

# Albemarle-Chowan Watershed Roundtable

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## Quarterly Meeting June 26, 2008 Greenville County Office Complex Emporia, VA

**Present:** Harvey Baker, Keith Boyd, Stacey Bradshaw, Eric Brittle, Kim E. Hummel, Claire Jones, Jerry Skalsky, Yamika Stokes, Patrick Vincent, Meredith Wilson, Sherri Woodard, Chip Rice

**I. Welcome:** Patrick Vincent welcomed everyone to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

**II. Guest Speaker – Eric Brittle, Department of Game and Inland Fisheries:** presented a report on a survey being done about the Nottoway River to estimate the number of fish in an area of the river. Three sites on the river are being tested. Studies are doing across Virginia for the Small-Mouth Bass Committee. Also, Fish Kills are occurring in the Shenandoah, Upper James, and Maury Rivers. DEQ is conducting a study to find the cause. The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is also conducting an Angler Survey to learn the economic impact the river has on the area. The survey is being done 12 days each month at 10 boat ramps.

**III. Minutes from 3/20/08 Meeting:** P. Vincent asked for any changes needed to the minutes. None were mentioned.

**IV. Albemarle- Chowan Watershed & Rivers Day:** Rivers Day was held on April 19, 2008 in Franklin with about 100 participants in attendance. Twelve exhibitors from non-profit organizations or environmental agencies were present. The Mayor of Franklin was the guest speaker. Comments were given by the Sussex and Southampton County Administrators. Discussion was held on how the event could have been better. Suggestions were for the event and opening comments to have started later, more attractions for children (rental rides, bouncy things), more vendors, and to hold it on a weekend other than Earth Day.

**V. Educational Workshops Update:** Old Dominion RC&D is planning a Watershed Festival for the end of August or first of September in Lunenburg at Falls Boat Launch. It will include booths, speakers, and recreational events. Y. Stokes, Acting Coordinator for South Hampton Roads RC&D, reported that the Planning Committee met about holding a Land Conservation Workshop. The workshop will be held around late September or early October. It will be a dinner meeting in Suffolk at a restaurant featuring landowners as speakers. The target audience will be landowners, local government, grass roots organizations, Ducks Unlimited, and VA-Assign-A-Highway.

**VI. Roundtable Logo Design Update:** No entries were received for the logo contest. The designer who created the logo for the AWCRC Day t-shirts will allow us to use that logo if everyone approves. The colors will be light blue and white.

**VII. Strategic Planning:** DCR wants the Roundtable to draft a strategic plan. P. Vincent is accepting volunteers to join the Strategic Planning Committee. Y. Stokes and S. Bradshaw mentioned that a committee was created prior to the Roundtable being overseen by South Centré Corridors. A mission was developed and many ideas to go toward the plan as well. P. Vincent will use the partially-created plan to help with the draft strategic plan.

**VI. Scenic Rivers Program:** P. Vincent introduced an article from the Independent-Messenger about Scenic River Designation. The Meherrin Ruritan Club inquired of the process to have the Blackwater River designated a scenic river. It may be a one and a half-year process. It does not seem that a formal request was made to DCR to begin the study for the Blackwater River to receive scenic river designation.

**VII. Partner Updates:** DCR: Noah Hill was not able to attend. Chip Rice attended in his place. The Chowan Field Coordinator position is close to being filled. The final agreement with Christopher Newport University has been completed. **South Centré Corridors RC&D** – The mini-grant program has been completed. The grant was used to educate youths on water quality issues. Next Council Meeting will be held July 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Human Services Building in Prince George. Woodland Options Short course will be held 8/20 at Eastside Community Enhancement Center in Petersburg. **Southampton Roads RC&D** – Y. Stokes reported the garden project with the juvenile detention center began. The vegetables have been planted. The program has been rewarding for the children. There have been some setbacks because of permit issues and increasing costs with the grant to build the greenhouse. They will apply for a grant to get shoreline work done on the Norfolk project. Next meeting 7/8 at USDA Service Center in Smithfield from 9:30 am- noon. **SWCD** – S. Bradshaw reported that the Fiscal Year is winding down. Crop applications are being finished. The programs start over 7/1. Many youth farm days are planned. Chowan Basic received a mini-grant from South Centré Corridors for help with Farm Day in April 2008. **NRCS** – K. Boyd reported that the Sussex office is now closed. It has been folded into the Emporia office to keep overhead costs down. **APNEP**- S. Bradshaw reported Lucy Henry is the contact for APNEP. Joan retired. **Virginia Watershed Association** – P. Vincent went to the re-designed website. We would like to have our watershed's information on the site. Kelly Miller is the Contact person.

**VIII. Suggestions for Next Guest Speaker:** A few suggestions were made: Since the Army Corps of Engineer did not work out for this meeting we would still like to hear from them on the Chowan Basin Study.

**IX. Next Meeting Date & Location:** It was suggested that the next meeting be in October. Jeff Turner has offered to give river cruises. Eric Brittle may be able to bring his boat as well. Meeting location: in Franklin, possibly at the Workforce Development Center at 10am. Claire Jones offered to host the following meeting at the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

**X. Additional Items:** Ag Expo will be held 8/14 at Billy Bain's farm. Registration is \$10. The Watershed would like to have a booth, possibly in conjunction with South Centré Corridors RC&D. We will get bumper stickers and such with the new logo on it. Also, NRCS State Agronomist, Chris Lawrence would be a good guest speaker for the Roundtable meeting.