

Wastewater TAG Meeting #2

February 8, 2023 / 10 am - Noon / via Zoom

Meeting Objectives & Goals

1. Share updates since the first meeting.
2. Identify steps for meeting the charge.
3. Assign roles for drafting information for the Steering Committee.

Participants

Bill Brewer
James Brown
Kevin Haynes
Bill Kreutzberger
Doug Lassiter
Grace Messinger
Andy Smith

DWR Representatives

Siying (Sylvia) Chen
Nick Coco
Rich Gannon
Joey Hester
Kristin Litzenberger
Michael Montebello
Matthew Nevills

DSC Facilitation Team

Maggie Chotas, Laura Swartz, Ian Ramirez - intern

Meeting Summary

Agenda Overview

- Overview of agenda & ground rules (Laura Swartz, DSC)
- Tag Charge & Updates since last meeting (Joey Hester, DWR)
- NC Septic Tank Association - updates since 2006 (Doug Lassiter)
- YPDRBA Survey data (Bill Kreutzberger)
- Tyson Farms & Permitting (Kevin Haynes & Jim Brown)
- Summary & Next steps

What's Next / Action Items

1. Joey uploaded the TAG membership list and the Jacobs Technical Memo to the [ShareFile folder](#). Everyone should be connected to the folder now.
2. Bill Kreutzberger compiled survey responses from the YPDRBA and Joey Hester incorporated them into the draft report for the Steering Committee. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

3. The group had the opportunity to provide feedback via email to Joey on the draft [Wastewater TAG report](#).
4. This group will meet again on the following dates:
 1. Wednesday, March 15 from 9 - 11 am via Zoom
 2. Thursday, May 4 from 10 am - noon via Zoom

Important Links

- [Wastewater TAG Report](#) - from February 15, 2023
- [Wastewater Group Sharefile Folder](#)
- [PPT Presentation](#) from DWR
- [Facilitation PPT](#) from DSC
- [Group Chat](#) from the Zoom meeting

Details on Discussion Topic

Discussion Topic 1 - Septic Systems in NC

Key Points

Doug Lassiter, North Carolina Septic Tank Association (NCSTA), explained the following key points:

- As of January 1, there are new rules. The NC Legislators are currently trying to water down requirements for septic expert certification, and the Association is against that.
- The Association is trying to embrace new technology from all over the world, and they are working with the General Assembly to promote the use of more advanced technologies.
- In 2021, new waste rules were adopted. They added private sector abilities to expedite permit turnaround. Ensures better qualified professionals to perform site evaluations.
- Grace Messinger asked - who submits the rates of failure for their septic tanks? What is the documentation of the process?
 - Individual owners are responsible for submitting information on failures, but they have a disincentive to do so. Local health departments are responsible for flagging failures and reporting to the State.
- Information disconnect → some homeowners are unaware they are on a septic tank or don't know what maintenance is required. Bill Kreutzberger added there is a real education issue where he lives in the mountains.

- CES has good educational material, and Sushama at DEH is a good asset for updating new educational materials.
- The extension service has good information for homeowners to learn about their systems.
- Joey asked - how do the new septic systems cost compared to the older technology? They can be significantly more expensive.

Points & Themes summarized:

1. The importance of knowledge and education for homeowners on septic tanks.
2. Given the soil types we have around High Rock Lake, what are the options we have for addressing nutrients from septic systems in the future?

Discussion Topic 2 - YPDRA Survey data (Bill Kreutzberger)

Key Points

- Bill Kreutzberger explained there has been a substantial reduction in Phosphorus since the 2006 baseline - around 25%.
 - Agreed to address spatial aspect of reduction as well as applying delivery factors to estimate delivered reductions. Bill Kreutzberger can review data relating to Abbott's Creek arm improvement.
- Bill Brewer (Winston-Salem/Forsythe County Utilities) - Can National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) staff speak to limits approach?
 - Some lagoons are not meeting current standards; looking at sidestream Nitrogen removal.
 - See a 60% NH₃ (Ammonia) reduction but can't plan on that in the future.
- Michael Montebello - any funds being set aside for improvements?
 - Bill Brewer - Not currently, not until we get the requirements. Don't intend to make nutrient reduction improvements until required.
 - Joey Hester added that NPDES can't adjust permits until the rules set requirements. 2025 is a realistic date for the rules to be in place.
 - Bill Brewer added that they are looking to seek lagoon fix funds in the next fiscal year, and then construction would likely be two years out. Rich Gannon added that that construction will happen before these new rules kick in.
 - In the past, Nitrogen limits have been staged at next renewal after rules effective date, several years down the road; actually six years in Jordan Lake. While Phosphorus limits came in the following year from the effective date.

- Cost of Nitrogen treatment is significantly more than the cost of Phosphorus treatment, by orders of magnitude.

Discussion Topic 3 - Tyson Farms & Permit Process

Key Points

- Tyson South Yadkin River made an upgrade from Nitrogen discharge to the South Yadkin River and received lower limits from the state out of that. Kevin Haynes noted they monitor Phosphorus currently per permit, but no limits. They average ~225k GPD discharge versus permitted .5 MGD.
- Tyson Wilkesboro is a pretreatment plant with a ~2.3 MGD discharge to the City of Wilkesboro. Jim Brown noted they are in the midst of an upgrade. They are waiting to see what limits will be. They will have pretreatment requirements associated with expansion going on from 4 - 8 MGD now. Currently they are reconstructing the plant, getting out of the floodplain as they expand. They are incorporating some removal and building capacity to handle whatever comes from rules.