

# **Local Program Report to the SCC**

## **City of Monroe**

The City of Monroe's Local Program was reviewed August 6, 2008. Currently a staff of six contributes three full time equivalents to erosion control. There is currently one vacancy that will be filled at the end of this month. There are currently thirty-three active projects larger than one acre. The staff has approved twenty-nine projects in the past year. There were eighteen plan disapprovals. The staff conducted 207 inspections from August 2007 to July 2008. Five Notices of Violation were issued and two civil penalties were assessed. The City also works with the building inspectors to have the certificate of occupancy held for non-compliant sites until compliance is achieved.

Four projects were evaluated. Three of the four projects were previously found non-compliant at the review in November. The sedimentation and erosion control plans for each of the sites were adequate. All sites were in compliance with the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act. General documentation was good for all files reviewed. The City updated their approval letter as requested and is conducting and documenting inspections properly for each site visited.

Staff recommends continued delegation of the program.

## **Henderson County**

The local program was reviewed August 12, 2008. This is a new program that started October 2007. The program is supervised by Natalie Berry, CPESC, CPSQW, CFM. She formally headed the City of Asheville program. She conducts the plan reviews, and spends 50 percent of her time on sediment and erosion control. A field inspector and an administrative assistant work full time in the sediment and erosion control program. Since last October, the program has received 623 sketch plans for sites less than one acre. Thirty-four projects greater than one acre have been approved. Enforcement activities for the past 10 months were 10 notices of violation and one suspension of a building permit.

Six projects were reviewed, most notably a 1400 acre golf resort. A number of areas had been initially graded but not finished, resulting in many exposed slopes. The understory had been cleared on steep mountain slopes, leaving small streams without protective buffers. The remainder of the projects ranged from 2 to 4 acres. Two were in excellent condition. Two had minor violations, stemming from a lack of ground cover. The sixth project was reviewed at the request of the local program to generate recommendations on controlling runoff from a steep roadbed. It had sediment controls in place, but the basins were smaller than designed because of the steep terrain. Rapid stabilization of the roadbed and ditches with stone, and reducing the inside slopes of the sediment traps were recommended.

The program is doing a good job of documenting and tracking plan review, inspections and compliance activities. The Land Quality inspector is planning to spend time in the field with the County inspector to improve his inspection skills.

Staff recommends continued delegation.

### **Caldwell County**

The local program was reviewed August 13 2008. This is also a new program that started October 2007. The County has an environmental engineer and a field inspector that administer the sedimentation and erosion control program and the stormwater program. The County has not accepted existing projects from Land Quality. So the County has 8 projects greater than one acre, while Land Quality still has 80 to 100 projects it is inspecting in Caldwell County. The inspector reports doing about 30 inspections per month, but has not been doing written inspections. No notices of violation have been issued.

Four projects were reviewed. One had not been approved, so the adequacy of the plan submittal was discussed. Two of the projects were issued plan approvals the day of the phone call scheduling the program review. They had both already started. One was a church site that had an adequate plan and adequate measures in the field. The plan had been approved after a lengthy review concerning stormwater management. However, the initial submittal had not been approved or disapproved within 30 days. The development of a 160 acres tract on the headwaters of the Johns River was reviewed. The plan had been submitted April 30, 2008, but not approved until August 7, 2008. Work has proceeded for some time. The initial phase of the project is permitted and inspected by Land Quality. The phase being inspected by the local program is 3.55 acres. Slopes are being matted as the road grading progresses. Several recommendations were made to improve runoff conveyance, but the site had measures in place. The last project was a 5500-foot road to a cell tower. It had vertical cut slopes on the upper side of the road, and steep fills slopes on the other side. All areas were bare except for the roadbed, which had gravel. The tower was complete, with a fence around it. A bare waste and borrow area was beyond the fence. The ditches were bare and eroding. Red sediment could be seen spreading under the rhododendron below the fill slopes.

The Caldwell County local program received a contract for start-up funding for the previous fiscal year. It has also been awarded a contract for additional funding this fiscal year. Staff is alarmed that letters of plan approval were not issued to two projects that were underway until the review was scheduled, no written inspection reports have been done, and that Land Quality retains responsibility for all the projects in the County approved prior to October 2007. Staff recommends that the program be placed on probation, and that Caldwell County be asked to respond to the Commission at the November 2008 meeting.