



Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium

By: Karen Fuss, Coastal Carolina University- Environmental Educator

Currently in its third year, the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium has enjoyed success in helping northeastern South Carolina's small municipal separate storm sewer systems (SMS4s) meet their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II permit requirements for public education & outreach (minimum control measure 1) and public involvement & participation (minimum control measure 2). The six regional agencies that jointly serve as core education providers to the member SMS4s include: Clemson University and their Carolina Clear Program; Coastal Carolina University's Waccamaw Watershed Academy; Murrells Inlet 2007; North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Program and Community Education Program; South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium's Extension Program; and the Waccamaw Riverkeeper™ Program. Member SMS4 communities include: City of Conway, City of Myrtle Beach, City of North Myrtle Beach, Georgetown County, Horry County, and Town of Surfside Beach with Towns of Atlantic Beach and Briarcliffe Acres pending membership.

Public education and outreach on stormwater impacts is performed by the education

providers. Customized stormwater education workshops are developed and presented for elected and appointed governmental officials and their staff as well as programs for the general public, the majority encompassing neighborhood associations. These programs focus on stormwater

issues and solutions unique to each community. Public Service Announcements for radio and newspapers addressing regional stormwater issues and local television interviews have been utilized. Participation at regional festivals also helps to educate citizens.

Additionally, CWSEC maintains a website to distribute stormwater information (current address is http://www.northinlet.sc.edu/training/stormwater_education/index.htm).

Students of all ages along with their teachers are also among the target audiences for CWSEC. CWSEC's educators provide field trips, in-class experiences and teacher workshops using a watershed approach to teach about runoff pollution. Most recently CWSEC secured



Installation of a rain garden in Surfside Beach.

a \$14,000 grant from local Wal-Mart stores to create a demonstration and educational site utilizing stormwater BMPs at Socastee High School in Horry County. Students, teachers

and employees from Wal-Mart and Horry County Stormwater Department along with members of CWSEC will work together to install a rain garden and an infiltration swale at the school. CWSEC education providers will provide stormwater information to be incorporated into the science curriculum, and aid the

students in developing a monitoring study to determine the effectiveness of these stormwater management practices.

Additional examples of providing public involvement and participation to the region include the Waccamaw River Volunteer Water Quality

Monitoring Program. Professional, e.g. contractors and engineers, involvement through technical training workshops on topics such as pervious

concrete, high performance building, and erosion prevention and sediment control continue to be offered. A multi-day Coastal Watershed Academy was held in Georgetown County in November 2007 for local government officials, natural resource professionals, etc. to provide training in water quality assessment and watershed management through seminars and field trips.

CWSEC is working within the Myrtle Beach Urbanized Area to increase the understanding of stormwater issues among a diverse group of stakeholders using a regional, watershed-based educational strategy. The core education service providers hope that their system for a collaborative regional approach to stormwater and watershed education will serve as a useful model for communities across the southeastern United States and beyond.

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