



**Bald Head Woods Reserve
Local Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 15, 2010, 1 – 3 pm**

Attendance

<u>LAC Members</u>	<u>Affiliation/Interest</u>	<u>Present</u>
Dr. Suzanne Dorsey	BHI Conservancy	Yes
Mr. Chris McCall	BHI Village	No
Dr. Anthony Snider	UNCW EVS; former site manager	No
Mr. Brad Stone	BHI Safety	No
Mr. Sky Conklin	Community Member	No/resigned
Mr. Gene Douglas	Community Member	No
Mr. Robert Timmons	Community Member	Yes

Others

Dr. Steve Everhart	DCM Wilmington District Manager
Mr. Calvin Peck	Bald Head Island – Village Manager
Rebecca Ellin	NCCR/NCNERR, Reserve Manager
Jason Dail	NCCR/NCNERR Stewardship and Education Specialist
Hope Sutton	NCCR/NCNERR, Stewardship Coordinator and Southern Sites Manager

Reserve Update – Rebecca Ellin

New Staff

The Reserve has two new staff. Jason Dail joined the program in July 2010 and is a Stewardship and Education Specialist based out of Wilmington. Jason transferred from the regulatory program within the Division and will be managing the Zeke’s Island and Bald Head Woods sites and working with the education staff to develop and implement educational programming for the southern sites.

Scott Kucera joined the program in October 2010 as Education Coordinator working from our Beaufort office. Scott has a strong background in public education development, implementation, and administration through his work experiences at the N.C. Maritime Museum, Exploris Museum, and Museum of Coastal Carolina and Ingram Planetarium. Scott will oversee all education programming for the Reserve and focus on developing a general public education program to help this audience better understand the Reserve program and how to use the sites, coastal and estuarine concepts, and high priority coastal management issues.

Budget Update

The Reserve receives funding from both the State of N.C. and the federal government for operation of the program and a budget update was provided for the upcoming fiscal year. The State is anticipating a budget shortfall of approximately \$3 billion and state agencies have prepared 5, 10, and 15% reduction scenarios for the upcoming 2011-2013 budget planning process to help address this shortfall. Federal appropriations for operation of the N.C. National Estuarine Research Reserve portion of the program are uncertain at this time; two scenarios that are possible are level-funding and an approximate \$30,000 reduction.

Rules and Policies Review Process

The Reserve will be undertaking a Rules and Policies Review Process in 2011 to provide recommendations for updating current rule and policy language for management of the Reserve sites. The Reserve rules (N.C. Administrative Code T15A 070) have remained relatively unchanged since their adoption in 1986 and contain ambiguous terminology and do not address new challenges at the sites. Additionally, other guidance documents for management of the sites are not consistent and are also out of date (i.e., state dedication letters, management plans). The objective of the Rules and Policies Review Process is to update the rules and policies to provide clear and consistent guidance for the public on use of the sites, an effective management tool for staff, and ensure enforceability by the appropriate agencies when needed. The process will include definition of the vague terms currently found in the Reserve rules, examination of a variety of management topics (e.g., fires, fireworks, organized events), development of new or revised rule and policy language where needed, and input on the draft language from the following entities: the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Local Advisory Committees (LACs), the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission, and a series of public meetings. The management topics will be sent to the LACs prior to their review to ensure that the Reserve is examining the appropriate topics. The proposed alcohol prohibition that was considered in 2009 is on hold and will be reconsidered as part of this process. The Reserve anticipates bringing draft language to the LACs in late 2011.

Draft LAC Procedures Document – Rebecca Ellin

The Reserve is required to maintain a LAC for each Reserve site according to the N.C. Administrative Code. The Code stipulates that the committees shall be appointed by the Secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources and shall include researchers, educators, managers, and citizens that use or are affected by the Reserve. Additional guidance does not currently exist for management of the committees. To make

these committees as effective as possible and transparent in their appointment and operations, the Reserve drafted procedures by which the committees will operate. The procedures were reviewed and comments discussed. Committee members may provide comments on the draft document through December 10, 2010. Comments will be considered and the document finalized for an effective date of 2011.

Site Update – Jason Dail

- An overview of the past years activities and current site specific issues was provided and discussed, including: Visitor use, invasive species, proposed projects within the Zekes/Smith Island basin and new sign installation.
- The walking trails are in need of maintenance, to include: tree/stump removal, bridge repair/replacement and step installation. Reserve staff will follow up to determine condition and appropriate remedy (if any).

Member Roundtable and other comments

- Both Bald Head Island and the Bald Head Island Conservancy are having several “Resource Management” issues and is requesting assistance from the NC Coastal Reserve. According to Dr. Dorsey, Bald Head’s deer, alligator, fox and beetle populations are increasing and effective management is proving to be difficult. The BHI Conservancy is hoping that the Reserve may be able to assist with these issues through educational outreach, monitoring, etc.
- Although hunting is allowed at the Reserve (and on Bald Head Island proper) it is not easily accomplished due to the complexity of the island’s transportation system.
- Another issue that Bald Head is dealing with is saltwater intrusion. According to Mr. Peck, back when the State obtained the Reserve property on Bald Head, there was an easement through the Reserve for a well field, but because the easement was not used within the specified time frame, the option to use it was removed. The Village of Bald Head is now requesting that the Reserve open up a discussion for potential use of the property for well installation. In addition, the Village would like for the Reserve to be part of a broader discussion on water uses and water consumption on the island.
- The Conservancy requested approximately 1,000 copies of the brochure for Bald Head Woods.

Meeting Follow Up – Jason Dail

- Advised all members to provide comments to me, regarding the draft LAC SOP, no later than December 10, 2010. Will send out reminder email on December 1, 2010. A final document will become effective in 2011.