



RiverWatch Volunteer

RiverWatch Report

February 2008

As the RiverWatch Volunteer Coordinator, one of the jobs I gave myself was to put out a monthly report to keep everyone informed as to what's going on. This is the first issue. Every month I'll include a summary of the discussion at the monthly NRF Advocacy Committee meeting for that month, along with other (useful and informative, I hope) information. My goal is to make the newsletter the

vehicle for general communications, and stop filling up your inboxes with all the email I've been sending lately. If there are things that you'd like to distribute to all the RiverWatch Volunteers, send them to me for inclusion in the newsletter.

This first edition is pretty long, because there's lots to cover as we get started. Future versions should be shorter.

How Is RiverWatch Doing So Far?

In a word, great! We started in January with a pilot session to tune our training, and then Larry began publicizing the program in late January. Your response has been fantastic. Larry and I have presented the basic RiverWatch training to a total of eighty-eight volunteers, and there are seventeen more people on the list for our next training session! That's a total of one hundred and six RiverWatch

Volunteers so far, dramatically exceeding my expectations. I had hoped that we could reach a total of one hundred people by the end of our first year, and we made it by the end of the first month! I really appreciate the response and commitment from all of you to protect our river.

"This program fulfills a dream I've had for four years. The winner will be the Neuse!"

Larry Baldwin

More RiverWatch Training March 13!

The next RiverWatch training session for new volunteers will be on Thursday, March 13, from 6:30-8:30 pm in the

auditorium at the New Bern-Craven County Public Library, 400 Johnson Street, New Bern. If you are attending

this session, please arrive before 6:30 so that we can start promptly. The library closes at 9, and we have to clean up and be out of the auditorium by then. To register for this session (and we need you to register so we have enough training manuals on hand), call Diane Baldwin in the NRF New Bern office at (252) 637-7972. We have

plenty of room, so if you know someone else who is interested, have them call and sign up as well.

You should think about attending the Muddy Water Watch training as well as RiverWatch. The sessions can be done in any order, so you could do them both on March 12-13.

Muddy Water Watch Training March 12 and 15!

The second phase of training for RiverWatch Volunteers is Muddy Water Watch, a program developed by Upper Neuse Riverkeeper Dean Naujoks, to train you to identify and deal with sediment erosion control and runoff problems on construction sites. Dean will be presenting two training sessions in March. (The sessions are the same; you only need to attend one.) The training sessions are:

Wednesday, March 12, from 6:30-8:30 pm in the auditorium at the New Bern-Craven County Public Library, 400 Johnson Street, New Bern. Please be in

your seat by 6:30 and bring your RiverWatch training manual.

Saturday, March 15, from 9:00-11:00 am at the Southeast Pamlico Volunteer Fire Department, 6389 Straight Road, Oriental. Make sure you bring your RiverWatch training manual.

We have more room in the New Bern location, so try to attend the Wednesday session unless you're in the Oriental area. If you can't make it to either of these sessions, that's ok, we'll be doing more Muddy Watch training in April if needed.

Eight RiverWatch Teams Formed!

RiverWatch is organized into geographical teams with a team leader assigned to each area. The great response to the program gives us the ability to cover more areas than we had anticipated, and that's great. I have been a little overwhelmed with trying to keep up with all the communication necessary with the large group of

volunteers, and so have the team leaders. They'll be contacting each of you to discuss your area and interests.

The teams we have in place, with the associated team leader, are:

1. Bay River – Bob Luhrs
2. CAFOs – Joanne Somerday
3. Fairfield Harbor – Dick Goodwin

4. Havelock – TBD
5. Kinston - TBD
6. New Bern – Bill Snyder
7. Oriental – Chuck Seymour
8. River Bend – Jim Comer

in to make RiverWatch a success. We're looking for a team leader in Havelock. In Kinston, Nell Craft is our only volunteer so far – we'll be publicizing RiverWatch upriver in the next several months to get her some help.

I'd like to thank our team leaders for the extra time and effort they're putting

Violation Reports Beginning To Come In!

The primary goal of RiverWatch is to identify and eliminate water quality violations in the Lower Neuse River Basin. As our volunteers get out on the rivers and streams and look around, violations are apparent. For example:

- Jennifer Smart and Adam Balfour found a deer carcass dumped into a creek off the Bay River the afternoon of the day they took the RiverWatch training.
- Kevin Hylton discovered a fuel oil slick on another Bay River tributary after a heavy rain. The source of the fuel may be an abandoned underground tank
- Chuck Seymour is investigating a construction site in Oriental.

with inadequate erosion controls in place.

- Melinda Penkava documented streams filled with silt after heavy rains along Rte 55. The streams are part of the Bay River watershed.
- George Wisneskey has documented two construction sites near Oriental with inadequate erosion controls.
- Art Thingulstad discovered a pipe routing muddy water from an office park into Crabtree Creek in Raleigh. We referred this one to Dean Naujoks.

We're just at the beginning of this effort, but the violations are out there.

February Advocacy Committee Meeting Report

[This Section available to RiverWatch Volunteers Only.]

Help With Electronic Communication

The only practical way to deal with all the communication necessary to keep RiverWatch afloat is to do it electronically. So we're pretty much stuck with emails with attachments, digital photos, spreadsheets, and electronic forms to fill out. I realize that not everyone may be completely comfortable using these tools, so I'd like to offer some help in making things go smoothly.

If you'd like a communications tutorial, some consultation on how to do something, or just some help on solving a particular problem, let me know.

And if you're at the top of your computer game, and would like to help some of your fellow volunteers, let me know that, too.

Boat Inspections

If you're concerned about having all the federally required equipment on your boat, you should know that both the local Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Cape Lookout Sail & Power Squadron will do a free safety inspection of your boat. These inspections will check for required equipment, and go beyond that to do an in-depth safety evaluation of your vessel. If you don't have all the required equipment, both organizations will give you advice on what to acquire – there are no fines or reports. If you have all the required equipment, you will get a sticker indicating you've

passed the inspection. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these stickers minimize the time you will spend if you are stopped on the water by the Coast Guard.

To get inspected, contact either of the following:

Lisa Kirby,
US Coast Guard Auxiliary,
(252) 635-1335, (252) 670-2501.

Bob Boyack,
Cape Lookout Sail & Power Squadron,
rwboy@embarqmail.com

Time Reporting

Nag, nag, nag.... Please remember to send in your time reports. They are essential for keeping track of how we're doing, and showing our funders we're

being successful. A big thank you to those of you who are sending me their reports.

RiverWatch Reading List

In the reading list I sent out earlier this week, I should have included a link to the article in the September 4 issue of *Carolina Currents* magazine titled “Neuse River Basin Boat Slips to Double,” which details plans for new

marinas in the lower Neuse. They’re extensive. Check it out [here](#).

Carolina Currents also has an article on the Bridgeton Harbor development plans [here](#).

See you on the river!

Jim Starr

RiverWatch Volunteer Coordinator