

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Study

The local governments in Wake County have a long history of environmental awareness, concern, and action. Over the last decade, the 12 municipalities and the County have worked collaboratively on a number of environmental initiatives, including the Water and Sewer Plan (1998), Watershed Management Plan (2002), Growth Management Plan (2003), Comprehensive Groundwater Investigation (2003), and the Open Space Plan (2004). The concern for the health of the local environment also extends to the citizens of Wake County, who have overwhelmingly supported recent votes on environmental issues. As an example, the Wake County Open Space bond referendums in 2004 and 2007 passed at nearly 75 percent and 70 percent approval, respectively.

While awareness and interest in environmental protection exists at the local government and citizen level, the County's waters continue to experience degradation. The length and number of streams on the State's 303(d) list of impaired waters has increased since the first list was published in 1998. Also, an assessment of the County's 81 watersheds as part of the Wake County Watershed Management Plan rated nearly 63 percent of the watersheds as either "impacted" or "degraded." If not managed closely, the continued future growth and development in Wake County could result in the further impairment of these water resources, having a pronounced impact on the quality of life in Wake County.

In addition to dealing with these local conditions, local stormwater program managers are also faced with several regulatory programs enacted by Federal and State agencies. These programs represent unfunded mandates that local governments must implement to protect water quality. The most notable of these regulations is the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NDPDES) program, which affects all 13 local governments in the County. This program requires the implementation of six minimum stormwater management program elements within the next three to five years.

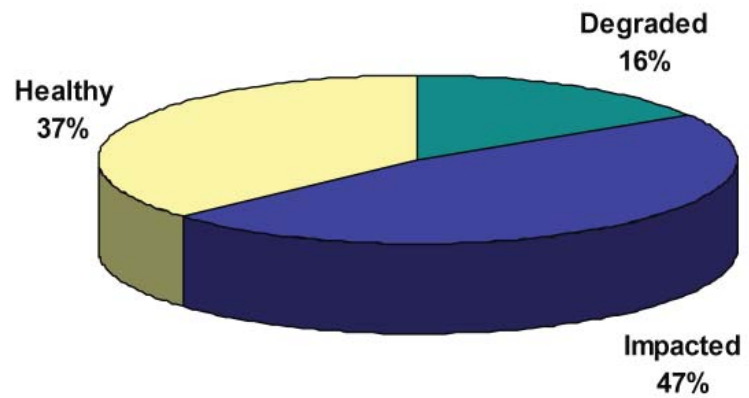


Figure 1-1
An assessment of the County's 81 watersheds as part of the Wake County Watershed Management Plan rated nearly 63 percent of the watersheds as either "impacted" or "degraded."

The local governments in Wake County have recognized this possibility of continued degradation of streams and water quality related to growth as well as the regulatory challenges currently facing all in the County. As such, the local governments have continued their commitment to protecting, preserving, and restoring the quality and quantity of the County's water resources by initiating the work associated with this report.

1.2 Project Background

In response to the challenges outlined above, the County and its 12 local government partners initiated the first phase of this project in 2005. The Wake County Collective Stormwater Management Evaluation (2006) consisted of a study of the programmatic, operational, and funding options available for the development of a collaborative stormwater management program involving some or all of the thirteen units of local government in Wake County. These units of local government included Wake County, the Towns of Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon, and the City of Raleigh. The initial phase of the project culminated in the preparation of a feasibility report that identifies potential opportunities

for collaborative programs and provided recommendations for a second phase, including the formation of a task force comprised of representatives from each participating municipality to further explore the possible advantages of an enhanced and collaborative stormwater management program.

In 2006, Wake County convened the Stormwater Management Task Force and retained CDM to assist with the facilitation of this process. In general, the Task Force has met monthly since February of 2006 for a total of 17 meetings. The stated goals and objectives of the task force at the beginning of the process were the following:

- Should we become more actively engaged in stormwater management?
- What are the potential solutions for solving Wake County's stormwater management issues?

1.3 Process

The County solicited each local government for the appointment of a task force member and alternate. The final group consisted of 20 members and 17 alternates composed of private citizens, community leaders, stormwater professionals, business leaders, and environmentalists. Wake County Commissioner Kenn Gardner served as the Task Force Chairperson.

At the outset of the process, County and CDM staff developed a proposed work plan that included five modules, as described below:

- 1) **Task Force Process.** Provide the Task Force with an understanding of the overall process, which included the establishment of ground rules and the development of goals and objectives for the group.
- 2) **Issue and Objectives Identification.** Engage the Task Force through the discussion of issues surrounding stormwater management in Wake County from a variety of perspectives. Using this information, the Task Force developed a list of issues and concerns. Once the issues were identified, the Task Force developed a list of common objectives and then prioritized the concerns based on their relationship to their objectives.
- 3) **Tools and Strategies.** Develop a list of appropri-

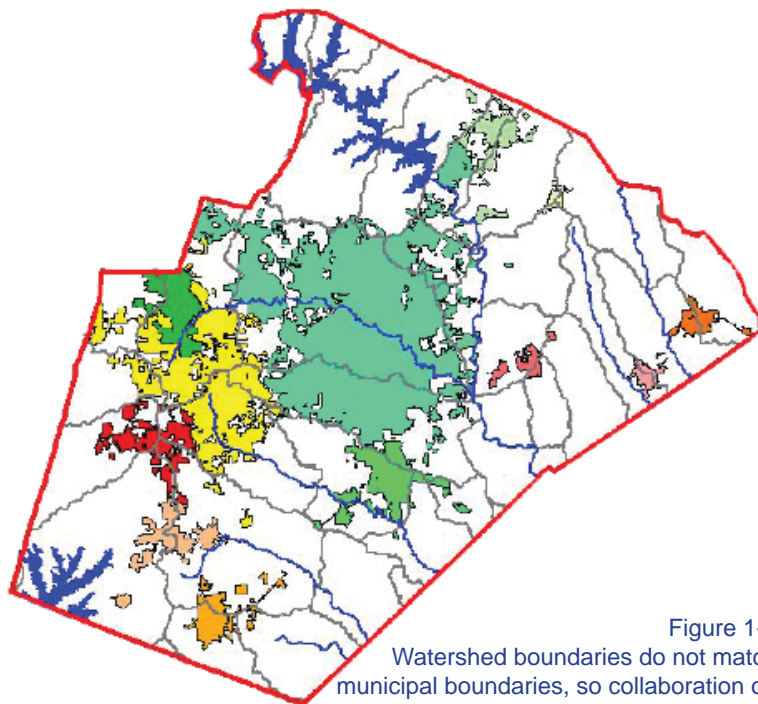


Figure 1-2
Watershed boundaries do not match municipal boundaries, so collaboration on stormwater management is essential.

ate tools and strategies that may be implemented to address the concerns for each prioritized issue. Also, the Task Force discussed the ongoing efforts at the County and municipal level and how those efforts may be improved or supplemented through the development of a countywide solution.

- 4) **Implementation Recommendations.** Develop draft recommendations for stormwater program content and organizational strategies to address priority issues in an efficient and appropriate manner. Also, the Task Force reviewed potential budget implications and funding options, as well as discussed implementation hurdles.
- 5) **Recommendations and Reporting.** Develop final recommendations for stormwater program content, estimate potential budget requirements, and propose an implementation plan based on Task Force and local government priorities. Ultimately, these recommendations and supporting information will be presented to County and local government boards/councils.

Throughout the 17 meetings, Task Force members were presented with technical information on stormwater management issues and participated in a variety of exercises to solicit their thoughts and opinions. In parallel, the

County also convened meetings with local government stormwater managers to review and comment on the work performed by the Task Force. By the conclusion of this process, the Task Force had established nine recommendations for new or enhanced stormwater management programs and strongly encouraged the need for collaboration among the 13 units of local government to address the stormwater issues identified by the group, to provide cost effective solutions by achieving economies of scale, and promote a watershed-based approach to future stormwater management efforts throughout the County.

1.4 Acknowledgements

CDM would like to acknowledge the significant time, effort, and assistance received during the last 20 months from the Stormwater Management Task Force members and other local stakeholders (Figure 1-3). The Task Force was instrumental in the successful completion of the project. CDM would also like to thank Commissioner Kenn Gardner for his service as the Task Force Chairperson.

Other important stakeholders and participants CDM would like to acknowledge include the following:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Sarah Bruce	TJCOG
Tony Chalk	Town of Garner
Mike Frangos	Town of Knightdale
Kim Gazella	Gazella Communications
Keith Gifford	Town of Knightdale
Bryan Hicks	Town of Rolesville
Chris Hills	Town of Wendell
Jennifer Holmes	Town of Zebulon
Heather Keefer	Town of Holly Springs
Jay Meyers	Town of Fuquay-Varina
Scott Miles	Town of Wake Forest
Sydney Miller	TJCOG
Teresa Piner	Town of Wendell
Frank Powell	Town of Garner
Jaclyn Sumner	Town of Garner
Terry Warren	Town of Cary
Mitch Woodward	Cooperative Extension

Wake County Stormwater Management Task Force Members and Alternates

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Sid Baynes	Town of Wendell
Danny Bowden	City of Raleigh
Tommy Broadwell	Town of Fuquay-Varina
Tommy Craven	City of Raleigh
Zachery Davis	Wake Pub. Schools
Mike Deaton	Town of Apex
Chris Dreps	UNRBA
Frank Eagles	Town of Rolesville
Hunter Freeman	Town of Cary
Jason Galarneau	Town of Holly Springs
Terrence Gleason	Town of Knightdale
Emily Grasso	Town of Morrisville
Jeri Gray	League of Women Voters
Les Hall	Wake County
Robin Hammond	Wake C. & NC CWMTF
Suzanne Harris	Home Builders Assoc.
Greg Jennings	Wake County
Sherry Johnson	Wake County
Norman Karr	Town of Garner
Marcia Lieber	Wake Soil & Water
John McGarrigle	Town of Wake Forest
Cindy McGuire	Town of Wake Forest
Tim Minton	Home Builders Assoc.
Stephen Morgan	Town of Knightdale
Dean Naujoks	Neuse River Foundation
John Phelps	Wake County
Michael L. Roberts	Town of Morrisville
Rocky Ross	Town of Apex
Todd St. John	Town of Cary
Rep. Paul Stam	NC House/Wake County
Chet Van Fossen	Town of Holly Springs
Gene Walters	Town of Fuquay-Varina
Kevin Watson	Town of Zebulon
Amy Wazenegger	Wake County
Kyle White	Town of Garner

Figure 1-3
Task Force Members and Alternates

Wake County Staff Members

CDM would also like to acknowledge the significant assistance and input received during the course of this project from Wake County staff members. The following Wake County staff members made significant contributions to this project, for which CDM is truly appreciative.

David Cooke	County Manager
Joe Durham	Assistant County Manager
Rick Rowe	Former Environmental Services Director
Tommy Esqueda	Environmental Services Director
Mark Bailey	Water Quality Director
Britt Stoddard	Project Manager
Chris Snow	Parks and Recreation Director
Melinda Clark	Staff Member
Betsy Pearce	Staff Member
Everette Lynn	Staff Member
Lee Squires	Staff Member
Mike Jennings	Staff Member