Agenda Item: 12-14 **Request Approval of the Proposed Reclassification of the Neuse River and Associated Quarry in Johnston County (Neuse River Basin) to Class WS-IV**

Explanation:

Johnston County has requested that portions of the Neuse River and an abandoned quarry within Johnston County be reclassified. The quarry is to receive water from a proposed Neuse River intake, and is to be reclassified to Water Supply-IV (WS-IV) with a Critical Area (CA). The subject portions of the Neuse River are to be reclassified to WS-IV with a CA and WS-IV with a Protected Area (PA). The reclassification is needed to construct the public water supply intake and utilize the quarry's water as a public water supply, in order to meet water demands projected through 2050.

Division of Water Resources staff concurs with the proposal. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) has been issued for this project. Finally, the waters to be reclassified meet water supply standards according to 2011 DWQ studies, except for high chloride levels in the quarry. Dilution and reduced residence times in the quarry, which will occur once river water is pumped in it, should result in lowered chloride levels.

In July 2011 and September 2011, the Water Quality Committee and the Commission, respectively, approved the request to proceed with rule-making for the proposed reclassification. A public hearing was held in December 2011 in Princeton, NC. The Report of Proceedings sent to the members of the EMC includes all written comments received and further details on this proposed reclassification.

Recommendation:

The Hearing Officer recommends that the proposed reclassification be approved by the Commission. If reclassified as proposed, and approved by the Rules Review Commission in June 2012, the effective date for this reclassification will be July 1, 2012.