



Wake County Water Partnership Annual Report 2018

I. Introduction

This report of the activities of the Water Partnership covers activities from January 2018 until January 2019.

A list of Water Partnership Committee members is included as Attachment 1. The Water Partnership will report once annually on activities and actions undertaken within the year in order to report and measure success on:

- Number of Wake County rules and ordinances reviewed
- Number of new initiatives suggested
- Number of Stakeholder Groups that received new information regarding good water stewardship

This will be discussed, below in the following categories: accomplishments, challenges, and horizon issues.

II. Accomplishments

This year the Water Partnership held its first annual planning retreat on January 12, 2018. During this meeting, each member shared priorities and subcommittees met to identify goals and objectives for the year ahead. This meeting also included presentations on green infrastructure and energy initiatives from Wake County Facilities, Design and Construction (FC&D) and Wake County Public Schools System (WCPSS) which advanced collaboration on water resources and sustainability within Wake County. Many of the green infrastructure ideas shared through the Water Partnership are being incorporated into discussions with WCPSS and the Southeast Park Project Team and will support the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES)TM that is being applied to Southeast Park in Wake County.

Water Partnership members also engaged in the PlanWake Comprehensive Planning Process. Wake County planners presented on the PlanWake process in February and October of 2018 and members participated in the Community Priorities Survey.

The Water Partnership maintained a strong presence with two committee members and three Wake County Environmental Services staff participating in the Triangle Delegation attending the 2018 One Water Summit in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This delegation brought the One Water focus back to be integrated into all the activities carried out by the Water Partnership.

Subcommittee Accomplishments:

Subcommittees established regular meetings and focused on the following:

Education and Outreach – Chair: Bill Holman - This subcommittee considers methods of educating the public and various stakeholder groups concerning proper

maintenance, operation, repair, and ownership of wells, septic systems and stormwater control devices.

In 2018 the Education and Outreach Subcommittee developed a fact sheet and website presence for the Wake County Water Partnership. The subcommittee also provided leadership for the October 10, 2018 Imagine a Day Without Water event. The subcommittee coordinated with state, local government, non-profits and community water providers to establish a water bar at Raleigh Union Station and the NC State Fair and developed outreach material on the importance of testing water in private wells. A total of 130 people visited the State Fair Water Bar in one day. In addition, a water-focused gameboard attracted visitors and Communications staff interviewed visitors on the value of water.

Comprehensive Planning – Chair: Joe Moore - This subcommittee coordinates activities in the areas of integrated water management planning, drought planning and conservation of water resources through demand side conservation strategies and technologies.

In 2018, this subcommittee supported scoping efforts for a county wide 50 Year Water Supply Plan. The proposed plan consists of two phases: Phase 1: Groundwater Assessment and Phase 2: Integration of Surface Water and Groundwater Assessments. County staff initiated discussions with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in March 2018 and the Board of Commissioners approved moving forward with a five year cost-share agreement with USGS for a county-wide groundwater assessment in January 2019. The USGS project will include establishment of a county-wide groundwater monitoring network and development of a groundwater flow model that will provide water resource managers with a tool to evaluate potential well interference and contamination susceptibility associated with future growth and climate scenarios.

Coordination – Chair: Jeff Adkins – This subcommittee ensures all water partnership members and agencies are aware of ongoing and new approaches to water management within the community by gathering information about the progress of other water collaboratives including the UNRBA, the Jordan Lake Partnership, and the Triangle J Council of Governments, among others.

In 2018, the Coordination Subcommittee drafted a report that summarized the activities of thirteen regional organizations associated with water resource issues. The report is updated bimonthly based upon information received from Water Partnership member representatives of each organization. The report and associated summary of upcoming regional water resource meetings is summarized and shared at each Water Partnership meeting.

In addition, this subcommittee identified and scheduled speakers to present on relevant water resource topics including the Town of Cary presentation on Emerging Contaminants and the Triangle J Regional Council of Governments presentations on the Triangle Water Supply Monitoring Project and Triangle Regional Resiliency Project.

Green Infrastructure – Chair: Dr. Joseph Threadcraft - This subcommittee considers standards, and opportunities that can be implemented by Wake County singly, or in collaboration with members of this Committee, to complete green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) projects in conjunction with stakeholders that are willing to work with the team.

The Green Infrastructure Subcommittee advanced initiatives to implement green infrastructure projects with the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS). Wake County staff in Facilities, Design and Construction, General Services Administration and Environmental Services met regularly with WCPSS representatives to identify opportunities and challenges associated with GSI implementation. Through these efforts, partners identified opportunities for integration of GSI pilot projects as outdoor classrooms within current WCPSS projects. This process also identified project maintenance as a large challenge in moving these projects forward and the Water Partnership GSI subcommittee subsequently formed a GSI Maintenance Work Group to evaluate and develop recommendations to address the maintenance challenge.

Rule Review:

Members of the Water Partnership also assisted in three rule review subcommittees by collaborating with the Public Health Committee and other stakeholders to review and update three rules for Wake County. Those rules and status is listed below:

1. Rules for the permitting and installation of offsite septic systems: Subcommittee review and recommended changes are complete; rules are currently being reviewed by the NC Division of Health and Human Services; staff will present recommended revisions to the full Water Partnership and submit to the Wake County Human Services Board for final approval in 2019. These rules will align the Wake County rules with those of the State of North Carolina and improve clarity about how to design and maintain off site septic systems.
2. Rules for the siting and permitting of private wells for drinking water: Review by subcommittee and full Water Partnership is complete; recommended revisions will be presented to the Wake County Human Services Board for adoption in February 2019. These rules will more effectively address concerns about contaminants found in private wells that can affect public health and clarify and align them with State law.
3. Unified Development Ordinance articles concerning Sedimentation and Erosion and Stormwater: Subcommittee review and recommended changes are complete; recommended revisions will be presented to the full Water Partnership and then submitted to the Wake County Board of Commissioners for final approval in 2019. These rules will address questions about the application of the Erosion and Sedimentation and Stormwater sections of the UDO, clarify definitions and update the rules to agree with State rules.

III. Horizon

The Water Partnership will be sending a Triangle delegation to the 2019 One Water Summit. One Water will be integrated into all the activities carried out by the Water Partnership including the 50-Year Water Supply Plan, groundwater outreach and education, watershed planning, and green stormwater initiatives. In addition, the Water Partnership will organize education and outreach events associated with the value of water for the Imagine a Day Without Water event on October 23, 2019.

Water Partnership members will continue to collaborate on county-wide water resource projects and identify opportunities to leverage funding through grants, cost-sharing and local government participation.

Horizon issues facing the group include membership changes and updates associated with Water Partnership representative organizations, maintaining member engagement by linking subject matter experts to appropriate projects, and development of strategies to keep Wake County decision makers and stakeholders informed of water resource issues and Water Partnership recommendations.

IV. Challenges

The greatest challenge faced by the Water Partnership Committee in 2018 included maintaining member engagement in subcommittees. To help address this challenge, membership will participate in a retreat on February 22, 2019 to discuss priorities and planning for 2019 and realign subcommittee membership, as necessary.

Challenges encountered with specific initiatives included identifying funding and resources to support long-term maintenance of GSI projects with WCPSS and other partners. The GSI Maintenance Working Group will continue to work with WCPSS, General Services Administration, Facilities, Design and Construction and external partners to develop recommendations for a maintenance model that promotes successful and sustainable GSI projects.

The process of creating a scope of work and collaborating with USGS was time intensive. This was a significant focus of resources. New initiatives for the Comprehensive Planning subcommittee were not introduced which caused a slowdown in the group's activity.

Two sets of rules have been slowed down by the review process that considers how the rules compare to State law. The teams have also been taxed to maintain the rule change process, thus additional rule reviews have been held up.

Attachment 1. Wake County Water Partnership Members, February 2019

Stakeholder or Organization	Applicant
Apex	Matt Echols, P.E.
Cary	Jeff Adkins; Water Resources Manager
Fuquay Varina	Jay T. Meyers, PE; Utility Director
Holly Springs	Seann Byrd; Water Quality Director
Morrisville	Joshua Baird; Stormwater Engineer
Raleigh	Kenny Waldroup; Assistant Utilities Director
Rolesville	Kelly Arnold; Town Manager
Garner	Jonathan Ham; Assistant Town Engineer
Zebulon	Joe Moore; Town Manager
Wendell	Marc Collins; Town Manager
Wake Forest	Eric Keravuori; Director of Engineering
Water Advocacy Group	Bill Holman; NC State Director
Private Well Owner	George Matthis
Agricultural Representative	Thomas Dean
Wake County Home Builders' Association	Suzanne Harris
Private Water Provider	Michael Melton
Academic Expert	Dr. Garey Fox
Soil and Water Conservation	Dale Threatt-Taylor
Wake County	Dr. Joseph Threadcraft
Interim Chair (Citizen Appointees)	David Knight
Citizen Appointee	Mitch Woodward
Citizen Appointee	Heather Keefer