

**NC Coastal Resources Advisory Council
 Ramada Inn
 Kill Devil Hills, NC
 March 21-22, 2007
 Meeting Summary**

Attendance

William Morrison, Chair	Y	J. Michael Moore	Y
Dara Royal, Vice Chair	Y	Elwood Padrick	
Frank Alexander	Y	W. Burch Perry	Y
Deborah Anderson	Y	Spencer Rogers	Y
Eugene Balance		Brandon Shoaf	
Joe Beck	Y	Robert Shupe	Y
Harold Blizzard		Harry Simmons	
Randy Cahoon	Y	Lester Simpson	Y
Carlton Davenport	Y	Steve Sizemore	Y
Eddy Davis	Y	Jimmy Spain	
Paul Delamar		Paul Spruill	
Webb Fuller	Y	Michael Street	Y
William Gardner, Jr.		Ray Sturza	Y
Renee Gledhill-Earley		Penny Tysinger	Y
Gary Greene		Beans Weatherly	Y
Judy Hills	Y	David Weaver	Y
Al Hodge	Y	Ginger Webster	Y
Maximilian Merrill	Y	William Wescott	Y
Joe Lassiter	Y	Tracie White	Y
Travis Marshall (Phil Harris)	Y	Rhett White	Y
Gary Mercer	Y	Don Yousey (David Stanley)	
Wayne Mobley	Y		

Wetland Bank Field Trip

Bud Needham of Needham Environmental Inc. led a field trip for CRC and CRAC members at a wetlands restoration site in Tyrrell County. The site is being restored from agricultural use and will be used as a mitigation bank. Along with replanting native wetland species and cypress trees, Needham is restoring the hydrology and replacing old culverts with new ones that will facilitate fish passage. Mitigation credits have already been sold for the portions of the site that have been fully restored.

Stormwater Retrofitting Seminar

The CRAC-sponsored Stormwater Retrofitting Seminar got underway at the NC Aquarium at Roanoke Island at 3 pm. Approximately 70 attendees, including CRAC members, local elected officials, and municipal staff were present to learn about some of the technical and practical issues associated with retrofitting existing facilities for better stormwater control. Following introductions by Eddy Davis, Al Hodge briefed attendees on DWQ's current and proposed permitting standards.

NSCU Assistant Professor Bill Hunt gave a presentation on some of the technical aspects of retrofitting, focusing on his 16 broad criteria for designing a project. More information on Bill Hunt's work is available at www.bae.ncsu.edu/stormwater. Charlie Humphrey, an Area Specialized Agent with the North Carolina Extension Office in Craven County, spoke about retrofit projects that the Extension Office has been involved with, and the services that it offers to assist local governments that wish to undertake projects. More information about the Extension Office is available at <http://craven.ces.ncsu.edu/>. Steve Miller, Water Resources Manager for the City of Kinston, gave attendees a first-hand look at the experiences of one local government that has completed several retrofitting projects. Steve discussed the technical, operational, and financial aspects of Kinston's projects, and considered the projects to be very successful. In closing, the presenters invited attendees to inspect the stormwater BMPs that had been installed at the aquarium, including a rain garden and cistern. The seminar ended at 5 pm.

The seminar was organized by CRAC members Eddy Davis, Judy Hills, and Penny Tysinger, together with DCM and Coastal Reserves staff.

Council Call to Order

Bill Morrison reconvened the meeting at 9 am on the 22nd, with 31 members in attendance. The Council approved the January 2007 minutes with one amendment from Mike Street.

Seminar Debrief

The Council was very satisfied with the turnout of local government officials and staff. The Council noted that there seemed to be more municipal staff than elected representatives present, and that this was expected. The Council thought the seminar itself was very well organized and focused, and had an appropriate mix of outstanding speakers. Due to this success, the Council decided to repeat the seminar later this year in Greenville and Wilmington. Bill Morrison asked that planning board chairs and planning staff be invited to the next seminars. The Council would also like to see a Resources section added to the DCM website that would contain these and similar presentations, or links to such.

The Council decided to produce a short, 5-10 minute presentation that members could take on the road to present at county commission and town council meetings along the coast. The presentation would be customized by location and should include information on grants available for retrofitting. Approximately 15 of the members present indicated their willingness to give the presentation to their local elected bodies.

Gloria Putnam of Sea Grant offered herself, at members' requests, to visit local commission and council meetings to educate officials about stormwater management, retrofitting, and other water quality issues.

Gary Mercer mentioned what he calls disconnects in messages from regulatory agencies, saying that the problems need to be fixed, and challenging the CRAC to work to find solutions to coastal water quality problems. Mercer suggested that using filter-feeding shellfish and ultraviolet radiation could be innovative ways to treat impaired waters.

Wayne Mobley said that the agencies through their regulations are charged to protect the public trust, which cannot be uncontrollably sacrificed for the sake of development. Mobley said that depuration plants are common in other states, e.g. New Jersey, and while North Carolina's shellfish harvest rules may be more stringent, the state has not seen any public health issues related to shellfish consumption since the rules were enacted.

Gary Mercer stated that he thinks the state's current stormwater rules are sufficient. Mercer would like to see a moratorium on new regulations, and see the agencies work instead on improving the current regulations and compliance among the regulated community.

Dave Weaver said he would like to see a nuts and bolts presentation for local governments that compares the current coastal stormwater regulations, the proposed Phase II regulations, and the Universal Stormwater Management Program. Al Hodge noted that extending the Phase II regulations to all 20 coastal counties is still in the conceptual stage at DWQ, it has not yet been formally proposed to the EMC for consideration or adoption. Al stressed that none of the current or proposed regulations currently under consideration would achieve water quality improvements, their intent is to prevent further degradation. Al questioned whether that was sufficient. Al conceded that it is not fair for the entire burden to fall on new development when much of the adverse impacts comes from existing development, e.g. failing septic systems, and this is why retrofitting is important. Al added that while he recognizes that much of the pollution problem comes from wildlife DWQ can only regulate human activity because he does not know how to keep a duck from pooping.

Deborah Anderson suggested a look at the Jordan Lake watershed rules which require all development, new and existing, to manage and treat their stormwater. Wayne Mobley reiterated that while only a very small percentage of state waters are closed to shellfishing, 99 percent of remaining clam waters (i.e. waters from Morehead City southward) are at risk of closure following every heavy rainfall. The state relies on management plans to keep the waters conditionally open.

Al Hodge said that the NC Coastal Management Program could assist with inspections and maintenance. Agencies should work cooperatively to share reports with each other and with local governments. Mike Street added that it would be good for DWQ to be given dedicated compliance and enforcement staff.

Max Merrill asked whether the Council could initiate a program to regulate coastal buffers. Max said that DENR's Soil and Water Conservation Division will be making grants available later this year to assist with installing stormwater BMPs on individual lots.

Gary Mercer asked whether the Council could recommend that CAMA land use plans be required to address stormwater retrofitting.

Priorities

The Council briefly revisited their list of priority issues. Bob Shupe and Mike Street emphasized the need to act on sandbags. Staff reassured them that the issue would be taken up in a committee of the whole at the May meeting in Greenville.

Wrightsville Beach Access #33

Bill Morrison pointed to the response from the mayor of Wrightsville Beach to the joint CRC/CRAC letter that was sent in regards to access #33. The mayor gave a lengthy explanation of the town's reasons for returning title of the access parcel to private ownership, and of the town's decision not to pursue legal action to secure prescriptive access. Bill stated that he didn't see the need for any further action by the CRAC.

New Business/Old Business

With no further business the Council adjourned at 11:30 am.

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