CWSEC Meeting Minutes

June 7, 2010 at Coastal Carolina University, Conway, SC

Present: Joe Dignam, City of Conway; Beth Thomas, NI-WB NERR; Lindsay Thomas, NI-WB NERR; Jen Plunket, NI-WB NERR; Dave Fuss, Horry Co.; Melodye Lane-Laveglia, Surfside Stormwater Committee; Ken Harbin, Surfside Stormwater Committee; Jay Beeson, City of North Myrtle Beach; Janet Wood, City of Myrtle Beach; Katie Giacalone, Clemson; Steve Moore, City of Myrtle Beach; Kevin Blayton, City of North Myrtle Beach; Nicole Saladin, NI-WB NERR; Ben Powell, Clemson Extension; Barbara Blain-Olds, City of Conway; Daniel Newquist, Waccamaw COG; John Adair, Surfside Beach; Tracy Jones, Georgetown County; Nancy Edelman, Town of Briarcliffe Acres; Joe Fersner, Woolpert; Tom Garigen, Horry County; Karen Fuss, CCU; Susan Libes, CCU; Staci Williams, American Rivers

Introductions

Meeting minutes from December meeting approved by Dave Fuss and Beth Thomas.

MCM 1 Ed Provider Updates

K-12 Presentations, Workshops

- Beth, Plantersville Academy: 40 kids at a time, June 14, 15, getting assistance from multiple partners
- Katie announced curriculum for 5th grade science classes. Will touch on watershed concepts, effects of urbanization. Will be announced at upcoming educator conferences and brought into local classrooms. Available this summer.
- Christine: Youth for a Healthier Sampit River”/Service over Self and Tara Hall School for Boys and YMCA “Take a child to the river” day

Adult training

- Ben meeting with graphic artist to develop shop posters on stormwater management
- Ben conducting HOA/POA workshops and speaking activities. Lessening initial pond visits to boost presentations to whole communities. Urging subcommittee set up to all associations to handle drainage issues – benefit is having a single point of contact.
- Nicole presented Aug 5th Beyond the Pipe Workshop: UNH Stormwater Center presenting findings on BMPs; for stormwater engineers, planners. Not a specific BMP workshop, but overview of research on multiple BMPs. Limited to 25 people due to group work. Happening elsewhere in the state this summer.
- Beth: National Estuaries Day hosted on Saturday, Sept 25th. Open House at Discovery Center. Enviroscape and large watershed model.
- Christine: River Watcher Forum

Mass Media
• Next round will incorporate billboards, radio and cable (more emphasis on TV than radio); television spot will be 30 seconds. Focused on “We all live downstream” and homeowner impacts to water quality. Featuring picturesque scenes of SC waterways with people using the waterways and talking about upstream impacts to water quality, letting viewers know the positive effects they can have on water quality if they use appropriate advice.
• Goldfish campaign will be repeated for the month of June while filming is ongoing for next video. Awaiting end of primaries.
• Files are available as wmv's and can be embedded into local websites and played on local channels – contact Katie (kgiacal@clemson.edu) or Ben (bpowel2@clemson.edu) to request files.

Conferences
• Coastal Society, Wilmington, NC
  o Nicole presenting on using assessments
  o Karen presenting on local lessons learned by the Consortium
  o Susan presenting on hypoxia in coastal waters
• National Marine Educators Association, TN
  o Karen, Beth, Lindsay attending and presenting on storm drain marking program and exhibit design
• SC Marine Educators Association: Karen presenting on storm drain marking; Clemson presenting new watershed curriculum
• SC Water Resources Conference
  o Karen presenting on Consortium and lessons learned
  o Susan presenting with Dave
  o Carolina Clear will have booth and posters, Low Impact Development and Watershed Stewardship Online Maps
  o Katie presenting on telephone survey responses for statewide effort

Committees and Meetings
• Section 208 Plan—Nicole noted progress that has been made to date. Meetings coming up this summer to focus more on writing the plan, hope to have completed this summer.
  o Dan Newquist gave update on the 208 plan, met with DHEC contact last week to ensure that things were moving in the right direction. August 1, 2011 deadline for completion of Plan. Asked the group for any help spreading information.

• Nicole- SC EPCC- Native and Invasive plants meeting next week to discuss any updates

• Beth – NOAA 312 Review. Team comes down in September to evaluate the effectiveness of the NI WB NERR. Will be looking to Consortium members to meet with the Review Team to provide input for us. Possible meeting date is September 15th.

    Karen showed more slides for Christine

• Pee Dee Scenic River Advisory Committee – Susan provided updates. Looking for river management plan for their part of the river. Susan and Christine are helping to advise this committee to keeping them focused on 303d list areas.
• Rivers and Wetland Protection Conservation Subdivision—going to I&R in July. (Voluntary incentive program to allow higher density based on protection efforts of more sensitive area on a development site. “Green Subdivision”)
• Susan--Dan Tufford talk on “Watershed Simulation Modeling of Waccamaw River and Greater Winyah Bay.” Times TBA.

Grants
• Working with NIWB NERR to NOAA for grant to look at impacts of swashes in comparison to North Inlet. Looking for locations for study sites to determine the human influence that has caused the swashes to structure and function differently.
• Apache Pier Water Quality Sensors – Sea Grant, Costal Conservation Assoc., SC DHEC OCRM
• Restoration at Crabtree—Dave Fuss presented on multi-partner effort. New grant will cover other bank to further connect the canal to its floodplain.
• Ben added that he is co-author on grant for property manager workshops at larger regional level – submitted to USDA CSREES Southern Region. In partnership with NC State and University of Georgia.

MCM 2 Ed Provider Updates

Volunteer Monitoring – Susan presented updates
• 2 additional sites in Surfside
• Murrells Inlet updates: Christine is engaging students in volunteer monitoring, looking into database for storing data. Also doing this monitoring in NC.
• Christine rec’d grant to attend National Water Monitoring Conference
• National Water Quality Monitoring Day and Annual Data conference for the river: in fall and in spring for volunteers to gather and give program feedback; Sept 29th
• New interactive graphics on website for visitors to view and plot data
• Bacteria source tracking in sediments in MI because of high E. coli counts with Georgetown County.

Demonstrations and Installations
• Blue Trails program targeting landowners along rivers for conservation efforts. Sending out information now. Also held workshop for tax professionals and producing a toolkit on working with easement programs. Will be available for summer
• Blue Trails also working on signs and kiosks about Blue Trail and stormwater information – looking for sponsors to help make this happen.

Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens
• In response to citizen interest, Ben is holding a Build Your Own Rain Barrel Workshop. Presentations at Farmers Markets and other events have spurred additional interest.
• Ben also re-scheduling rain garden workshop.
• Nancy brought pictures of rain barrel demonstration and bog garden/riparian buffer installation in Briarcliffe Acres. This was completed with help from Clemson. Signage is being developed.
• Household Hazardous Waste with Georgetown County - Ben will work with Tracy on this.
• River Sweeps, Sept 20-24 is South Carolina Coast Week: River, Beach, Marsh Sweeps – Beth gave updates
Low Impact Development Map
- Now embedded at www.cwsec-sc.org and www.clemson.edu/carolinaclear - there are many sites entered with photos – thanks to Lindsay for helping out with data entry! Clickable pins show project information, photo and some contact info.
- Nicole: Stormwater on Wheels occurred this past spring and will be repeated this fall. People had an opportunity to get away from power points and see working practices installed

Storm Drain Marking Program
- Karen updated on this program: 7 sites marked; 113 drains to ocean markers installed; 73 drains to river markers installed; 5 groups participated (students, Boy Scout Troop, Brownie Troop, Surfrider Foundation)
- Data collection on each marked site – this information could be valuable to MS4s – all data will be given to communities
- Presentations also incorporated before marking for emphasis on educating people about stormwater
- Looking to expand sites; want to have a presence in all MS4s; looking for greater group participation; will look to expand to private properties and secure funding to sustain the program
- Will be revisiting marking sites to collect follow up on change of behavior
- Wal-Mart wants to partner on this regional effort, hopefully will be a funding partner

Consortium Budget
- Last December, Karen talked with everyone about having contracts coincide with permit cycle; therefore, the addendum everyone will receive includes language on setting everyone to permit cycle; the next week, everyone will receive addendum at same rate to continue for the year to get everyone on fiscal year and permit year cycles
- Increased costs will be coming in the next contract cycle; the goal is to have additional fees to help pay for a part time assistant to help coordinate

MS4 Updates & Discussion

Kevin receiving phone calls from residents concerned about oil: DHEC meeting last week, Susan and MB both attended, DHEC now taking water quality with their Enterococcus measurements to get pre-event baseline. The big question is how to notify the public. Does DHEC have any press release assistance? There will be a multicolor system to give a map-based view of the status on beach closings due to combined Enterococcus and oil spill-related issues online. Shannon Berry is DHEC contact on this. Susan will contact her with concern expressed from group and respond regarding her feedback on press assistance.

This conversation evolved into beach closings and beach warnings due to bacteria. Myrtle Beach has signage that permanently warns people what they can expect should a storm occur versus posting 200 feet each way each storm. This was an approved upon method by DHEC.

NOAA scientist relayed to group that cigarette butts collectively are more of a concern for petroleum byproducts than potential tar balls.
Smoking on beach bans brought up by Ken, Surfside Beach. No uniformity in regulations on can you smoke on the beach versus banned smoking, just like pet allowances. Horry County Stormwater hands out little pouches for cigarette butt collections to smokers out on the beach. This is a possible item to give to people out on the piers. In NC, there are actually stations where people could get access to these pouches.

Eric Smith, NERRS is conducting research on stormwater ponds. This research begins this week, two year research effort with this year collecting baseline.

Kevin asked about workgroup on water quality standards triennial updates. Susan has supplied comments, but no one is regularly serving. Changing bacteria standard is a focus; saltwater standards and use classification are top issues. Susan asked about coastal nutrient; Kevin responded that inland lakes may be the only consideration for nutrient changes (nitrogen). Kevin mentioned that these are open to the public. Kevin said that DHEC wants to move to Enter in coastal waters and E. coli in freshwaters according to that meeting’s discussions. POTWs and industry have additional needs. Susan asked about rapid testing; Kevin does not think this will be available this round of changes, but we can expect it in three years.

Joe Fersner brought up August 27th NOI re-issuance deadline with Ann Clark. Ann indicated that the re-issuance deadline may be extended until January 2011 due to verbiage from the new permit’s timing for release (and its unavailability at the time of the current deadline). Joe urged everyone not to let their permit expire. Steve asked if the NOI can be submitted for the new permit requesting that the permit be maintained as is current. This was a point of discussion for MS4s since that may keep them in the first phase of the permit mandates – this is more guesswork right now as to how DHEC will operate.

EPA MS4 survey: Joe wants to emphasize expansion of MS4 permits; possible combining Phase 1 and 2 permits, which would affect Phase 2 in a larger way.

Dave brought up MS4 Improvement Guide: big focus on assessment and evaluation. Dave stressed the importance of our report and future surveys. Karen and Katie conveyed DHEC’s emphasis on anecdotal evidence of education impact. This will lead to increased communication among the group about anecdotal pieces of evidence such as increase in pet waste bags at dispensers and feedback from attendees on behavior change. Nicole mentioned potential funding opportunities for local surveys from Sea Grant. KLW surveys and the telephone survey conducted by Carolina Clear will provide useful evaluation information.

Tracy was hoping to present Smart Sponge results, but needs to get through one maintenance cycle to present more information. Clogging issues.

Vacuum truck has made a world of difference for Myrtle Beach; Georgetown County is making the case to purchase one. The combo of this with street sweeping has been effective.

Leaves on storm drain education materials being produced in English/Spanish – anyone wanting this tailored for their ordinance language should contact Katie. Janet added that carpet cleaning companies are illegally dumping into catch basins. She now has a brochure to address this. Restaurants are also a critical audience due to grease issues. Janet suggested the Chambers as a way to get information out to restaurant owners.
Hotlines came up and reporting illegal/suspicious activities online. Discussed potential for a web page that discusses when to call with links to people’s online reporting forms. Steve mentioned that sharing information about violating companies should only be done across community boundaries when a citation or something publically available has resulted. Susan is also geo-referencing all complaints that are pursued. Ben suggested that the ed providers’ role is to let people know when and why to call.

Karen asked about new BMPs being piloted in the MS4s. Kevin mentioned upstream contraptions that Myrtle Beach has already used in addition to a screen system at the end of the pipe. Screens are very maintenance heavy. Tracy is having an issue with a neighborhood that floods from chronic debris being dumped into the stream. She has attempted clean ups, neighborhood watches, etc. with no success.

Susan is looking to expand lab capabilities to do Bacteria Source Tracking. Horry County is a partner, and Janet assisted. qPCR is the method that Susan is pursuing, which will provide rapid source assessment, particularly helpful for beach monitoring. Grant was not awarded, so Tom inquired as to how much is needed to get the lab capable to do qPCR, so that the group could discuss how this can be afforded.

Year 6 Activity Plan

There are activities that will continue that are always ongoing – storm drain marking, classroom education, clean ups and so on. Also, ed providers mentioned the next 6 month’s activities earlier in the meeting. This next question asked what additional ideas for education and outreach the MS4s have.

- Joe Dignam mentioned communication on changes to the stormwater permit. Katie and Karen will continue to meet and talk with DHEC about permit changes, but this will only be on public education and involvement. Susan suggested that everyone use the listserv to report back on their attendance and discussions regarding other MCMs. Dave emphasized that he expects from the consortium that we will know if our reporting meets all requirements and make changes as necessary to comply.
- Dave also suggested that Ben continue on the track of doing community level education on ponds.
- Nancy requested a brochure on stormwater impacts with another set of information on what/when people should call to report problems.
- Ben is building a pond management website; Susan suggested posting dates of the upcoming presentations and what people can expect to streamline efforts; Ben suggested that he can post this when it is not a meeting only for community members.
- Tracy mentioned septic installer education. The capabilities at DHEC first need to be explored before defining an activity plan for outreach/education. Dave added that Bureau of Health and problems at DHEC due to organization could be difficult to address.
- Janet added restaurant owners education, pursue through Chambers.
- Janet also added municipal employee training.