

AGENDA

NEUSE RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Sheraton Hotel
New Bern, North Carolina
November 27, 1995 10:00 AM

I. Legislative Welcome (10:00 - 10:10)

Senator Beverly Perdue

Representative John Nichols

II. Welcome and Opening Comments (10:10 - 10:45)

Jonathan B. Howes, Secretary
NC Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources

III. Charging the Regional Council

James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
State of North Carolina

BREAK (10:45 - 11:00)

IV. Perspectives on Water Quality (11:00 - 11:45)

- Sustainability: Making Room to Grow - Linda Rimer, Assistant Secretary
NC Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources
- Information on Neuse River Water Quality - Jimmie Overton
North Carolina Division of Environmental Management (NCDEM)

LUNCH (11:45 - 1:00)

V. Management Programs to Address Water Pollution (1:00 - 2:00)

- DEM's Basinwide Initiative to Protect Water Quality - Alan Clark, NCDEM
- Addressing Point Sources of Pollution, Steve Bevington, NCDEM
- Addressing Nonpoint Sources of Pollution, David Harding, NCDEM

VI. Discussion of Roles, Responsibilities and Priority Issues (2:00 - 3:45)

- Role of Neuse River Basin Regional Council and Other Participants - Greg Thorpe
NCDEM
- Breakout Sessions to Identify Priority Issues - Simon Garber
North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, NCSU
- Summary and Follow-up - Greg Thorpe and Simon Garber

Neuse River Regional Council
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ATTENDANCE

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
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Charles M. Slaughter	Soil & Water	756-2017
Anna Leeves		715-4140
RESTOS HOWARD	DEHR	733-705
Bill Bradford	409 GLENDALE RD - Snow Hill	747-5171
Boyd Benson	RT 2 B-288 Snow Hill, N.C.	747-5669
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Charles R. Homan	P.O. Box 10 Wilson, N.C.	(919) 309-2461
Martin Lebo	P.O. Box 1351 New Bern, NC	(919) 633-7511
Randy Martin	P.O. Drawer M Morehead City, NC 28553	919-726-6848

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
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Joe Zublenar	NCSU	515-3252
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John J. Simpson	PO Box 39 Pollocksville NC	224 6601
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Robert W. Schachter	DEP ENR Coastal Mgmt	733-2292
Allen Clark	NC DEHNR, Div. of Env. Mgmt	733-5083 (EXT. 570)
Burdick	Cartersville News Times, M.C.	919-726-7081
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Gary Stefanica	DEM-WQ, Raleigh, NC	919-733-5883
Joan Giordano	DEM-WQ, Washington, NC	919-946-6481
Jimmie Overton	DEM - Raleigh	
Steve Tedder	DEM - Raleigh	

12-14-95

Neuse River Basin Regional Council Summary of Issues

First Meeting – November 27, 1995 @ New Bern, NC

The first meeting of the Neuse River Basin Regional Council was held on November 27, 1995 in New Bern, NC. Thirty-eight of 52 members were present. Upon completion of presentations by DEM staff and discussion of the role of Council members, the members divided into four smaller groups to identify issues of concern to them. Participants were divided to assure a geographic balance among those present and were broken out according to a color code.

Each group was asked to provide comments to the following question: *"Based on what you have heard today, what are the issues facing the Neuse River Basin that this Council should address?"* Individual groups produced a list of issues and then prioritized them according to their level of concern.

Following are the issues presented by each group (the top five issues are ranked 1-5):

RED GROUP:

- 1- Identify all sources of pollution and seek to better understand the significance of each source's effect/impact on the environment.
- 2- Identify and implement achievable solutions to the problems of the Neuse Basin (what is POSSIBLE as opposed to what is MANDATED).
- 3- Reduce nutrients to an acceptable level and create a timeline for doing so.
- 4- Provide incentives to stakeholders -- creates a sense of "pride of place".
- 5- Identify the resources needed to address these problems.

OTHER ISSUES:

- Short-sighted economics vs. sound planning
- What is the overall impact of point sources in the Neuse Basin?
- Informational needs of Council members to make decisions
- Growth management concerns

GREEN GROUP

- 1- Define the pollution sources (*"What are the definable sources of pollution impacting the Neuse and how do we address them?"*)
- 2- What programs are in place to address the pollution problems of the Neuse and how are these efforts being coordinated? (Who is defining the process?) How do Regional Council members provide input into this "process"?
- 3- Educate don't "finger point".
- 4- What are the problems? Is it really nitrogen (nutrients)?
- 5- How much of a problem is hog waste?

OTHER ISSUES:

- What is the effect of "flow regulation" on water quality?
- While addressing these problems, make sure there is minimal impact on the economy. Can we afford the solutions? Can we live with them?
- Charge for DEM: "Tell us what data prove to be the major sources of pollution."

GOLD GROUP:

- 1- Concerned about growth issues and the regulations that affect development activities throughout the basin.
- 2- Concerned about current animal waste strategies designed for animal operations. Are they adequate?
- 3- Need more comprehensive monitoring to enhance targeting efforts.
 - Where are the pollution sources?
 - Are self-monitoring programs effective?
 - Can sub-basins be managed as "point sources"?
- 4- Effective use of money (spend it on high-priority issues). Assurances that "cleaning up the Neuse" is a priority for the state and that money & resources are dedicated to this effort.
- 5- Homeowners use of fertilizers and pesticides (nutrients). Create an action plan to address homeowners' contribution of nutrients to surface waters.

OTHER ISSUES:

- Identify specific sources of pollution
- Economic value of the Neuse Basin as it relates to tourism
- Review existing permitting procedures (consider incentives)

- Need more inspections
- What are the secondary impacts resulting from the Global Transpark?
- Secondary impacts of waste water treatment plants?
- Is there a short-term fix for handling the current problems in lower Neuse Basin?
- Reach consensus on what data are most reliable in developing management strategies for the Neuse Basin.
- General concerns about the various land and water use activities occurring throughout the basin (i.e., agriculture, silviculture, & fishing).

SILVER GROUP:

- 1- How do we control nitrogen in the Neuse River (air, soil and water)?
- 2- How do we address nutrient contributions from nonpoint sources? Need to better understand nutrient impacts and types (i.e., nitrate and ammonia).
- 3- How do we educate the public that they contribute to the problem?
- 4- Need to understand the relationship(s) between the various components of the problem (i.e., What is nitrogen's effect on phosphorus?)
 - Is the current water quality data base adequate?
 - What are the responsibilities of local, state and federal governments?
 - How can local concerns be brought forward?
 - What impact does the Falls of the Neuse Dam have on fish biology in the lower Neuse?
- 5- How do we address the different views of the individual Council members?

OTHER ISSUES:

- Why didn't state agencies see the water quality and fish kill problems coming?
- Review the existing environmental rules and regulations within the Neuse and the degree they're being enforced.
- How do we handle growth (human & livestock)?
- Determine the sources of fish kills.
- How do we weigh the benefits of industrial growth vs. possible nutrient contamination?
- Identify the economic contribution of the Neuse to each of the neighboring counties and to the state.
- How will we know if/when we have made accomplishments in solving the problem?
- How can the Council be better informed to address the issues?
- How can legislators be persuaded to write better environmental rules?
- How can nonpoint sources of pollution be evaluated and violators of water quality standards be held accountable (assessed with penalties)?

COMMON ISSUES

A common theme of many of the issues presented by the break-out groups is the need for better **public education** on the issues identified in the Neuse River Basin. A better informed public is necessary if we are to become better stewards of our land and water. Education is a critical component and underlying theme to all of the issues summarized below:

- 1- **Nutrients.** There is a need to better understand nutrients and their relationship to water quality problems. What are the major sources of nutrients to surface waters and how do we reduce their overall load? What programs are in place to address nutrient loads from point and nonpoint sources?
- 2- **Identify pollution sources.** Identify all sources of pollution and determine the significance of each source's effect/impact on the environment. Implement achievable solutions to problems associated with these pollution sources.
- 3- **Informational needs of the Council members.** Council members need more information to better understand the scientific, economical, regulatory, and political aspects of environmental management, and guidance on how they will provide input into this process. They also recognize their need to better understand the issues of the basin in order to make informed decisions.
- 4- **Economics.** Council members realize that "solving the problems of the Neuse" will be expensive and that tough decisions are needed to affect "change" throughout the basin. Peoples' jobs and livelihoods will be affected by decisions made to reduce nutrients to the river. Is there enough money to implement corrective strategies? Can we pay a lot of money for these "solutions" and be willing to live with them? How does managing growth of a particular area effect the local economy? There is a concern for the effective use of money and that it be spent on high-priority issues. Are there enough incentives for stakeholders to implement "change"?
- 5- **Growth management.** How are we going to manage population growth occurring throughout the basin? Expanding development creates additional demand on the natural resources, resulting in conflicts among various interest groups. What are the secondary impacts of potential growth to an area? How will we manage new and/or expanding animal operations?