

MEETING SUMMARY
NC Mountain Resources Technical Advisory Council
May 20, 2011, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Town Hall Building, 95 Walker Street, Columbus, NC

Members in Attendance: Jim Fox, Rick Wooten, Paul Muller, Todd Cherry, Andy Brown, DJ Gerken, David Ray

Others in Attendance: David Gantt, Judy Francis

Call to Order

Jim Fox called the meeting to order at 10:00. There was consensus to amend the agenda to discuss the report card project first due to the shortened meeting time.

Approval of March 18, 2010 Meeting Summary

Todd Cherry made a motion to approve the meeting summary from March 18, 2011. Andy Brown seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Discussion of Regional Sustainability Report Card

Jim Fox provided a brief PowerPoint presentation about the report card project. The contract for the grant has been finalized, and work has begun. Todd Cherry is beginning to collect appropriate data for inclusion. The assignments and timeline for the project are projected to be as follows:

Phase 1 by May 31 – decide on metrics

Phase 2 – August, receive text, maps, graphs, and images on web portal

Phase 3 – October 31, 2011 version 1 of pdf and website

Phase 4 – Jan 31, 2012 final version

Information will be organized in natural, built, social, economic categories. Rick Wooten will provide geologic resources information. David Ray asked how we will illustrate that the categories are related. Issues like ecosystem services fall into multiple categories. Jim said that is the challenge of web design. We need a place to start and index, and then we will work to highlight the connectivity. David Ray said maybe we should have a fifth category called “synergies”. Andy Brown reminded everyone make sure music, craft, and Cherokee are included in the cultural category. NEMAC is project lead. Todd Cherry will be doing economics, Bill Yarborough will provide data about agricultural issues, and DJ Gerken will also contribute data he is aware of. The project will provide an overview of the 27 counties, have maps of elevations, river basins, climate information, natural heritage areas, a land use change map sequence, and forestry data. Todd –Cherry said that maybe since it is web-based, it would be helpful to start out with a map of the big picture. Then you can drill down to specific issues, and that would illustrate various connections.

David Ray asked if there would be a scoring mechanism. Jim said that is why we tied the original report card to the Montreal Accord. They utilized a uniformity of scoring method. We don't know how to do that for this version until we start looking at the data. David Ray asked for clarification of whether or not this will be a report card or a status report. Jim said it was his understanding that the MRC wanted a report card. He will send out meeting notice and hopes to hold bi-weekly meetings. He asked TAC members to contact him if they are interested in participating. Judy said it would be best to involve at least one member of the MRC on the report card team, and the MRC should also be very involved in the public roll-out of the project.

Slope Mapping Funding

Rick Wooten said the future of the program does not look good and there will not likely be any additional maps completed. Continuing the program has become a political issue and it is not reconcilable with a number of House members. DENR does not have the financial or managerial flexibility to save it. DJ asked how much institutional knowledge will we lose. Rick responded will probably lose a lot. We want to save some staff jobs, but these positions are being eliminated. It is a very sober time right now. DJ said the TAC should continue to stress non-regulatory responses to the slope issue and the significance of having good information. The main thrust is public safety. It also protects major investments of money. The TAC reviewed the overview of recommendations they had previously worked on. They focused on MRC action items. We will lose the slope mapping capacity, but also response to local governments and technical support will not be available anymore. Todd Cherry said that just because the program is gone doesn't mean that landslides will stop happening. The need for the information will still be important. There are a lot of requests from site designers and engineers for the slope maps. They use the information frequently.

Determine Next Meeting Date

DJ said the report card work group should meet sometime in July to check on metric development. We should also meet prior to MRC on same day. Jim will send out a poll to select a meeting date in July.

Adjourn

There being no further business, David Ray made a motion to adjourn. Paul Muller seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously at 11:05 AM.