

**NEUSE RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Wayne Center  
208 W. Chestnut Street  
Goldsboro, NC

**MAY 29, 1998**

9:30AM

**AGENDA**

9:30am	Call to Order & Welcome	Chairman Bill Ritchie
9:35	Self-Introductions	All
9:40	Acceptance of Minutes (March 27, 1998)	Chairman Ritchie
9:45	Report on "Program of Work" Facilitated Workshop held May 7, 1998	Joan & Guy
10:00	Groundwater in the Neuse River Basin	TBA DWQ - Groundwater Section
11:00	BREAK	
11:15	Old Business:	
	<u>Discussion:</u> Resolution on Groundwater	All
	<u>Discussion:</u> RC Attendance/Participation	Chairman Ritchie
12:00	New Business/Public Comment	All
12:30pm	Adjourn	



## NEUSE RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Wayne Center  
Goldsboro, NC  
May 29, 1998

### MINUTES

The Neuse River Basin Regional Council met in Goldsboro on May 29, 1998. In attendance were the following:

E.T.Iseley	Marguerite Whitfield
Joan Giordano*	Sondra Riggs
Caroline Parker	Dee Smith
Jim Cummings	Charles Pittman III
Bill Ritchie	Norman Ricks III
Joe Hughes	Jeff Welti*
Tom McGee	Chester Lowder*
Frank Walston, Jr.	Marion Smith
Andy McLawhorn	Mike Bell*

Peg Jones\*

\*Denotes visitor or staff

Margaret Holton, John Costlow, and Wayne Cash were unable to attend and were excused.

Chairman Ritchie called the meeting to order. The minutes were approved as received.

Joan Giordano reported on the facilitated workshop held in Kinston on May 7th. She reviewed the results of this workshop which was held to help the Council develop a Program of Work for the next 2 years.

Due to the absence of Dr. Costlow, discussion was postponed on the resolution concerning groundwater.

Mr. Ritchie discussed our ongoing problems with poor attendance. He is going to send letters to the various appointing agencies requesting that they poll their representatives to see if they want to continue. Joan Giordano explained the cumbersome process that will have to be used to get additional people appointed because we must first identify those with poor attendance and then find people who will meet the various categories where vacancies exist. After discussion, Joan proposed including a response card in the next mailing to all Regional Council members requesting that they return the card to her stating their intention to continue as a Council member or ask to be removed from the membership role. Once these are received we will know exactly which slots must be filled.



Joan introduced Jeff Welti who is a hydrologist with the Division of Water Quality, Groundwater Section, located in the Washington Regional Office of the Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources. Mr. Welti gave a presentation on groundwater. After his slide show he distributed packets of information to each member. A question was raised about septic tanks as a possible source of contamination of groundwater particularly since so much drinking water in eastern NC is derived from groundwater. Mr. Welti said he would share this concern with his supervisor.

NOTE: Mr. Welti spoke with his supervisor and determined that it is possible for septic tanks to contaminate groundwater, although evaluation of this concern needs to be made on a case-by-case basis. Given the soil structure in much of eastern NC (where clay content can be significant) septic tanks are known to perform less efficiently and thus increase the possibility of contaminating groundwater. He stressed that this is not of pervasive concern in the area and suspicion of such a concern should be dealt with on an individual basis.

Mr. Smith asked about the effect PCS has had on the Castle Hayne Aquifer. Mr. Welti responded that PCS has modified their processing system and that their present impact on water use and discharge is significantly reduced. He said they have made every effort to recycle their wastewater and that NC is just beginning to study depletion and salt water intrusion in the aquifer. Ms. Riggs suggested this topic serve as the program at one of our future meetings.

Joan then introduced Mike Bell, of the Public Water Supply Program, located at the Washington Regional Office of the Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources. He gave a presentation about drinking water. He does not believe that PCS has damaged the Castle Hayne Aquifer, yet. He expressed concern for the Black Creek and Cape Fear aquifers which have been severely reduced. He suggests the formation of a "Capacity Use Area" in the Neuse River basin. This puts more emphasis on proper management of the available water resources. Currently there is only one "Capacity Use Area" in North Carolina. General questions and answers concerning safe drinking water followed.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Peg Jones of "Save Our Rivers, Inc." announced a statewide watershed conference and invited us all to attend. It is being held on June 19 & 20, 1998 at Catawba College in Salisbury. If you are interested in attending or have questions, call (828) 369-7877 or e-mail: [rivers@dnet.net](mailto:rivers@dnet.net)

Mr. Ritchie then told about the survey he and others received. He will make copies and distribute them to the members who are asked to fill them out before the next meeting. The survey is from a graduate student at the State University of NY (SUNY) and is funded by the National Science Foundation.

Marion Smith invited all to the Neuse River Days, June 6th, in New Bern. Mr. Iseley invited all to the "Pamlico Paddle" on June 13th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. **The next meeting will be held on July 31, 1998 at a place TO BE ARRANGED. PLEASE NOTE: the next meeting will not be held in Goldsboro.**



**Neuse River Basin Regional Council Workshop:  
Designing a 2-Year Program of Work  
May 7, 1998  
Kinston, NC**

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## Introduction

The Neuse River Basin Regional Council held a workshop session May 7, 1998 in Kinston, 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 concern in this Basin.

Pollutants of concern:

- organic and inorganic toxics
- nutrients
- pathogens
- sediments

Nonpoint sources of concern:

- agriculture (intensive animal and conventional farming)
- urban run-off/highways
- septic systems
- golf courses

Point sources of concern:

- municipal facilities (treatment and collection)
- package treatment plants
- industrial wastewater treatment facilities

The Council believes a comprehensive education/outreach effort is needed on all of these issues, aimed at all stakeholders. They also want to be sure everyone keeps in mind that the lower Neuse is estuarine and the river feeds directly into Pamlico sound, one the state's major estuaries. In addition to these concerns, the Council has passed policy resolutions on:

- the need for water quality monitoring in the Neuse;
- the need for fairness and disclosure in allocating research dollars;
- the need for better geographic representation on the Council;
- the need to assess the extent of groundwater depletion; and
- the need for state action to help clean up fish kills.

They will continue to monitor these issues over the coming months.

After considerable discussion, the Council selected two major initiatives to pursue in the coming months. They also agreed to conduct briefings in local communities; identified policy issues they would like to learn more about and take action on if appropriate; and addressed some organizational issues, setting the following agenda:



1. nonpoint source demonstration projects
2. a greenway/buffer initiative
3. briefings for local governments and other organizations
4. policy issues
5. organizational issues.

This report summarizes the Council's first round of discussion on their two-year program of work.

## **2-Year Program of Work**

### **1. Nonpoint source demonstration projects**

Because the Neuse has been designated a nutrient sensitive river, the Council decided to undertake several nonpoint source demonstration projects in the Basin over the next two years. They believe these can have both water quality and educational benefits for the Neuse River Basin and its residents. To coordinate with the existing nonpoint source committees in the upper, middle and lower Neuse, they agreed to invite representatives of these committees to attend a Council meeting and present what they are doing. They will ask each representative to describe the projects they are undertaking, and to suggest ways in which the Council could be of help by working in partnership or undertaking a complimentary initiative.

#### **Timeframe and Implementation**

To allow time to contact and work with the three non-point source committees, the Council agreed to invite the representatives of these committees to attend their July Council meeting. Members of the Neuse Council that also work with the nonpoint source committees will work with staff to arrange these presentations. At the September meeting the Council will select specific partnerships or projects to move forward with, with the idea they would like to be involved in projects in all three parts of the basin.

### **2. Greenway/Buffer Initiative**

Because of the level of interest and concern about the issue of buffer requirements in the Neuse Basin, and because there are a number of greenway initiatives underway, the Council decided it would like to find ways to contribute to efforts to protect water quality in the river through some type of greenway or buffer initiative. Various Council members expressed interest in everything from working toward more flexible buffer



requirements, to becoming partners in a specific greenway project, to engaging in educational activities related to greenways and buffers.

The Council agreed before they can select a specific project or approach, they need to know how much of the Neuse shoreline is already buffered, what the state's proposed buffer regulations are, the controversies they have generated, and the alternatives that have been considered. They also want to know more about the greenway program being developed by the Nature Conservancy and the Triangle Land Conservancy. With this initiative, as with the nonpoint demonstration projects, they decided to begin with some briefings before settling on a final work program.

### **Timeframe and Implementation**

Staff will work with Council members to invite appropriate representatives from both the state and the non-profit sectors to come to the Council's May meeting to talk about the new buffer regulations and the greenway programs. Bill Thornway at DENR was suggested as a useful contact to identify someone who could speak about what is happening with regard to greenways in the basin. As with the nonpoint source project presenters, they will be asked to take about 30 minutes to describe their program/activity and to suggest ways in which the Council might be helpful in advancing the programs. At their September meeting, the Council will decide on the best way to proceed with this initiative in terms of specific partnerships, actions or projects.

## **3. Briefings for Local Governments and other Organizations**

Council members agreed they should begin an annual process of briefing local governments and other key interest groups in the basin about water quality concerns in the Neuse; what the Council is doing to focus attention on and address those concerns; sharing success stories from other communities in the basin; and suggesting what these groups can do to help protect the river. This could serve an educational purpose, get the word out, and open the door to potential partnerships.

### **Timeframe and Implementation**

Council members agreed that each individual member will take the lead in scheduling a briefing for the local government or interest group they represent at some time in the coming year. They will also see that all of these groups get copies of the Council's annual report.



#### 4. Policy Issues

The Council identified three major policy issues they are interested in exploring. If there appears to be potential for meaningful action, they will approach the CCMP Coordinating Council and others about taking joint action on these matters

- **Department of Transportation policies affecting water quality.** Concern was expressed about a variety of DOT practices that may be having negative effects on water quality in the Neuse, from land disturbing activities to chemical application. A new regulation is being developed that may address some of these concerns, but is not expected to address all of them. Marion Smith of the Neuse River Foundation agreed to do the preliminary scoping on this issue.

- **Enabling legislation for Waterway Commissions.** Some interest was expressed in getting state enabling legislation adopted to allow formation of community Waterway Commissions, modeled after the existing Community Appearance Commissions. These commissions could work in partnership with this Council on various initiatives. Success has already been achieved with such a commission in one community. Bill Ritchie agreed to do a first round of scoping on this issue and explore the interest of the League of Municipalities in helping to sponsor enabling legislation.

- **A feasibility study on use of remote sensing for data collection.** There is interest in investigating the costs and potential benefits of establishing a remote sensing satellite for eastern North Carolina to collect a variety of kinds of data. This might be an initiative which several regional councils could support if it proved sufficiently beneficial. Dr. John Costlow agreed to do the first round of scoping on this matter.

Other policy issues the group indicated interest in and will continue to track are how the state will help local governments deal with failing municipal treatments systems, the development of "re-usable water" regulations, and groundwater protection.

#### 5. Organizational Issues

The group expressed concern about Council members that never attend leaving some geographic areas unrepresented. They will continue to try to have representatives who are unable to attend replaced. The Council agreed they will use Executive Committee meetings and one on one meetings with newly appointed Council members to bring them up to speed on the Council's work so this will not interfere with the momentum of the group. Finally, they want to get more publicity for their meetings and activities, particularly once they more fully develop and begin to implement their program of work.

