

PASQUOTANK RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Crawford House Cafe
Currituck, NC

February 5, 1998
4:00-7:00 pm

AGENDA

4:00	Call to Order	Yates Barber, Acting Chair
4:05	Self-introductions	All
4:15	Old Business	Yates Barber
	*Adoption of By-laws	
	*Expansion/Discussion Priority Concerns	
	*Nomination of Officers	
6:15	New Business	All
	<i>cc</i>	
6:45	Public Comment	
7:00	Adjourn	

PASQUOTANK REGIONAL COUNCIL

Heritage House
Currituck, NC
February 5, 1998

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chair, Yates Barber at 4:30 pm. He thanked the County of Currituck for their gracious hospitality in providing the refreshments for the evening's meeting. Self-introductions were made and it was announced that Kermit Skinner resigned due to duties associated with his responsibility as Manteo's City Manager .

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted by acclamation.

A motion to accept the Pasquotank River Regional Council by-laws as written was made by Hollis Creecy and seconded by Erie Haste. The motion carried after a short discussion. The discussion centered around the topic of vacancies on the Council and how to fill them so a broad representation of interests are included. A motion by Mike Dincan and seconded by Erie Haste to canvas the membership with regard to their intentions of remaining members was voted upon and passed.

The next order of business was the election of officers. The nominating committee met and offered the following slate of nominees:

Chair	Erie Haste
V. Chair	Clarence Skinner
Sec./Treas.	Carlisle Harrell

There being no nominations from the floor, a motion to close the nominations was made by Gilbert Baccus and seconded by Jerry Markham. Motion carried. The slate of nominees was accepted and voted upon without dissention.

The committee then turned to the expansion of the priority concerns listing which was begun in Plymouth at the Regional Council kick-off meeting held in September. Joan Giordano explained the importance of developing this listing as it will act as the basis for crafting the Pasquotank Regional Council Program of Work and will be used during the facilitated workshops being held in April.

Mr. Barber offered a history of the hydrology of the Currituck Sound and surrounding waters. He emphasized that the system is unique in that it is driven by wind tides and not lunar tides. He also mentioned that the once abundant submerged aquatic vegetation has mostly been destroyed due to the cutting of canals and other various land-uses.

Discussion ensued regarding the monitoring of Currituck Sound. Mr. Barber reported that the

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Division of Water Resources (DWR) and the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) are cooperating to set up a permanent monitoring system. He added that money for the project was received from the Division of Marine Fisheries, as well. He further reported that Congressman Walter B. Jones, Jr. has introduced a bill which will enable the US Corps of Engineers to engage in a model study to learn more about the Currituck Sound and the canal draining which so greatly affects it.

Mike Duncan requested that we have a presentation on the issue of monitoring. Chairman Haste added that he felt we (as a Council) needed someone to tell us more so that we could decide what to do. Gilbert Baccus expressed a desire to learn more about pfiesteria and John Mulvey told the group about the North Eastern North Carolina Regional Partnership, formerly the North Eastern North Carolina Economic Development Commission. Mr. Barber briefly discussed the introduction of exotic plant and animal species (especially hydrilla and zebra mussels) as being troublesome and that they are sometimes introduced via the ballast from foreign ships.

New Business:

A motion by Mike Duncan and seconded by Hollis Creecy to appoint Erie Haste (municipal), Yates Barber (interest-group) and Clarence Skinner (county) as the Pasquotank Regional Council delegates to the Coordinating Council was made. There being no further nominations, they were closed. The motion passed and the listing of delegates was forwarded to DENR Secretary Wayne McDevitt.

Chairman Haste remarked on the need for polling the Pasquotank River Basin Regional council members who have not been attending meetings about their intention to continue as members. Joan and Guy added that this is a concern with all five Regional Councils and that a campaign to inquire of members falling into this category is planned. A letter which will be used for this purpose is being prepared.

Lastly, mention of a toxic chemical (sulfonyl urea--spelling?) used on corn, soybeans, etc. is suspected of hurting submerged aquatic vegetation. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Powquotank RC
Attendance
Clerksbeck, NC
2/5/98

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>
Jean Goodard	DWR Staff
John Mulvey	Economic Development, Currituck County
Gilbert Baccus	Perfumers/Comm. Industry
JERRY Markham	Camden Recreational Fishing
Harris Z. Essay	Yates Co
Yates Barber	Currituck County Volunteers
Carl Beutson	Retired forester
Damon M. Tatem	CWMTF COASTAL
Steve Foster	Perfumers
Bill Richardson	Currituck County Manager
Guy Stefanski	DWR Staff
Mike Duncan	Currituck Co. Agriculture Rep.
BEN GRAY	COMMISSIONER

PASQUOTANK RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL

What are the priority environmental concerns in your river basin?

Members of the Pasquotank River Basin Regional Council have developed a list of priority environmental concerns for the Pasquotank River Basin. This list was determined by members during the Regional Councils "Kick-off" Meeting on September 25, 1997 and their regular meeting on February 5, 1998.

Below are the PRBRC's priority environmental concerns as correlated to the main goals, objectives and management actions of the CCMP. NOTE: These are not ranked in order of priority.

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.

Concerns:

- 1- salinity in Currituck Sound
 - too much
 - wide fluctuation
 - canals to the north
 - diversions from North River headwaters
- 2- responsibility for water quality problems will be placed disproportionately on agriculture
- 3- sedimentation/erosion problems
- 4- not enough effort toward actual clean-up

Concern #1. Salinity in Currituck Sound.

The CCMP's Water Quality Plan offers many strategies designed to "restore, maintain or enhance water quality". Specifically, Objective A, Management Action 1, Critical Step #2 (pg. 29) says that the Regional Councils shall have input into the basinwide planning process.

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

Management Action 1: Develop and begin implementing basinwide plans to protect and restore water quality in each basin according to the schedule established by the Division of Water Quality. The plans would include provisions for basinwide wetland protection and restoration.

The PRBRC is concerned with canals and other water diversion/control structures in Virginia which may be affecting water quality and resource habitats in the Pasquotank River Basin; particularly in Currituck Sound. They are very interested in partnering with the State of Virginia and the Army of Corps of Engineers on these issues. 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 PRBRC should be encouraged to discuss these issues with Virginia and the Corps through this Coordinating Council format.

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Concern #2. Responsibility for water quality problems will be placed disproportionately on agriculture.

Concern #3. Sedimentation/erosion problems.

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 to addressing these two concerns. Following are specific management actions that also address agriculture/sedimentation/erosion issues:

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

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 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.

Concern #4. Not enough effort toward actual clean-up.

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.

VITAL HABITATS PLAN

Goal: Conserve and protect vital fish and wildlife habitats, and maintain the natural heritage of the Albemarle-Pamlico region.

Concern #1. Preservation of “green spaces” & environmentally sensitive areas.

(NOTE: Many, if not all, of the CCMPs management actions address this issue)

Objective A: Promote regional planning to protect and restore the natural heritage of the APES region.

Management Action 1: Develop ecosystem protection and restoration plans (basinwide ecosystem plans) for each river basin in the region. **NOTE: Critical Step #1 (pg. 84) indicates that the Regional Councils would have input into developing these plans.**

Management Action 2. Develop and maintain accurate maps and records of wetlands, fisheries habitats, federal and state endangered species and their habitats, natural areas, and natural communities.

Management Action 3: Expand programs to identify wetlands on a regional scale and to evaluate and rank wetland function.

Objective B: Promote the responsible stewardship, protection and conservation of valuable natural areas in the APES region.

Management Action 1: Bring areas identified as having the highest priority for protection into public ownership and/or management. Expand funding for public acquisition of park lands, gamelands, coastal reserves, and other natural areas.

Management Action 2: Provide incentives and technical assistance for the protection of privately owned vital habitats.

Objective C: Maintain, restore, and enhance vital habitat functions to ensure the survival of wildlife and fisheries.

Management Action 1: Enhance the ability of state and federal agencies to enforce existing wetlands regulations by 1995.

Management Action 2: Strengthen regulatory programs to protect vital fisheries habitats, which include submerged aquatic vegetation, shellfish beds, and spawning areas by 1995.

Management Action 3: Enhance existing efforts to restore the functions and values of degraded wetlands and vital fisheries habitats. Develop and begin implementing an expanded program to restore wetlands.

STEWARDSHIP PLAN

Goal: Promote responsible stewardship of the natural resources of the Albemarle-Pamlico region.

Concerns:

- 1- plan development in a deliberate and environmentally sensitive manner
- 2- growth is occurring rapidly (more traffic, increased tourism)
- 3- increasing use of aquifer leading to depletion of ground water
- 4- sounds in NC are very unique with unique & complex problems
- 5- no simple rating system for rivers to determine "good or bad" water quality
- 6- government continues to expand around issue, but nothing happens



7- recommendations and initiatives will be changed when they are taken over by agencies

8- Pfiesteria: stress public education

Concern #1. Plan development in a deliberate and environmentally sensitive manner

Concern #2. Growth is occurring rapidly (more traffic, increased tourism)

Objective A: Promote local and regional planning that protects the environment and allows for economic growth.

Management Action 1: Support local planning by providing funding and economic incentives to local governments to integrate environmental and economic planning by 1999.

Management Action 2: Provide to local governments affordable and accessible data from the state Geographic Information System for use in planning and public education within the region by 1996.

Concern #3. Increasing use of aquifer leading to depletion of ground water.

The CCMP does not contain a management action which specifically addresses the depletion of ground water. However, this issue could best be addressed through regional planning and education.

Objective A: Promote local and regional planning that protects the environment and allows for economic growth.

Objective B: Increase public understanding of environmental issues and citizen involvement in environmental policy making.

Concerns 4 through 8 are associated with public education efforts. The management actions in Objectives B and C of the Stewardship Plan seek ways to increase the level of public understanding and environmental education.

Concern #4. Sounds in NC are very unique with unique & complex problems.

Concern #5. No simple rating system for rivers to determine "good or bad" water quality.

Concern #6. Government continues to expand around issue, but nothing happens.

Concern #7. Recommendations will be changed when they are taken over by agencies.

Concern #8. Pfiesteria: stress public education.

Objective B: Increase public understanding of environmental issues and citizen involvement in environmental policy making.



Management Action 1: Expand and coordinate education projects about the Albemarle-Pamlico estuary, focusing on both environmental and economic issues.

Management Action 2: Increase opportunities for citizens to communicate with members of environmental agencies and policy-making commissions.

Management Action 3: Enhance and heighten local public involvement in issues affecting the estuary.

Management Action 4: Expand involvement in the Citizens Water Quality Monitoring Program and make the program more interactive with regulatory agencies.

Objective C: Ensure that students, particularly in grades K-5, are exposed to science and environmental education.

Management Action 1: Support the development of a comprehensive environmental science and education curriculum.

Management Action 2: Provide for teachers at all levels ongoing opportunities to gain renewal credits in workshops on environmental and estuarine education.

The PRBRC also produced a list of "Hopes":

- * rivers flowing to the sound be declared "clean and good"*
- * projects will be pursued that will tangibly affect water quality*
- * better coordination of state agencies*
- * Council should promote public education on water quality issues*
- * need to bring more young people into the process*
- * Council could approach local elected officials to determine their priorities & concerns*
- * responsibility for water quality problems is balanced between all interests*

April 8, 1998

