

DRAFT

APNEP Policy Board Meeting

Umstead State Park

Raleigh, NC

April 29th, 2008

Attending

Bill Crowell
Jack Thigpen
Fred McManus
Steve Wall
Marjorie Rayburn
Lucy Henry
Granville Maitland
Etles Henries Jr.
Bob Honseman
Richard Rogers
Manly Wilder
Kirk Havens
Dean Carpenter
Tony Reevy
Noah Hill
Jimmy Johnson
Chad Smith
Lisa Riegel
Leanne Madre

Jack Thigpen, chair of the Policy Board and NC Sea Grant extension director, provided welcoming comments, called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

APNEP Workplan Update

Bill Crowell, APNEP director, reviewed the projects in APNEP's 2009 Workplan, noting that the total grant award for 2009 is expected to go up by over \$100,000 and our indirect cost rate with the state has also gone up. He also noted Joan Giordano's retirement and the restructuring of staff responsibilities slightly to compensate for her departure.

Brief comments about each project were made as follows (full information about is available in the APNEP workplan document that was disseminated at the meeting).

- The **Virginia Watershed Field Coordinator** position is open and APNEP is in the process of changing the host institution. The position will continue as half funded by the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- Dean Carpenter, APNEP's Science Coordinator, briefed the Policy Board on the **spatially-enabled content management system** that he will be working to set up in order for APNEP to serve as a data clearinghouse of natural resources data in North Carolina. The project will use mash-up technology adopted from the Puget Sound estuary program, thus limiting our costs. The system will allow natural resource managers to view and link to data from APNEP's website.
- Dean Carpenter also briefed the Policy Board on an **imagery catalog** that he is coordinating. To begin to compile imagery from the APNEP region, APNEP will host two workshops to determine availability of historical imagery.
- Bill Crowell commented on APNEP's support for another **Teacher Institute**, put on by the Office of Environmental Education at DENR and by the Environmental Education Fund. This project is a success story, because APNEP initially put in most of the funds and the Office of Environmental Education has been able to leverage funds from additional sources to the point where APNEP is one of many funders for 2009.
- APNEP will be working with the Virginia Institute for Marine Sciences to conduct a **pilot ecosystem assessment** in the Pasquotank and Chowan river basins. The project will be funded half by DCR and half by APNEP EPA 2009 funds. It was also noted that it will be important to bring together EPA region 3 and 4 to leverage funds such as those from the Healthy Lands Initiative in region 3 and from discretionary funds available from region 4.
- APNEP's SAV working group is reviewing **images taken of SAV** this year and they are beginning to be mapped. 10% of the imagery still needs to be taken. The digitizing process is painstaking and APNEP may need to hire some additional support in order to complete the process.
- The **Citizens' Monitoring Network** is ongoing. There are approximately 46 volunteers involved and they monitor around 25 sites. In the future, support from local business and other sources will be needed. Jack Thigpen noted the crossover with the Oyster Monitoring Program out of Sea Grant and Bill Crowell noted previous attempts to integrate the project with the Streamwatch Program out of DWQ.
- APNEP will identify a **waterbody within the next month to target for removal from the 303d list**. APNEP will be involved in the awareness raising and leveraging of community support. The project could be buffers, sewage repair, or some other point source fix, but most of the "low hanging fruit" has been captured. Noah Hill noted that Region 3 has similar funding for Virginia Beach.

Bill Crowell noted that Virginia is increasingly focusing on their southern watersheds. Fred McManus noted a few success stories of NEP's involved in 303d delisting, including Charlotte Harbor and Sarasota Bay NEPs.

- APNEP continues to use our **website** for outreach purposes and a suggestion was made that Policy Board members can send events to APNEP staff for posting on the online calendar.
- Lucy Henry, APNEP watershed management coordinator, commented on several **public listening sessions** that she will be facilitating to learn about public perceptions of the combined threat of population growth and sea level rise at the coast. She will begin these sessions in July and will be working with the Albemarle-Pamlico Conservation and Communities Collaborative (AP3C) to host the sessions.
- Lucy Henry also briefed the Policy Board on a **survey project** that APNEP will be undertaking, beginning in the fall. The project will probably employ the East Carolina University Center for Survey Research in an APNEP region-wide public opinion survey about estuary management, comparable to a 1994 survey that APNEP undertook. The survey will allow for a better understanding of how APNEP and others have succeeded in raising public awareness about the importance of natural resources protection and will also inform our CCMP revision process.
- APNEP will again fund **demonstration projects**, but this year we have less funding and will broaden the scope to allow for more than just schools to apply. Bill Crowell mentioned the uncertainty about whether to require match and it was suggested that it be recommended, but the CAC in their review can rank and prioritize taking match into consideration. Another suggestion was to focus on areas with impaired waters.
- APNEP also has funds from the state budget for **river herring protection**. Last year it was \$100,000 in funding, which was used to support a DMF sampling project and will likely be used for land acquisition to protect herring habitat. 2009 funds might be slightly more. Jack Thigpen noted a project funded by DOT to research fish swimming velocities for the engineering of culverts on the Chowan River. Bill Crowell mentioned APNEP's support for an Environmental Defense impediments study and also noted that the estimated cost by DOT for removal of culverts is \$80,000-125,000.

Jack Thigpen called for approval of the 2009 plan and all approved apart from 2 who had to abstain.

STAC Issue Papers

Kirk Havens, an APNEP Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee member from the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, introduced the Policy Board to 5 issue papers that were written by subcommittees of the STAC. The STAC members established 3 subcommittees about a year ago, including a monitoring and modeling committee, a management committee, and a forecasting committee. Each committee nominated issue paper topics, based on what they thought were the pertinent issues facing the A-P region and needing policy attention. Then, as a group, they selected 5 issues to write white papers about in this first round, with another 5 pending.

In short, the papers were as follows: 1) Called for more monitoring of natural resources; 2) Commented on the dynamic of human health driving water quality standards with lack of understanding and consideration for ground and surface water connection and ecology; 3) Reviewed BMP implementation and efficiency and called for a basin-wide approach to evaluating BMPs; 4) Commented on lack of monitoring of nano-particles and noted the difficulty in tracking these new materials in the environment; 5) Commented broadly on climate change impacts to the A-P.

Kirk Havens then opened the floor, noting that the STAC was prepared to receive feedback from the Policy Board, to provide more information through presentations, and to provide more in-depth papers. The purpose of the issue papers is to stimulate further discussion, not to serve as a comprehensive overview of the topic.

Comments:

- Richard Rogers commented on the need for a more hand-in-hand approach to climate change – that currently efforts are disparate.
- Bill Crowell suggested the Climate Change paper be submitted to the legislative climate change commission.
- Steve Wall commented that the water quality issue paper is a big topic of discussion right now and that a basin-wide approach would be a “sea change” for DWQ.
- Others commented on the need to read the papers before endorsing them. Another suggestion was for them to be used to inform APNEP’s outreach efforts.

Where do the papers go from here?

- 5 papers are done, 6-10 are being worked on.
- Papers will not be circulated before a full Policy Board review
- The Policy Board would like STAC recommendations about which topics are most important.
- Policy Board members can send comments to Bill or Dean for forwarding to and consideration by the STAC.

Sea Level Rise Adaptation

Tom Cors of The Nature Conservancy in North Carolina briefed the Policy Board about sea level rise adaptation developments in North Carolina. Cors noted that TNC has 270,000 acres in conservation in the A-P and that NC is in the top three most heavily

impacted (in acres) US states from sea level rise. Issues like the heavily ditched landscape of the coastal plain make adaptation challenging for NC, but we are considered a state that is strong in our adaptation opportunities. The Lieberman-Warner Act could bring \$36 million to NC through an adaptation fund by 2012. Cors suggested that NC needs to be prepared to implement adaptation and noted strong support from NC representatives Butterfield and Dole.

Some actions that Cors noted are underway include SAV restoration, oyster reef restoration, and efforts to determine ways to facilitate wetland migration, but also said that we are at ground zero in terms of restoration strategies. The April 10th Sea Level Rise Adaptation meeting in Manteo, co-sponsored by APNEP, set us up for going forward. Some of the opportunities that were mentioned include collaboration with the Albemarle-Pamlico Conservation and Communities Collaborative, the APNEP Climate Ready Estuaries project, a possible state legislative adaptation committee, and APNEP's CCMP as a comprehensive ecosystem plan that includes adaptation strategies. An ongoing challenge is the question of who has cognizance – EPA or NOAA and whether match will be required with the federal adaptation funds.

Coastal Community Planning and Development

Lisa Riegel, director of the North Carolina Natural Heritage Trust Fund, gave the Policy Board a presentation about a smart growth meeting put on by the National Estuary Program that she attended in Washington, DC on behalf of APNEP. She commented on the fact that North Carolina's expecting 50% population growth by 2050 and that much of that growth is occurring on our coasts. The question is how and where we'll grow and one of the solutions is a smart growth strategy. Smart growth goes against the standard approach of separate land uses, which has been proven to be a drain on the economy, requiring people to drive more and increasing infrastructure costs and water quality problems. Smart growth is what people like – it's aesthetically pleasing because it encourages things like trees along streets and walkable communities. The smart growth approach is also better for the environment, better for health and costs less to a community. Some current regulations discourage smart growth, but fixes could include impact fees for developers and awareness raising. One role that NEPs could play in moving smart growth forward is to identify existing issues and conditions limiting smart growth.