOVERNMENT TO BECOME SENIOR SCIENTIST WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND/ D5

The resolution also asked that "top priority" be given to hiring a new project director to replace Douglas N. Rader, who is leaving the study March 15 to join the new North Carolina office of the Environmental Defense Fund. An identical resolution will be considered by the Pamlico group at its meeting Saturday in Washington.

Parker Chesson, chairman of the Albemarle committee, said Thursday that the ambitious, five-year, $5 million study has been plagued from the beginning by "a sense of disorganization which leads to a lack of communication. As yet, we have had no concrete evidence of progress" toward the study's goal of developing a plan for better management of the two estuaries.

"It's a natural thing," for such a broad and complex program to have startup problems, Chesson added. "But its been a year now and things should be falling in place. All the rough spots and kinks have not been worked out."

Derb Carter, chairman of the Pamlico Advisory Committee, said the citizens' groups want NRCD and EPA to know that "the public is ready to hear something. We need to get the word out that something is happening and that money is being well spent."

In addition, Carter is concerned about the lack of communication among the committees that are turning the cranks that drive the study. "The citizens advisory committees, the Technical and the Policy committees have never met together," he said. "The technical research is a total mystery to the citizens advisory committee people. They just know a bunch of money is being spent."

Chesson said he believes some

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STUDY

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problems have developed because the roles of the Technical, Policy and Citizens Advisory committees were not worked out at the beginning of the project.

The study was funded by the 1987 Water Quality Act and is administered jointly by NRCD and EPA. The decision making responsibility is vested in the nine-member Policy Committee, while the larger, Technical Committee is charged with selecting research projects worthy of funding and reviewing data collected in those studies. The two, 30-member citizen committees were organized to form a link among the public and policy-making, technical and administrative arms of the project.

And from an administrative standpoint, Chesson said he believes "the program has been understaffed from day one. With all our ambitions, we have had only three people" working on the study.

Both Chesson and Carter said reports on technical and public information projects should be provided to the citizens' committees at the end of the first year's studies and thereafter on a regular basis.

Rader reported to the Albemarle Committee that calls would go out for a second round of studies by the end of March and a decision will be made by June on which new projects will be funded.

He said $225,000 in supplemental funds have been added to the 1987-88 budget for the study, and more than $2 million in federal and state funds is expected in the coming fiscal year.

In other business, the committee adopted a resolution calling for a halt in the expansion of military airspace over the Albemarle and Pamlico sounds and asking for a review of the existing military use there.

The approval came after a presentation in which Don Flowers, a committee member and executive director of the Albemarle Regional Development and Planning Commission, cited dangers from noise, laser beams and radiation from military activities in the area.

The Albemarle Committee also heard a presentation by David McNaught, director of the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation, which is involved in one of the study's public involvement projects for establishing an estuarine streamwatch network and a citizens' program for monitoring water quality.

McNaught said his organization will hold a workshop March 26 to offer training in water sampling techniques. "We want to collect viable data and to get the public involved and out on the water," he said. "Citizens must get out and collect samples following strict procedures."

A similar program is being organized by an Albemarle Committee member, Yates Barber, to monitor water conditions in the Currituck Sound.

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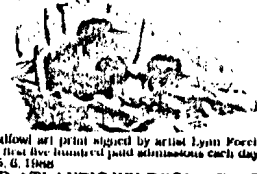

Wildfowl art print signed by artist Lynn Forehand to the first five hundred paid admissions each day March 4, 5, 6, 1988
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