

2010 CHPP Public Meetings

Morehead City, June 8, 2010

Wilmington, June 14, 2010

Manteo, June 17, 2010

Three public meetings were held in June 2010 to receive public input on the revised CHPP draft and recommendations. There were 12, 10, and 6 people in attendance at Morehead, Wilmington, and Manteo respectively, in addition to CHPP staff. CHPP Steering Committee members that attended included BJ Copeland, MFC, and Joan Weld, CRC. Mike Lopazanski, Jessi Oneal and Kevin Hart, CHPP team members, also attended. A presentation focusing on new information in the CHPP was given by Jimmy Johnson. Anne Deaton went over the recommendations and asked for input on the recommendations and what their top priority recommendations / issues would be. Suggestions by the public included:

In Morehead, comments included that the CHPP plan has been effective and accomplished a lot, and the CHPP Steering Committee and team have continued addressing important issues. One comment was to modify Recommendation 3.2 to specifically state to continue the ban on oceanfront hardening, rather than the more general wording. They asked that Recommendation 3.4 regarding estuarine shoreline stabilization be reworded to state that alternatives to vertical shoreline stabilization techniques be preferred rather than just considered since the DCM Estuarine Shoreline Stakeholders group found bulkheads to be the least preferred structure on almost all shoreline types. Also they asked that Recommendation 3.6 be reworded to clearly state that oil drilling should be banned in North Carolina state or federal waters. Several others agreed. Other comments included needing to support local stormwater ordinances that address CHPP recommendations and encouraging Low Impact Development (LID) in rule-making.

In Wilmington, questions were raised about whether the CHPP was addressing compliance and cumulative impacts enough. One person stated that the CHPP had enormous potential but the goals were the weakest part of the plan. He offered suggestions for a more effective strategic plan. He said goals should be concise and quantified, with specific benchmarks for measuring success by selected deadlines to assess progress. When assessing progress, one can reevaluate why you didn't meet a goal and adaptively adjust as needed. Of the 24 recommendations, he felt 20 were process based rather than goals. He suggested a workgroup be formed to revise the goals. Although it was explained that the CHPP implementation plans are where specific deadlines are set, he felt they should be included in the plan and upfront to provide vision. It was also pointed out that the specific goals (restore X acres of SAV in X years) used for Chesapeake Bay restoration had failed due to the inability to track progress through monitoring. Others also mentioned that the CHPP needs to have a clear vision and simple message tied to one or two key issues that the commissions and public will support and partner on.

In Manteo, one person thanked the staff for including more information on sea level rise and shoreline stabilization. There were questions and discussion regarding enforcement of proper performance of wastewater treatment plants and associated infrastructure. This relates to Recommendation 4.1 and 1.1. They asked if there was something that could be added to the CHPP recommendations to help this since there continue to be many problems with wastewater treatment plant and pipe failures. They asked if the state could require local governments to

increase taxes as needed to ensure that adequate funding was available to maintain aging systems properly. Staff said they would discuss with DWQ to see if there was anything that could be added. Other comments included focusing on prevention and preservation of habitat more than restoration. There was an interest in more oyster sanctuaries in closed shellfish harvesting waters and artificial reefs in ocean waters. SAV habitat was mentioned as the highest priority habitat for protection. There was concern that currently you are not allowed to plant marsh grass to protect your property without a lengthy permit and they thought this was counterproductive. They would like to see the process for permitting marsh sills simplified and promoted since this is an environmentally preferred method of protecting the shoreline and is widely used in other northern states. They noted there is a need to coordinate shoreline development at the community level. Another comment was to modify Recommendation 3.6 to state to maintain the ban against oil drilling. One person asked that buffer rules be improved to enhance water quality conditions. There were also several questions about what specifically had been done regarding some of the water quality recommendations and how that was working and if there were any examples of successful cumulative impact regulation from other states that could be included in the CHPP and used as a model.

The public was given a handout to fill out and return if they had additional input. To date, two sets of written comments have been received. Deadline for comments is July 31, so additional comments may be forthcoming.