

Memorandum

Prepared for: Wake County Water Partnership

Subject: **Coordination Subcommittee Report – Bimonthly Status of Regional Organizations**

Date: August 14, 2020

From: Coordination Subcommittee

Copy to: Michael C. Orbon, Wake County Water Quality Manager; Nancy N. Daly, Wake County Water Resources Manager

This Memorandum describes the status and recent activities of several key organizations that are involved in water resources issues important to Wake County. This Memorandum will be periodically updated prior to each meeting of the Wake County Water Partnership.

Upcoming Regional Meetings

Organization	Date / Time	Meeting Name	Location	Comments
Triangle Water Supply Partnership	August 7, 9:30 – 11:30 am	Bi-Monthly Partnership Meeting	Virtual	If interested in attending, please coordinate with Jen Schmitz, jschmitz@tcog.org
Upper Neuse River Basin Association	September 1, 9 – 11 am	Path Forward Committee Bimonthly Meeting	Virtual	Open to all; contact Forrest Westall for login. Agenda at https://www.unrba.org/
Upper Neuse River Basin Association	September 16, 9:30 am - noon	Board of Directors Bimonthly Meeting	Virtual	Open to all; contact Forrest Westall for login. Agenda at https://www.unrba.org/
TJCOG	September 10, 2-4 pm	Smart Growth/Water Resources Collaboratory Meeting, Topic TBD	Virtual	If interested in attending, please coordinate with Jen Schmitz, jschmitz@tcog.org
Jordan Lake One Water	September 11, 1-3 pm	Integrated Water Management Implementation Working Group	Virtual	If interested in attending, or in joining a working group, please visit Jordan Lake One Water web page or coordinate with Jen Schmitz, jschmitz@tcog.org

Regional Organizations Summary

1-Cape Fear River Assembly

Nature of Organization	CFRA is a nonprofit organization comprised of local governments, conservation groups, universities, water utilities, agriculture, and private industry that seeks to make NC citizens and stakeholders aware of the value of the Cape Fear River as a resource. Coordination Subcommittee member Jen Schmitz is the current President.
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFRA's 2020 Annual Conference was originally scheduled for May, but has been postponed until the fall. The date and format (virtual vs in-person) will be announced. CFRA held a Board Meeting and strategy meeting on June 3rd and June 4th, as well as August 5th. Strategic planning will continue through 2020.

2-Jordan Lake One Water (JLOW)

Nature of Organization	Collaborative group to facilitate discussion water management in the Jordan Lake watershed from a regional perspective and identify opportunities for collaboration. Association is comprised of local governments, conservation groups, universities, water utilities, agriculture, and private industry stakeholders interested in sharing the cost of water quality and quantity improvements to realize watershed-wide social, economic, and environmental benefits.
Water Partnership Members Participating	Cary, Wake County
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JLOW has been invited to have significant input into the NC Division of Water Resources (NCDWR) rules revision effort in 2020 following the December 2019 release of NC Policy Collaboratory's Jordan Lake Nutrient Management Study report. Interested citizens and groups are encouraged to participate in upcoming work groups, and can sign up at TJCOG's JLOW web page. Five working groups have been formed and are meeting regularly: Integrated Water Management (IWM) Implementation, Organization, Monitoring, Evaluation and Finance. Through March, working group meetings were in person; since then, the meetings have continued virtually. Recent meetings: IWM (June 25); Organization and Finance (joint meeting June 15); Monitoring and Reporting (June 26; July 17); Evaluation Methods (July 13). The JLOW Advisory Committee met virtually on July 17th.

3-Triangle Water Supply Partnership

Nature of Organization	Joint planning organization focused on collaboration and coordinated planning for Triangle region's water supply sustainability & security, including identifying interconnections improvements between utilities to support regional contingency planning. The group focuses on regional water supply issues in both the Jordan Lake/Cape Fear River basin and Neuse River basin. This organization was formerly called the <i>Jordan Lake Partnership</i> .
Water Partnership Members Participating	Raleigh, Apex, Cary, Holly Springs
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Water systems receiving Jordan Lake water supply allocations, including Apex, Cary and Holly Springs, now have executed Round 4 contracts.▪ Partnership meetings occur every other month, including August 7th; this meeting will be held virtually. TJCOG serves as the Partnership's administrative and fiscal agent, providing administrative support, and Coordination Subcommittee member Jen Schmitz facilitates their meetings. Meetings are announced at the Partnership webpage (trianglewaterpartnership.org); signup for email meeting notices is available. Meetings are open to the public.▪ A subgroup of four Partnership members – Chatham County, Durham, Orange Water and Sewer Authority, and Pittsboro – are moving forward with plans to construct a new jointly-owned water supply intake and water treatment plant on the western shore of Jordan Lake, to serve their long-term needs. They anticipate the new facilities will be operating by 2031. Currently the only Jordan Lake intake is operated by Cary and Apex.▪ Current Partnership initiatives are updates to the water system interconnect regional computer model, modeling regional water shortage responses using the state's OASIS model, and a regionally-consistent water shortage response plan. Partners are also communicating to maintain a regionally-consistent approach toward state-mandated source water risk & resilience plans and emergency response plans. The Partnership plans to begin a regional water supply plan for utilities in 2021-2022.

5-NC Drought Management Advisory Council

Nature of Organization

Statutory body formed for interagency coordination to monitor and coordinate drought responses, including responsibility to issue drought advisories

Provide consistent & accurate information on NC drought conditions to US Drought Monitor, Environmental Management Commission (EMC), NCDEQ, Environmental Review Commission (ERC) & the public.

Recent Activities/Status

- Council reviews drought designations on a weekly basis (issued on website each Thursday morning). The latest North Carolina drought index map as of August 6th is below. Following Hurricane Isaias, no drought or abnormally dry conditions currently exist in the state. Assess NCDMAC's weekly [Current Drought Assessment Report](#) here.

North Carolina Drought Update

For the assessment period ending August 4, 2020

This Week's Drought Monitor of North Carolina Map

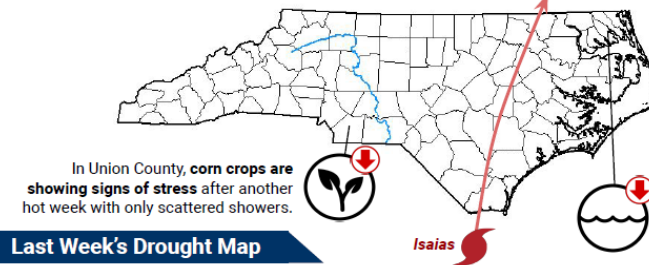
From the US Drought Monitor, authored by Brian Fuchs (National Drought Mitigation Center) with input from the North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council ([ncdrought.org](#))



Soil moisture levels have surged above normal everywhere except the Charlotte area, which had an inch of rain or less in the past week.



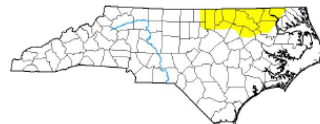
The interior Coastal Plain received **2 to 4 inches of rain from Isaias**, including at least 3 inches across the dozen D0 counties.



In Union County, **corn crops are showing signs of stress** after another hot week with only scattered showers.

With only 1 inch of rain from Isaias in Elizabeth City, **groundwater levels continue to decline**, but remain near-normal for this time of year.

Last Week's Drought Map



A PRODUCT OF PROJECT NIGHAWK
<https://climate.ncsu.edu/nighthawk>



Statewide Condition Summary

What's Changed? The rainfall from Hurricane Isaias eliminated any Abnormal Dryness in NC just a week after it was re-added to the state's drought map.

What's New? Isaias neutralized the precipitation deficits that built up in July, but it didn't completely end any concerns about dryness. Some of the rain ran off instead of soaking into the ground, while the northeast coast and southwest Piedmont saw less rain from the storm and remain slightly drier than normal for the summer so far. A few more hot, dry weeks could see Abnormally Dry conditions re-emerge, even in hurricane-hit areas.

What's Next? High temperatures will return to the low 90s with mostly pop-up showers in the coming week.

Statewide Coverage By Category

Category	Coverage This Week	Change Since Last Week
D0: Abnormally Dry	0.00%	-9.61%
D1: Moderate Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D2: Severe Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D3: Extreme Drought	0.00%	0.00%
D4: Exceptional Drought	0.00%	0.00%

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s seasonal weather outlook projects above-normal temperatures and normal precipitation for the state through the end of 2020.

6-North Carolina League of Municipalities, Regulatory Action Committee (RAC)

Nature of Organization NCLM promotes good government by offering non-partisan advocacy for municipalities at the state and federal level, and a forum for exchange of ideas.

Provides technical feedback and formulates policy positions on proposed regulatory and legislative actions. Focus is primarily on environmental, stormwater, water quality and water resources regulatory processes.

Recent Activities/Status ■ NCLM is monitoring state-wide conditions on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on municipalities and utility service, including the near-term prospects for aid to local government. The League’s [latest weekly bulletin](#) was posted July 24th. The bulletin included this table outlining \$599 million in NC municipal revenue losses through the end of June, across the board in sales/occupancy taxes, utility fees and property taxes. The expiration of the utility shutoff prohibition order at the end of July is also addressed. UNC School of Government held a webinar in late July addressing the difficult path ahead for utilities and local government on disconnections, late penalties and payment plans.

MUNICIPAL REVENUE SOURCE	PROJECTED DECLINE THROUGH 6/30/21
Sales Tax	-\$301 million
Occupancy Tax	-\$65 million
Municipal Utilities (water, wastewater, electricity)	-\$176 million
Property Tax	-\$57 million
TOTAL PROJECTED LOST REVENUE	\$599 million

- The legislative short session wrapped up at the beginning of July, with a plan to reconvene in September. Legislation (HB 1087) created a [Viable Utility Reserve fund](#), a grant program that would support financially-stressed public water/wastewater systems by facilitating viable operations and encouraging regionalization. Initial funding of \$9 million was provided with the legislation.
- Several Partnership members, including Jay Meyers, participate in meetings of the NCLM Regulatory Action Committee.

7- North Carolina Policy Collaboratory

Nature of Organization	The Collaboratory, housed at the University of North Carolina, was established in 2016 by the NC General Assembly to facilitate and fund research related to environmental and economic management of NC natural resources, including new technologies for habitat, environmental, and water quality improvement
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jordan Lake Nutrient Management Study submitted to the General Assembly in December 2019 can be accessed here: Jordan Lake Study Final Report. The study evaluated nutrient concerns and identify solutions to protect the water quality in the lakes, and funded research to conduct sampling, evaluated reservoir vulnerability to eutrophication, identified Jordan Lake’s nutrient/sediment sources, and evaluated the likelihood of nutrient mitigation through BMPs, regulation & restoration.▪ The Collaboratory has initiated a Falls Lake Nutrient Management Study to be completed by 2023, including coordination with the Upper Neuse Basin Association. The Collaboratory recently published a Falls Lake Nutrient Management Study project brief describing the project. An interim update on the study is required to be submitted to the Legislature in December 2020.▪ The Collaboratory received a \$5 million appropriation from the NC General Assembly as part of the FY2019 budget, to conduct baseline water quality testing for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) throughout the state.

8-Triangle Area Water Supply Monitoring Project

Nature of Organization	Joint-venture water quality sampling, analysis and reporting project between US Geological Survey and local utilities addressing several Triangle-area water supply watersheds. Website https://tawsmp.org/
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Links to partner communities’ monitoring of perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs) and other contaminants of emerging concern are on the organization homepage.▪ Currently in Project Phase 8 (July 2017-June 2022), with bi-monthly sampling at 10 reservoir sites and 4 stream sites, stream gage measurements at 10 gaging stations & annual storm-event sampling at other stream sites. Phase 8 includes analysis for 1,4-dioxane, bromide and chromium as a special project.▪ The joint-venture has been collecting water quality data in region streams and lakes for 30-years. The biennial monitoring report for October 2015-September 2017 was published by USGS in July and is accessible at the TAWSMP website (https://tawsmp.org/publications/).▪ The next TAWSMP Steering Committee regular quarterly meeting will be held August 19, 2020.

9-Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG)

Nature of Organization	<p>Intergovernmental organization for local elected officials focused on regional issues such as transportation, sustainable resources and affordable housing.</p> <p>TJCOG Water Resources Program is a home for numerous partnerships and programs that help manage water supply and water quality in Neuse and Cape Fear river basins. Programs have included Clean Water Education Partnership, Jordan Lake Partnership Regional Water Supply Plan, and participation in several water quality monitoring projects.</p>
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Triangle Region Resiliency Study's 2018 final report, with a vision of specific strategies the Triangle region can follow to address future climate change can be downloaded at the TJCOG website.▪ Clean Water Education Partnership (CWEP, https://nc-cleanwater.com/), a collaborative effort of local governments, state agencies and non-profit organizations to develop education and outreach materials on stormwater and surface water quality and protection. The next quarterly CWEP meeting will be held in October.▪ TJCOG hosts a quarterly joint meeting of its Smart Growth and Water Resources Collaboratives at TJCOG. These meetings often include agenda topics of interest to Partnership members. The next Collaborative meeting will be held (virtually) on September 10, 2020, topic TBD. Minutes of the June 11th Collaborative meeting include discussion of regional efforts to continue essential services during COVID-19.▪ TJCOG and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) are working with local and county governments on the 2050 regional transportation plan, which includes forecasts of future regional growth.

10-Upper Cape Fear River Basin Association

Nature of Organization	<p>Regional water quality monitoring coalition representing municipal and industrial wastewater dischargers in the upper section of the Cape Fear River, from the headwaters of the Haw to Jordan Lake.</p> <p>Provides water quality monitoring and projects to improve water use and water quality management to ensure the health of the Deep River, Haw River, and New Hope Creek subbasins of the river, as well as to satisfy their federal NPDES wastewater discharge permits.</p> <p>Encourage effective water resource management strategies through informational presentations at meetings and distribution of information and reports by email.</p>
Recent Activities/Status	<p>UCFRBA's Technical Advisory Committee meets on a quarterly basis. A joint Board and TAC meeting were held July 28th, and the next meeting will be in October, with location/format to be announced. Additional information on UCFRBA meetings and reports can be accessed at the UCFRBA website.</p>

11-Upper Neuse River Basin Association

Nature of Organization Preserve Upper Neuse River Basin water quality through innovative and cost-effective pollution reduction strategies and provide a forum for cooperation on basin water supply issues. Implement comprehensive water quality monitoring program which provides data for regulatory compliance and informs water quality management decisions.

Recent Activities/Status

- The UNRBA Board of Directors last met on June 17th; the UNRBA Path Forward Committee met on August 4th. Both meetings were held virtually. The Board is chaired by Wake Co. Commissioner Sig Hutchinson. Topics discussed at the Board meeting included:
 - Status reports on modeling and monitoring projects, including Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach (IAIA) and the Monitoring and Regulatory Support effort which is critical to the examination of Stage II IAIA.
 - UNRBA submittal of comments on the USEPA draft Ambient Water Quality Criteria Recommendations for Lakes and Reservoirs.
 - UNRBA still plans a meeting with NCDEQ staff to review the 2019 Annual Monitoring Report. This had been planned for earlier in 2020, but could not be held due to COVID-19.
 - Coordination with NC Policy Collaboratory researchers on the Falls Lake Nutrient Management study, including site selection for the onsite wastewater treatment system study.

Meeting materials and the Executive Director's Monthly Report are available at UNRBA's [Board of Directors' June 17 meeting page](#) and [August 4th Path Forward Committee meeting page](#). The next scheduled Board meeting is scheduled (virtually) for September 16th; the next scheduled Path Forward Committee meeting is scheduled (virtually) for September 1st.

12-Upper Neuse Clean Water Initiative

Nature of Organization	Partnership of landowners, Triangle Land Conservancy, non-profit organizations and local/state governments' now administered and coordinated by TJCOG. UNCWI is focused on protecting drinking water in Upper Neuse River Basin reservoirs through land protection (voluntary purchase, donation & conservation easements) focused on water sources and conveyances, upland areas, promoting water infiltration and protecting vulnerable areas. State and local funding including watershed protection fees collected by Raleigh and Durham, help fund property and conservation easements purchases.
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ UNCWI's Review Board met July 15th for their mid-year Board meeting, and to transition administration to TJCOG; they will meet again on September 22nd to review fall funding round applications. Coordination Subcommittee member Nancy Daly is on UNCWI's Board, and Subcommittee member Jen Schmitz administers the program.

13-WakeUP Wake County

Nature of Organization	Non-governmental advocacy organization promoting good growth planning and sustainable, healthy communities through education, advocacy and civic engagement, advancing a higher quality of life for all. WakeUP continues to promote ways for municipalities to break down barriers in the development process to encourage Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI). Executive Director Heather Keefer is a Partnership member.
Recent Activities/Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ WakeUP continues to focus on OneWater issues, including JLOW.▪ WakeUP's website has been updated with several blog posts focused on post-COVID-19 lockdown sustainable growth and transportation issues.
