

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alan Clark
THROUGH: Jeff Manning
FROM: Elizabeth Kountis
DATE: April 29, 2010
SUBJECT: **Proposed Reclassification of Southwest Creek from Class C to Class SC**

The Division of Water Quality (DWQ) is requesting that the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) grant staff permission to proceed to public notice with a proposed reclassification of a part of Southwest Creek (Onslow County, White Oak River Basin) from Class C HQW NSW and C NSW to Class SC HQW NSW and Class SC NSW, respectively. The Wilmington Regional Office DWQ staff submitted a request for reclassification of these waters. This reclassification concerns the portion of the Southwest Creek main stem from approximately 0.5 mile upstream of Mill Run to New River, and approximately 2.0 miles of the creek are proposed to be reclassified. Water quality studies conducted in July 2001 show that these waters meet the criteria for Class SC, and Wilmington Regional Office DWQ staff who conducted those studies stated that the study data is still valid.

The purpose of this rule change is to reflect the saltwater nature of these waters. The current and proposed uses for these waters are identical, consisting of secondary recreation (such as fishing, wading, and boating), wildlife, and aquatic life including propagation and survival, with one exception: Class C waters are also protected for agricultural uses.

Federally owned (Camp Lejeune) land exists directly adjacent to the proposed waters and Onslow County is the only local government with limited jurisdiction in the reclassification area. Onslow County and Camp Lejeune staffs were contacted about the proposed reclassification, and both parties stated that they have no concerns with the proposal.

If reclassified, the ambient water quality standards for Class SC waters will apply. Compared with the ambient standards for Class C waters, the Class SC standards are less restrictive, equal to, or more restrictive, depending on which parameters are compared. Thus, the specific wastewater components of any new NPDES facility that would be discharged to these waters would determine whether the discharge would be affected by this reclassification. There are no NPDES dischargers to the proposed waters, and there are no planned discharges to these proposed waters, according to DWQ staff in the Wilmington Regional Office as well as Camp Lejeune staff. In addition, the land area directly adjacent to the proposed waters contains no development except for a few road endings, and the above-mentioned staffs stated that no development is proposed on these lands.

DWQ staff recommends sending this item to the May 2010 WQC meeting to request permission to proceed to the full EMC at their July 2010 meeting. The proposed effective date of this reclassification is estimated to be July 1, 2011.