

Item Title: Implementation Strategy for Compliance with the North Carolina DEQ Falls Lake Rules that has been Proposed by the Upper Neuse River Basin Association as it Pertains to Wake County

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners approves Wake County's participation in a Joint Compliance Approach to Falls Lake Nutrient Management requirements.

Item Summary:

Purpose: Staff request the Board's endorsement of a specific approach to water quality regulation. Board approval is not required by statute, but is requested due to the policy and budget impacts.

Background: Falls Lake is a valuable, regional resource, providing drinking water for 550,000 customers, recreation, and habitat to aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. The State strategy to reduce nutrients in Falls Lake, consists of two separate stages and assigns load reduction targets for individual sectors. The strategy targets the highest nutrient reductions ever passed in North Carolina. Over the long term, it is expected to cost more than \$1.5 billion for local communities to implement and it is uncertain as to whether it will succeed in the intended goals.

Local governments, including six municipalities and six counties, have come together to have a common voice in communicating with NCDEQ. They now propose an alternate strategy for achieving Stage 1 compliance and are coordinating with NCDEQ on the implementation process. With this action, the Board of Commissioners approves the joint compliance approach to regulation in the Upper Neuse River Basin.

Board Goal: The proposed action supports Board Goal GS3: Address water quality and water quantity issues associated with water resources.

Fiscal Impact: This item anticipates directing \$100,000 in existing CIP funds towards Stage 1 rule compliance in FY22. New County CIP funds totaling \$360,000 would be required to cover stage 1 compliance through FY 2026.

Additional Information:

Wake County is a member of the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA), a collaboration of local governments promoting innovative approaches to water quality

planning and management. In 2011, due to concerns with technical feasibility and cost of meeting state mandated nutrient reductions to address impaired water quality, the UNRBA began a re-examination process of the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Rules. This presentation will provide an overview of the progress to date as well as latest developments and proposed strategies to comply with Falls Lake Rules.

Attachments:

1. Presentation