

## **NC Source Water Collaborative September 17, 2013 Meeting Summary**

### **Attendees**

Gale Johnson, DWR	Linnette Weaver, DWR	Sean McGuire, DWR
Will Brooks, KTCOG	Debbie Maner, NCRWA	Keith Starner, NCRWA
Mike Schlegel, TJCOG	Christy Perrin, NCSU	Amy Axon, DWR
Nancy Daly, EEP	Lisa Corbitt, Mecklenburg Co	Jay Frick, DWR
Tom Gerow, NC Forest Service	Jessica Godreau, DWR	Jeff Hughes, UNC SOG
Brooke Massa, WRC	Julie Ventaloro, DEMLR	Adriene Weaver, DWR

The meeting was called to order a few minutes after 10 AM and began with welcoming comments and introductions.

### **Awards Team Presentation**

Christy Perrin provided an overview of the Awards Team progress to date and solicited approval from the SWC to move forward with the Team's plan.

The general Awards Program plan is to announce the program at the WRRRI conference in the spring of 2014 and to hand out awards in spring 2015. The awards will be given out on an annual basis if possible. The award applicants will not compete against each other, they will only compete against the criteria. The award categories are: 1) Planning for surface and groundwater sources; 2) Implementation for surface and groundwater sources; 3) Education and 4) Leadership. The time frame for the awards is in the last 5 years for implementation and the last 3 years for the other categories. There may be different levels of awards, like gold, silver and honorable mention. The plan to advertise the awards program is to spread the word through as many professional organizations, conferences, listservs, newsletters, etc. as possible. We will need help from all of the SWC members to get the message out.

The team has also developed criteria for judging the award applicants. The criteria were provided in a handout entitled ***NC Source Water Collaborative – Awards Program September 17, 2013***. Christy requested review and input on the criteria.

Comments from the member are summarized below:

- 1) Process is good. Just need a few more pieces. Reach out to more people to get the word out.
- 2) What is the reward? Glass teardrop purchased with some grant money we had to spend some time ago.
- 3) EPA presented awards for WHPP early on- wonder if they would consider doing that for us?
- 4) NCSWC is first of its kind. Region IV EPA has contacted us and wants us to present what we are doing at several conferences coming up.
- 5) Convert scale to points to make it easier to award points.
- 6) Who would judge the applications? Judges would be a few from this group and others from outside.
- 7) Need to promote success.
- 8) We need to be prepared to defray concern about taxpayer costs. Projects that support community development and protect source water would be good examples. Projects that provide local level

recognition could be positive. Market it as an environmental benefit to calm down those who are objecting.

- 9) Where and how to deliver and publicize? Suggest that we take awards to Town Council meetings and possibly engage the local press would come out. The awards could be contagious, others would want it.
- 10) Mike Schlegel suggested that the criteria be rewritten in a way that they could be easily scored. During the meeting he provide his suggested revisions and the percentage points for each criteria.
- 11) Keith Starner, NC RWA said we could run a full page ad in their publication.
- 12) Is it ready to go now? No, plan to craft details better, get marketing materials together. Roll it out in the spring. May want to gage some of the participants. As ideas come to the group, please let the Awards team know.

## **The US Endowment for Forestry and Communities: Future Initiatives and Current Projects**

Tracy Mehan, The Cadmus Group, has been retained to coordinate source water protection efforts for the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities (the Endowment). Tracy provided a presentation on the Endowment and what they would like to accomplish.

The Endowment started in 2006 with the mission to promote sustainable forestry in the US. Maintaining forested watersheds in a healthy condition ultimately reduces drinking water treatment and storage costs. Protecting and managing forested watersheds is cost-effective, but very significant funding is required to accomplish this necessity on a nationwide basis. The most scalable and practical approach is to empower communities to protect their own watersheds by connecting water consumers with the forest landowners who produce their water. The Endowment supports approaches that allow communities to generate the funding needed to protect their watersheds, including payments for watershed services, watershed protection fees on water bills, and local ballot measures that secure funding for watershed protection.

Tracy works with the water utilities sector to help them partner the forest management and land owners to develop long term sustainable way to protect land and watersheds. If there are any utilities in NC that are interested in working with the Endowment and forest land owners, Tracy would be interested in talking with them.

Questions:

Are you more interested in a single utility or a regional groups? Either one is fine as they do not have preconceived scale. However, the Endowment only wants to be a partner, not a leader. So the group would need to be well established.

What is the specific form of support is being offered by the Endowment? It varies as long as the project works toward long term sustainability to watersheds, land and source waters.

Jeff Hughes, UNC SOG, Environmental Finance Center, spoke about the work that they do and the project that they recently finished up through a grant from the Endowment.

The Environmental Finance Center (EFC) works up all kinds of finance scenarios for municipalities. They have developed a "revenuehed" analysis framework, which includes educational activities, detailed assessment and inventory of assets, forestry best management practices, and revenue scenario modeling and tools. The

Revenueshed Users Guide can be found on the EFC's website:

<http://www.efc.sog.unc.edu/reslib/item/communicating-revenuesheds-user-guide>.

The EFC provided assistance to the Conservation Trust for NC in their participation in the "Healthy Watersheds Through Healthy Forest Initiative", which was funded through the Endowment. They developed models for looking at beneficiaries and impactors in a watershed. The key to success is to figure out how the two groups can work together. After understanding revenue options, they learned that multijurisdictional partnerships are key, you need to have trust, open communication and leverage. Information about the Initiative can be found here: <http://www.efc.sog.unc.edu/project/healthywatersheds>

Tom Gerow, NC Forest Service stated that he was very interested in understanding what activities are being taken on in NC regarding watershed protection and forest management. He wants to get a nexus going between forest and water. Very much wants to be a part of protecting the watershed and networking with others.

## **Education Team Update**

The team is working to develop an education package for local governments. During our last meeting we got help in understanding the needs of local governments from the League of Municipalities and the Association of County Commissioners.

We are looking into potential funding sources to help cover the expense of developing these materials.

We have revised a postcard/calling card that will be handed out by members to provide basic information about our organization. We hope to finalize the draft in our meeting today.

## **Miscellaneous Items**

Amy announced that she will be giving a presentation about the collaborative at the Ground Water Protection Council Annual meeting in St. Louis MO on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Rebecca will be giving a very similar presentation at the Association of State Drinking Water Administrator's annual conference in October. We hope that these presentations will help expand the national attention that we have been getting for our collaborative.

The logo and slogan for our collaborative have been finalized and were shared. They are ready for use on the website and printed materials.

## **Meeting Adjournment/Team Breakouts**

The group broke out into the two project teams for the remainder of the meeting. The education team was facilitated by Amy and Christy facilitated the awards team. Notes for the breakout session were compiled and are separate from this summary. The meeting was concluded at 1:00 pm.