

NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL HABITAT
PROTECTION PLAN
2004 PUBLIC MEETING DATA ANALYSIS

**A Report on the Input Received at Public Meetings
July – August 2004**

Prepared by

**North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Division of Coastal Management**

August 2004

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I. Introduction

The North Carolina General Assembly enacted the Fisheries Reform Act in August 1997. One of its major provisions is a requirement that the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) prepare Coastal Habitat Protection Plans (CHPPs). The stated CHPPs goal is to enhance the coastal fisheries associated with each habitat. The divisions of Marine Fisheries, Coastal Management, and Water Quality were given the major responsibilities for writing the plans. A unique feature of the law is that three state regulatory commissions (Coastal Resources, Environmental Management, and Marine Fisheries) must adopt the plans. Once adopted, the Commissions' actions are to be consistent with the plans. The Commissions are to adopt the initial plan by the end of December 2004. An Intercommission Review Committee (IRC), comprised of two members of each of the commissions, oversaw the development of the plan and was responsible for drafting recommendations.

During the summer of 2003, the Department conducted a major effort to educate and solicit public input for development of the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP). The focus of the 2003 public meetings was to explain the CHPP to the public, describe the state's coastal habitats and the threats to them, and to get the public's input about perceived threats and possible solutions. The Department held a series of 10 public meetings, and distributed over 200 copies of an introductory video, 15,000 informational brochures, and 250,000 copies of a newspaper tabloid. Over 500 citizens attended the public meetings, almost 1,000 written comments were received, and the CHPP was widely discussed in local and regional news media. A primary message conveyed at these meetings was that public comment would be incorporated into the draft CHPP. The Department also made it clear that there would be another series of public meetings in the summer of 2004 to give citizens an opportunity to see how their comments have been incorporated into the plan and allow them to comment on forthcoming recommendations.

The Department held a second round of public meetings in the summer of 2004 — ten meetings geared towards the general public, as well as five additional meetings to solicit comments from targeted stakeholder groups that seemed to be under-represented at the 2003 meetings, including realtors, homebuilders, local governments, and agriculture and forestry interests. The 2004 public meetings focused on soliciting public response to the recommendations drafted by the IRC and whether or not the recommendations would be effective in meeting the goals of the CHPP. These meetings attracted over 500 people, who submitted 276 completed questionnaires (see Attachment 1) and over 700 written comments. As in 2003, the Department assured the meeting attendees that comments would be incorporated in the CHPP and the accompanying draft recommendations. The CHPP has undergone revisions reflecting the comments received during this second round of public input (see Attachment 2) and the targeted interest group meetings (see Attachment 3), as have the recommendations.

The meeting dates and locations, the attendance at each meeting, and the number of completed comment questionnaires returned are shown in Table 1. A summary of the five meetings held in July and August for targeted stakeholder groups are shown in Table 2. One additional meeting is to be scheduled in September for a targeted stakeholder group in the northern coastal area.

Table 1. Locations and other data for the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan public meetings, Summer 2004

Location	Date	Attendance	# of Questionnaires Completed
Manteo	July 13	45	30
Edenton	July 14	27	22
Jacksonville	July 19	30	19
Beaufort	July 21	47	43
New Bern	July 22	36	29
Bolivia	July 27	28	17
Wilmington	July 28	100	50
Washington	July 29	60	32
Mooreville	August 3	7	5
Raleigh	August 4	50	29
Totals		430	276

Table 2. Locations and other data for the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan stakeholder meetings, Summer, 2004

Location	Date	Attendance	Stakeholder Group
Wilmington	July 8	18	Business Alliance for a Sound Economy
New Bern	July 29	32	N.C. Coastal Communities Coalition
New Bern	August 2	9	N.C. Fisheries Association
Raleigh	August 5	4	N.C. Forestry Association
Raleigh	August 5	16	N.C. Soil & Water Conservation Comm. Technical Review Committee
Total		79	

II. Summary of Written Responses

Attendees at the 2004 public meetings received a form that included the CHPP draft recommendations and columns to fill in to (1) indicate if the draft recommendations would likely help achieve the plan's goals, and (2) rank their top three overall recommendations, as well as to provide additional comments. Participants provided about 700 individual written comments at the meetings, in addition to their evaluation of the efficacy of the recommendations and their priorities.

About 64% of the attendees turned in a response form. Overall, 90% of respondents indicated that the draft recommendations would contribute to reaching the CHPP goals, ranging from a low of 81% for recommendations **4(E)(2) - Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through rule making, including : more stringent impervious surface limits** to a high of 99% for recommendation **1A - Enhance enforcement of, and compliance with, Coastal Resources Commission (CRC), Environmental Management Commission (EMC), and Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) rules and permit conditions.** Thus, even the recommendations that generated the greatest opposition were supported by at least 80% of those persons who provided written comments.

The following recommendations were ranked as the three most important overall for success of the CHPP (indicated as the highest priority by the most respondents):

1(A) Enhance enforcement of, and compliance with, Coastal Resources Commission (CRC), Environmental Management Commission (EMC), and Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) rules and permit conditions (99% support).

1(C) Enhance and expand educational outreach on the value of fish habitat, threats from human activities, effects of non-native species, and the reasons for management measures (93% support).

4(A)(1) Reduce point source pollution from human sewage by increasing inspections of sewage treatment facilities, collection infrastructure, and land disposal sites (93% support).

Respondents also indicated which of the recommendations they felt would contribute the least towards success of the CHPP. The following three recommendations received the least support:

4(E)(2) Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through rule making, including more stringent impervious surface limits (81% support).

4(E)(3) *Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through rule making, including expansion of Areas of Environmental Concern (AECs) upstream and landward (82% support).*

4(D)(3) *Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through voluntary actions, Best Management Practices (BMPs), and incentives, including documentation and monitoring of small but cumulative impacts to wetlands and streams resulting from un-permitted/un-mitigated activities (82% support).*

III. Comments on Individual Goals

Goal 1: Improve Effectiveness of Existing Rules & Programs Protecting Coastal Fish Habitats

An average of 237 respondents (95%), felt that these recommendations would help achieve Goal 1 (Table 3). Recommendation **1A - Enhance enforcement of, and compliance with, Coastal Resources Commission (CRC), Environmental Management Commission (EMC), and Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) rules and permit conditions** was perceived as the most effective, with 99% of respondents agreeing that it was beneficial. Recommendation **1D - Coordinate rulemaking and enforcement among regulatory commissions and agencies** was ranked as the least effective under this goal, with 8% of respondents challenging its usefulness.

Table 3. Summary of comments on Goal 1 recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendations helpful?		Overall Rankings (# of votes)		
	Yes	No	1	2	3
1A	237 (99%)	2	61	24	14
1B	240 (96%)	11	21	23	32
1C	239 (93%)	19	29	26	24
1D	233 (92%)	20	21	21	23

Meeting attendees expressed strong support (39% of Goal 1 written comments) for enhanced education efforts (20%) and better enforcement of existing rules (19%). Many respondents believe that understanding the regulations will improve compliance and make enforcement seem fairer since the rules would be more widely known. The third most common written comment called for improved coordination among permitting and regulatory agencies (13% of Goal 1 comments).

Goal 1 comments also revealed skepticism (6% of comments) about the feasibility of fulfilling this goal. Respondents questioned whether there is sufficient political will to fully enforce existing rules, and whether programs and enforcement will be adequately funded.

Goal 2: Identify, Designate and Protect Strategic Habitat Areas (SHAs)

An average of 212 respondents (93%), felt that these recommendations would help achieve Goal 2 (Table 4). Recommendation **2A1 - Gather information to identify Strategic Habitat Areas by: coordinating, completing, and maintaining habitat mapping (including seagrass, shell bottom, and other bottom types) using the most appropriate technology** was perceived as the most effective, with 98% of respondents agreeing that it was beneficial. Recommendation **2B - Identify and designate Strategic Habitat Areas using ecologically based criteria** was ranked as the least effective under this goal, with 11% of respondents challenging its usefulness.

Table 4. Summary of comments on Goal 2 recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendations helpful?		Overall Rankings (# of votes)		
	Yes	No	1	2	3
2A1	227 (95%)	12	18	7	5
2A2	225 (95%)	12	4	6	9
2A3	219 (91%)	21	6	3	3
2B	227 (89%)	27	9	23	18
2C	232 (91%)	23	13	18	18
2D	230 (92%)	21	21	20	19

Written comments on this goal showed little consensus. The most frequent comment was whether this goal was necessary and feasible (11% of Goal 2 comments) while 9% of the comments supported increased funding for land conservation.

Other comments on this goal advised DENR to proceed with implementation instead of conducting further studies, that individual property rights should be preserved, public trust access should be maintained, and that new Strategic Habitat Areas (SHA) should be coordinated with existing programs and designations. Respondents also indicated that any new SHA should be afforded strict protection, including a ban on trawling.

Goal 3: Enhance Habitat and Protect it from Physical Impacts

An average of 200 respondents (91%), felt that these recommendations would help achieve Goal 3 (Table 5). Recommendation **3A - Greatly expand habitat restoration, including: 1. creation of subtidal oyster reef no-take sanctuaries and 2. re-establishment of riparian wetlands and stream hydrology** was perceived as

the most effective with 93% of respondents agreeing that it was beneficial. Recommendation **3B - Prepare and implement a coast wide beach and inlet management plan that requires ecologically based guidelines for minimization of impacts to fish habitat, while addressing socio-economic concerns** was ranked as the least effective under this goal, with 15% of respondents challenging its usefulness.

Table 5. Summary of comments on Goal 3 recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendations helpful?		Overall Rankings (# of votes)		
	Yes	No	1	2	3
3A1	220 (93%)	16	4	9	4
3A2	209 (90%)	24	10	6	4
3B	202 (85%)	37	22	15	16
3C	228 (92%)	20	19	23	22
3D	218 (90%)	24	11	24	16
3E1	219 (93%)	17	0	5	5
3E2	194 (87%)	30	3	3	8

Other comments received for Goal 3 covered feasibility, trawling, estuarine buffers and beach nourishment. Some respondents believed that this goal might be unnecessary, and questioned whether it is feasible to implement (16% of Goal 3 comments). An equal number of comments called for bans on trawling and mechanical shellfish harvest for inshore waters (16% of Goal 3 comments).

Increased limits on coastal development was supported by 14% of the comments, including tighter restrictions within buffers and setbacks, and 9% of the comments supported more attention to the positive and negative effects of beach nourishment. There was little consensus in other comments on this goal.

Goal 4: Enhance and Protect Water Quality

An average of 195 respondents (89%) felt that these recommendations would help achieve Goal 4. Recommendation **4G4 - Reduce non-point source pollution from concentrated animal operations by the following actions: use improved siting criteria to protect fish habitat** was perceived as the most effective, with 98% of respondents agreeing that it would be beneficial. Recommendation **4E2 - Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through rule making, including: 2. more stringent impervious surface limits** was ranked as the least effective, with 19% of respondents challenging its usefulness.

Table 6. Summary of comments on Goal 4 recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendations helpful?		Overall Rankings (# of votes)		
	Yes	No	1	2	3
4A1	239 (93%)	17	23	16	5
4A2	232 (93%)	17	9	7	9
4B	221 (90%)	24	8	9	6
4C	215 (92%)	18	12	12	15
4D1	224 (94%)	15	8	13	11
4D2	223 (91%)	21	6	4	6
4D3	191 (82%)	43	4	6	3
4D4	214 (89%)	26	8	7	7
4D5	215 (90%)	23	1	4	1
4D6	203 (88%)	28	4	4	6
4E1	199 (83%)	42	14	6	5
4E2	191 (81%)	45	5	6	6
4E3	195 (82%)	44	4	5	4
4E4	195 (83%)	40	2	5	5
4F	194 (85%)	33	1	2	5
4G1	230 (90%)	25	16	18	11
4G2	216 (88%)	30	7	4	14
4G3	209 (85%)	37	13	10	11
4G4	217 (98%)	5	5	6	4

The most frequent comment on this goal was a need to reduce pollution from farming and development (11%). Other frequent comments included:

- Strengthen stormwater regulations and enforcement (8%)
- Encourage new pollution control technologies (7%)
- Increase public education efforts (7%)
- No need for more regulations; enforce existing rules (7%)
- Provide incentives for low-impact development and voluntary compliance with existing regulations (6%)
- Strengthen enforcement of buffer rules — fewer variances (5%)

IV. Summary

The public provided more than 700 written comments to the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources on the draft recommendations of the North Carolina Coastal Habitat Protection Plan at 10 meetings in the eastern and central parts of the state during July and August 2004. Overall, more than 90% of the comments indicated support for the recommendations. Even those recommendations generating the most opposition were still supported by 80% of the meeting attendees.

Recommendations that would not require new rules garnered the greatest support, including those dealing with improved enforcement, education, and coordination. Programs to restore oyster beds and riparian wetlands and stream flow were also strongly supported.

While recommendations for stricter impervious surface limits, extending AECs inland, and conducting cumulative impact assessments received the most direct opposition, each of these recommendations was still supported by over 80% of respondents.

V. Response to Public and Interest Group Meetings

In response to the comments received at the 2004 public meetings and the targeted interest group meetings, numerous changes have been made to the text of the CHPP and the recommendations in particular. Some of the highlights are indicated below.

One major text change has been in the sections discussing the threats from forestry activities. Earlier CHPP text cited forestry as a major threat to water quality. Data from the most recent 303 (d) listing requirement of the Clean Water Act show that it is an order of magnitude less than agriculture and development. The text in the CHPP has been changed to reflect this.

There was much confusion about how increased impervious surface limits would be applied, as well as apprehension about the effects on property owners. It was also noted that the recommendations did not acknowledge the use of engineered systems to minimize the effects on water quality due to increased impervious surface coverage. The recommendations have been changed to incorporate the use of engineered systems and recognize that increased limits on impervious surfaces may not be feasible in all situations.

Written comments indicated some confusion over the buffer requirements currently in place and what the CHPP recommendation (larger buffers) intended – larger than what? While the recommendation still does not state a specific width, it was changed to focus on more effective buffers.

Several comments recommended stakeholder involvement in the implementation of specific recommendations as well as economic analyses. Since stakeholder groups and economic concerns are relative to many of the recommendations, the IRC chose to address them in the text of the document as a preface to the recommendations. *“Implementation of any of the recommendations below through specific rules or policies may involve further discussion with stakeholders and, in some cases, the balancing of competing ecological and economic values.”*

In response to meetings with local governments, a new recommendation was added *“Enhance coordination with, and financial/technical support for, local*

government actions to better manage stormwater and wastewater.” This recommendation recognizes the efforts currently undertaken by local governments to manage stormwater and protect water quality and the importance of support for these initiatives.

Several changes were made to recommendations dealing with non-point source pollution. *“Improve land-based strategies throughout the river basins to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through voluntary actions, assistance, Best Management Practices (BMPS) and incentives, including...”* The IRC wanted to make it clear that these recommendations, and the CHPP itself, apply to the entire river basins and not just the coastal counties.

Attachment 1. CHPP Recommendation Form Used at Public Meetings, 2004

IV. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS		Will rec s he goa YH
Goal 1: Improve Effectiveness of Existing Rules & Programs Protecting Coastal Fish Habitats		
A. Enhance enforcement of, and compliance with, Coastal Resources Commission (CRC), Environmental Management Commission (EMC), and Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) rules and permit conditions.		
B. Coordinate and enhance water quality, physical habitat, and fisheries resource monitoring (including data management) from headwaters to the nearshore ocean.		
C. Enhance and expand educational outreach on the value of fish habitat, threats from human activities, effects of non-native species, and the reasons for management measures.		
D. Coordinate rulemaking and enforcement among regulatory commissions and agencies.		
<i>Comments or suggested recommendations:</i>		
Goal 2: Identify, Designate & Protect Strategic Habitat Areas		
A. Gather information to identify Strategic Habitat Areas by:		
1. coordinating, completing, and maintaining habitat mapping (including seagrass, shell bottom, and other bottom types) using the most appropriate technology,		
2. monitoring the status of those habitats, and		
3. assessing effects of land use and human activities on those habitats.		
B. Identify and designate Strategic Habitat Areas using ecologically based criteria.		
C. Analyze existing rules and enact measures needed to protect Strategic Habitat Areas.		
D. Improve programs for conservation (including voluntary actions) and acquisition of areas supporting Strategic Habitat Areas.		
<i>Comments or suggested recommendations:</i>		

(1) SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	Will rec s he goa
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2. Goal 3: Enhance Habitat and Protect it from Physical Impacts

A. Greatly expand habitat restoration, including:	
1. creation of subtidal oyster reef no-take sanctuaries and	
2. re-establishment of riparian wetlands and stream hydrology.	
B. Prepare and implement a coast wide beach and inlet management plan that requires ecologically based guidelines for minimization of impacts to fish habitat, while addressing socio-economic concerns.	
C. Protect Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV), shell bottom, and hard bottom areas from fishing gear effects through improved enforcement, establishment of protective buffers around habitats, and further restriction of mechanical shellfish harvesting.	
D. Protect fish habitat by revising estuarine and public trust shoreline stabilization rules using best available information, considering estuarine erosion rates, and the development and promotion of incentives for use of alternatives to vertical shoreline stabilization measures.	
E. Protect and enhance habitat for anadromous fishes by:	
1. incorporating the water quality and quantity needs of fish in surface water use planning and rule making and	
2. eliminating obstructions to fish movements, such as dams, locks and road fills.	
<i>Comments or suggested recommendations:</i>	

<i>(1) SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	Will rec s he goa YI
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3. Goal 4: Enhance and Protect Water Quality

(a) Point Source	
A. Reduce point source pollution from human sewage by:	
1. increasing inspections of sewage treatment facilities, collection infrastructure, and land disposal sites and	
2. providing incentives for upgrading all types of wastewater treatment systems.	
B. Adopt or modify rules or statutes to prohibit ocean wastewater discharges.	

C. Prohibit new or expanded stormwater outfalls to coastal beaches and to coastal shellfishing waters (EMC surface water classifications SA and SB), and continue to phase-out existing outfalls by implementing alternative stormwater management strategies.	
(b) Nonpoint Source	
D. Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through voluntary actions, Best Management Practices (BMPs), and incentives, including:	
1. improved methods to reduce sediment pollution from construction sites, agriculture, and forestry,	
2. increased on-site infiltration of stormwater,	
3. documentation and monitoring of small but cumulative impacts to wetlands and streams resulting from unpermitted/un-mitigated activities,	
4. incentives for low-impact development,	
5. enhanced inspections of onsite wastewater treatment facilities, and	
6. increased water re-use and recycling.	
E. Improve land-based strategies to reduce non-point pollution and minimize cumulative losses to wetlands and streams through rule making, including:	
1. larger vegetated buffers,	
2. more stringent impervious surface limits,	
3. expansion of Areas of Environmental Concern (AECs) upstream and landward, and	
4. establishment of setbacks along estuarine and public trust shorelines.	
F. Develop and implement a comprehensive coastal marina and dock management plan and policy to prevent closures of shellfish harvest waters and minimize cumulative impacts on fish habitat.	
<i>(2) SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	
4. Goal 4: Enhance and Protect Water Quality (Continued)	
G. Reduce non-point source pollution from concentrated animal operations by the following actions	
1. continue the moratorium on new/expanded swine operations until alternative waste treatment technology is implemented,	
2. use a greater percentage of agricultural conservation funds to phase-out concentrated animal operations in sensitive areas and relocate operations from sensitive areas,	
3. mandate the phase-out of waste lagoons by a specific deadline, and	
4. use improved siting criteria to protect fish habitat.	

Comments or suggested recommendations:

Attachment 2. Major Changes Since CHPP Public Draft 7-01-04

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Large, foldout map of habitat types

WATER COLUMN CHAPTER

- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Hydrologic modification/Dredging (navigation channels and boat basins)
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Water quality degradation/Land cover and water quality
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Water quality degradation/Nutrients/Sources of nutrient enrichment
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Water quality degradation/Sediments/Status of turbidity/sedimentation
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Water quality degradation/Fecal coliform bacterial contamination in estuarine waters
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Water quality degradation/Fecal coliform bacterial contamination in ocean waters
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Water quality degradation/Toxic chemicals/Sources of toxic chemical pollution
- Chapter 2, Section 2.4, Existing management measures/Stormwater management program
- Chapter 2, Section 2.5, Water column summary
- Chapter 2, Section 3.2, Fish utilization/Nursery

SHELL BOTTOM CHAPTER

- Chapter 3, Section 3.3, Status of associated fishery stocks
- Chapter 3, Section 3.4, Water quality degradation/Toxic chemicals

SAV CHAPTER

- Chapter 4, Section 4.4, Physical threats/Channel dredging

SOFT BOTTOM CHAPTER

- Chapter 6, Section 6.2, Ecological role and function/Community structure/marine
- Chapter 6, Section 6.3, Status and trends/Designated areas
- Chapter 6, Section 6.4, Physical threats/Dredging
- Chapter 6, Section 6.4, Physical threats/Shoreline stabilization/Soft stabilization

RECOMMENDATIONS <whole chapter>

Attachment 3. Comments from Interest Groups - 8/10/04 Memo from Mike Street to IRC

MEMORANDUM

Memo To: IRC
From: Mike Street
Subject: CHPP comments from interest groups
Date: 10 August 2004

We met with five “interest groups”: realtors and homebuilders in Wilmington, local government in New Bern, commercial fishing in New Bern, forest industry in Raleigh, and agricultural interests in Raleigh. You have already received a summary of the Wilmington meeting on 8 July 2004 as part of the comments package dated 26 July 2004. A summary of specific concerns from the last four interest group meetings follows.

- N. C. Coastal Communities Coalition, 29 July 2004 – Attendance included some mayors, several town managers, planners, a county commissioner, and local Division of Soil and Water Conservation staff, as well as Robin Smith and CHPP Team members. An attendance list is attached. There was detailed discussion of local government concerns, including:
 - Need to recognize major role of local government and need for significant financial support
 - Lack of adequate review time
 - Lack of stakeholder process in CHPP development
 - Negative portrayal of beach nourishment
 - Threat of reduced impervious surface limits
 - Threat of larger buffers
- N. C. Fisheries Association (commercial fishing), 2 August 2004 – There was concern with any new restrictions on commercial fishing practices.
- N. C. Forestry Association, 5 August 2004 – Persons present included representatives of both a large corporation and small property owners.
 - The primary concern was the negative portrayal of forestry, especially including lumping of forestry with development and agriculture as a pollution and sediment source. (Data 305 (b) reports) support this concern, as both development and agriculture contribute an order of magnitude more sediment to surface waters than does forestry. We are modifying text accordingly.)
 - There was also a concern with the description of the complex exemption (from permits) process as it applies to forestry. We have a much clearer understanding, based on comments from DFR, and we are modifying text accordingly.
 - All the attendees stated that well over 50% of the Coastal Plain is in forest cover, and trees are the best use of land from a water quality perspective.

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Phone: 252 726-7021 \ FAX: 252 726-0254 \ Internet: www.ncdmf.net

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- Technical Review Committee for the N. C. Soil and Water Conservation Commission, 5 August 2004 – This committee drafts the cost-share rules for the Commission and evaluates their effectiveness. Membership includes farm agents, NCSU scientists, DWQ, and agriculture groups. I am an inactive TRC member.
 - Technology exists to use ocean outfalls for waste treatment without harming water quality.
 - There is a severe lack of acknowledgement of improvements in water quality, such as Chowan River.
 - A variety of animal operations produce large amounts of nutrient-rich wastes. This material must go somewhere off the farm where it is produced. There should be an emphasis on finding uses for this waste rather than prohibitions on processing it.
 - Separate construction from agriculture and forestry as a source of sediment. Construction (development) is a much greater source. (Urbanization/development and agriculture are both major contributors to impairment of surface waters. Both greatly exceed forestry.)
 - Improve incentives for vegetated buffers.
 - Delete reference to “agriculture conservation funds”. Instead focus on cost-share funding and additional direct funding for phase-out of waste lagoons in sensitive areas.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

cc: Bill Ross, Robin Smith, Dempsey Benton, Dan Oakley, Steve Wall
Pres Pate, Charles Jones, Alan Klimek
CHPP Team