



Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program

N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Beverly E. Perdue, Governor

Dee A. Freeman, Secretary

Bill Crowell, Director



February 29, 2012

Policy Board Members,

The upcoming meeting of the APNEP Policy Board promises to be an extraordinary occasion. In light of its importance, please make every effort to attend. If you are required to be absent, please nominate a proxy in writing to attend and vote on your behalf.

First and foremost, the agenda includes discussion and adoption of APNEP's updated Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, a document four years in the making. APNEP's ecosystem-based management approach promises to substantially improve regional management efforts while serving as a model for other ecosystem-based management efforts nationwide. The document has been developed with substantial input from the Policy Board, APNEP's advisory committees, and numerous partners, and the general public. On behalf of APNEP staff, I would like to extend my appreciation to the Policy Board for their support of this monumental effort and recommend adoption of the plan.

Second, APNEP's first regional ecosystem assessment since 1991 will be offered for review and acceptance by the Policy Board. Our Science and Technical Advisory Committee led this effort with support from staff and various partners in the region. In sum, 24 major indicators of regional ecosystem health are discussed, each of which provides important management insights for the program. This assessment will serve as the foundation for future expanded assessments, which will be delivered in support of APNEP's ecosystem-based approach.

Finally, the agenda includes a number of other substantive items. Changes to the Policy Board bylaws are offered for review and adoption as well as elections for your Chair and Vice-Chair. In addition to providing updates on current projects, staff will introduce several new initiatives designed to bolster APNEP's ecosystem-based management efforts. We look forward to discussing these items and more in Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Crowell".

Dr. Bill Crowell
Director

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