

Indian & Howards Creek Local Watershed Plan (LWP)
Advisory Team Meeting -- June 17, 2008
Identification & Sorting of Major Watershed Issues

AT OUR NEXT ADVISORY TEAM MEETING (Sept. '08) WE WILL BEGIN 'TRANSLATING' THESE ISSUES INTO SPECIFIC GOALS/OBJECTIVES FOR THE LWP EFFORT, and ASSIGNING PRIORITY RANKINGS...

Category & Specific Issues

➤ **Threats from Stormwater Runoff**

- Control stormwater from development with implementation of County stormwater ordinance (Lincoln Co.)
- Specific problem site: stormwater runoff from old Carolina Freight property (Cherryville)
- General (watershed-wide) Problem: Non-point source pollution from stormwater runoff
- General: evaluate stormwater impacts to streams; implement corrective action
- Possible solution: adopt/apply NC DWQ's USMP (model stormwater program)

➤ **Outreach/Education; Promotion of Local Watershed Efforts**

- Clean water: a bandwagon that the general public can 'jump on'
- Educating citizens and property owners about the importance of watershed planning & its long-range benefits
- Take a comprehensive approach; get the buy-in of local policy boards in Lincoln, Gaston and Catawba Counties, and in Cherryville and Lincolnton
- Systematic land use planning: watershed-wide and in smaller priority areas where development pressures are greatest
- Asset/strength: designation as critical watershed (*question: for WSW waters?*)
- Feeding public interest; making information readily available

➤ **Water Quantity**

- Problem: impacts of drought
- Problem: diversion of water from streams for 'other purposes' (irrigation, etc.)

➤ **Agriculture**

- Eliminate/reduce livestock access to streams; why do we still have cows in the creeks?
- Livestock in streams & riparian buffers: fecal, nutrients, and sediment (bank erosion) inputs
- Work with landowners to establish Agricultural BMPs
- Asset (current initiative): Eaker Dairy expansion; improved water quality
- Problem/weakness: ag/timber exemption from environmental regulations

➤ **Erosion/Sedimentation; Riparian Buffers**

- Problem: streambank erosion; silt and sand bedload moving downstream (water quality and habitat impacts)
- Problem: historic channelization of streams
- Problem: lack of good (wide, well-vegetated) riparian buffers
- Solution/Asset: establish (restore/enhance) and maintain healthy riparian buffers on all perennial and intermittent streams in both watersheds; work with landowners to preserve/expand stream buffers

➤ **Regulatory Enforcement**

- Problem: lack of DWQ (and DLR - Land Quality) staff to effectively monitor and enforce state rules
- Problem: local ordinances and WSW ordinances less strict and less strictly enforced than Stormwater Phase II rules; possible solution: adopt/apply the NC USMP (DWQ's model stormwater program)

- Problem: erosion from NCDOT major road projects (Hwy 150 @ Howards Creek, Hwy 16 @ Killian Creek)
- Assets/Solutions: Local soil erosion ordinance being enforced (Gaston County); ensure enforcement of soil erosion & sediment control and WSW rules; strengthen critical watershed-specific ordinances; strengthen ordinances related to stormwater runoff and NPS sources, including focus on LID requirements

➤ **WWTP Issues**

- stream and effluent monitoring; elevated coliform counts in receiving streams
- need for better accountability for WWTPs along the major stream corridors

➤ **Drinking Water Protection**

- Asset/Solution: protecting Indian Creek water quality adds a layer of protection for Cherryville drinking water; Source Water Protection initiative(s)

➤ **Multi-purpose Land Conservation Efforts** (and protection from development)

- Problem: impacts from new/expanding development
- Problem: invasive species; how can this Planning effort address this?
- Asset/opportunity: less development pressure in the LWP area than in eastern portion of Lincoln Co.
- Asset/Solution: identify and restore/enhance wetland sites; conserve large tracts of high-quality habitat, including areas near/surrounding Natural Heritage sites; preserve/protect strategic riparian corridors for passive (low-impact) recreation opportunities; establish a county tree preservation ordinance; establish/modify open space requirements that will lead to cumulative (water quality and habitat) benefits related to preservation of large areas
- Seek funding for specific problem areas instead of a more generic overview process; *assumption: more funding available for 'targeted' areas, as opposed to large-scale planning projects...?*
- Establish a multi-jurisdictional, cooperative effort focused on watershed protection!

NOTE: several folks noted the overlap & interconnectedness between many of the watershed issues identified during this exercise; for instance, it's difficult to talk about erosion/sedimentation problems apart from a consideration of stormwater runoff, agricultural issues, land conservation efforts and general development pressures, and regulatory enforcement.