

Path Forward Committee (PFC) Meeting Agenda
August 1, 2023, 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM
Butner Town Hall

Note this meeting has been shortened to one hour and moved ½ hour earlier to accommodate the UNRBA Technical Stakeholders Workshop beginning at 10:30 AM.

Materials related to this PFC Meeting will be placed on the UNRBA website unless noted otherwise on the [UNRBA Meetings Page](#).

I. Opening Comments, Agenda Review/Revisions — Co-Chairs Michelle Woolfolk and Terry Hackett

II. Modeling and Regulatory Support Status

Item Summary (Alix Matos): The Technical Stakeholders Workshop follows today’s meeting, and a detailed review of modeling results will be provided. The Watershed Analysis Risk Management Framework (WARMF) modeling report has been revised to address comments from the MRSW and DWR and to include the results of watershed scenarios. The Executive Director and Chair of the Modeling and Regulatory Support Workgroup (MRSW) are reviewing the revisions and responses to comments. The draft will be refined in response to their comments and provided back to the MRSW, DWR, PFC and subject matter experts (redline and clean copy) for review. A final report will be submitted to DWR following the review process. In response to requests from DWR at the WARMF Model training, the model interface was refined to provide additional functionality similar to the old interface. A final set of WARMF model files has been provided to DWR for review.

The third lake model is the Statistical/Bayesian/Decision Support model which is based on an extensive data base dating back to the 1990s. Evaluations of loading to Falls Lake are being compiled including tributary loading, atmospheric deposition, and nutrient releases from Falls Lake sediments. The subject matter experts and third-party reviewers funded by the NC Collaboratory began review of the input data and categorization in February. Evaluations of data within the lake arms compared to the main lake is being conducted to inform model development.

The lake modeling report (WARMF Lake, EFDC, and the UNRBA Statistical/Bayesian model) is under development. This report will include the results of the lake sensitivity and scenario evaluations.

III. FOCUS FOR TODAY’S MEETING: Developing Recommendations for a Revised Nutrient Management Strategy and a Petition for a Site-Specific Chlorophyll-a Water Quality Standard

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): Since November 2022, the PFC has been discussing concepts and principles under consideration for inclusion in the UNRBA’s recommendations for a revised Falls Lake Strategy/Revised Falls Lake Rules. A potential list of key concepts and principles was provided in November 22, 2022 and PFC input was recorded and used to update that list for the December 2022 PFC meeting. Subsequent discussions in January and February at the PFC meetings were conducted and a “Preliminary Draft” of the C&P Document provided on March 1, 2023. Additional work continued with input from PFC members and an updated version of the “Preliminary Draft” issued on March 31, 2023 (redline and clean versions, copies attached to the transmittal email for this PFC agenda) with a request for additional review and comment. An update, now “Draft,” C&P Document was provided ahead of the June PFC meeting and given to the Board on June 21, 2023. This was released to the PFC for comment again on June 26th and

released to the entire PFC email list on June 28th (copies of these communications attached to the transmittal email for this PFC meeting). Comments were requested by July 14th. We have been working through the comments from the June 28th release and frankly, there were several new comments. We have also received comments from other stakeholders. We are working through those and will have an updated draft soon. A final draft for PFC, DWR and Stakeholder review and input ahead of the September 5, 2023 meeting should be available in mid-August. At the September PFC, I will ask for the PFC to support a final draft for approval by the Board on September 20th. Clearly, we have been working on this and there has been significant opportunities to have input and several draft C&P Documents have been put out for comment. To illustrate and remind you of our efforts, the process over the last 8 months has provided a lot of information presented to the PFC: [PFC Meeting Presentation 11-2022, slides 18-51](#); [PFC Meeting Presentation 12-2022, Slides 10-32](#); [PFC Meeting Presentation 1-2023, slides 10-19](#); [PFC Meeting Presentation 2-2023, 41-44](#); [PFC Meeting Presentation, 3-2023, slides 43-48](#); [PFC Meeting Presentation 4-2023, slides 46-60](#); [PFC Presentation 6-2023, slides 33-37](#); and discussed as the number one agenda item at the July 11, 2023 PFC Check-In Meeting (agenda for that meeting attached to this agenda transmittal email). It is an extremely well vetted process, and I have not included specific information to document the many discussions we have had over the last several years about where we need to go following the completion of our monitoring work and the release of our 2019 monitoring report and throughout the modeling effort. I have made it clear that we will have a final set of recommendations, based on the science we have developed by December of this year. Meeting this goal is essential to have our work influence the rules readoption process. I must have your help in wrapping up this review.

A public-facing summary has also been developed to expand outreach and invite additional feedback on the draft concepts and principles document. This summary was provided before this meeting, and it will be reviewed briefly at the meeting. This document can be used by the local governments to distribute and give your stakeholders a general understanding of the effort the UNRBA has made and where we are going with the science we have developed. It is also a good set of talking points to guide presentations. The formats provided have multiple uses and can be posted to your social media sites.

A draft of Consensus Principles II (CP-II) continues to be developed and will be distributed soon for review. Because it is a very condensed set of key principles that are supported by the C&P Document, the principles are well known at this point. It is now just the matter of deciding the key points to make and how to present those points in a short document.

The UNRBA met with DWR leadership on June 22nd to continue discussing coordination efforts to review the technical findings of the reexamination, discuss UNRBA recommendations for a revised nutrient management strategy, develop a petition for site specific criteria, and continue coordination as the agency moves into the rule's readoption process. It was a very good session and specific priorities were identified requiring UNRBA and DWR cooperation and coordination. DWR has filled two critical positions in their Classifications, Standards and Rules Review Branch. We reviewed the results of that meeting at the Check-In meeting on July 11th.

We have invited Region IV EPA modeling, 303(d), and standards staff to attend the UNRBA Technical Stakeholders Workshop today and have received confirmation that two of them will be at the meeting or connected in.

The UNRBA will continue to identify opportunities to work with other stakeholders as we move through finalizing our recommendations. Subject matter experts continue to evaluate other State's site-specific standards for chlorophyll-a and nutrient-related standards. The UNRBA continues to work with Dr. Marty Lebo to complete his work and integrate his results into the site-specific standard evaluation, statistical modeling, and regulatory support efforts. This team met on June 23rd to transfer input on this effort from Jay Sauber. We continue to discuss with our legal advisor appropriate legal pathways and statutory and regulatory issues we need to address as we move our recommendations forward.

Other Items that will only be noted are below--narratives provided for your reference and consideration:

I. Gathering Data from Local Governments to Support the Cost Benefit Analysis

Item Summary (Alix Matos): An important component of the re-examination is understanding the costs of past and possible future actions in the watershed as well as the benefits in terms of nutrient load reductions and improvements in lake water quality. To support this economic analysis, we are requesting information from the PFC as described during the [February PFC meeting](#). Please email initial information to amatos@brwncald.com and ashley@brindlecreek.com and copy Forrest.Westall@mcgillassociates.com. Structured data requests will follow after existing data and reports have been reviewed and compiled.

II. Timeline for the Development of Recommendations for a Revised Strategy and Model Development Documentation

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): This was discussed in detail during the main item for discussion today. But this summary is repeated for reference and to further emphasize the need for timely review of materials: The timeline for the development of strategy revision recommendations was set in 2018 as part of the modified Collaboratory legislation. December of 2023 has been ahead of us for about 5 years and all of our focus has been on achieving this goal. We are well on our way to having the C&P document developed and will pull together the Consensus Principles II to be the primary communication to the state (EMC, DEQ, DWR and General Assembly). A final C&P document will be the support for those consensus principles. We also, as noted, have our model documentation reporting that will be submitted to DWR for review. Compliance with the approved Quality Assurance Project Plan is the main yardstick for looking at how our models were developed. It is our intention to submit all of our modeling documentation before the end of the year. Forrest has discussed with the two Co-Chairs of the PFC the plan for this process and the schedule by product has been developed and was provided to the PFC ahead of the meeting. We need to keep in clear focus meeting this schedule because it is critical to placing before the state our recommendations for a revised strategy and for a site-specific water quality standard for chlorophyll-a.

III. Communications Support

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): We have been working hard to schedule briefings for our jurisdictional governing bodies. I met with the Creedmoor City Commission on July 17th, scheduled to meet with the Wake County Growth and Sustainability on September 18th, scheduled to meet with the Durham County Board of Commissioners on October 2nd, scheduled to meet with the Raleigh Stormwater Committee on October 5th, scheduled to meet with the Durham City Council on October 19th, and scheduled to meet with the Orange County Board of Commissioners on November 15th. I am available to meet with other committees or governing Boards and Commissions of our members. In any event, we will be seeking for you as staff to your Boards and Commissions to present the Consensus Principles II to them for endorsement prior to approving the package for submittal to the State at the November 15th, 2023 UNRBA Board meeting. Please make plans to reach out to us on any presentations or materials you need for requesting endorsement of the CP-II. We will be working on a draft resolution for your use. There are several efforts of outreach underway, including the Technical Stakeholders Workshop today, ongoing engagement with DWR and other interested organizations.

We still understand that American Rivers is still planning a “Neuse River of the Year” event for the upper part of the basin. The UNRBA is planning a press release to coincide with the timing of the event. This press release will also reference the successes of the IAIA. Plans to develop videos and messaging for UNRBA members to distribute on their social media accounts is being planned to coincide with this event to streamline videography.

The “open” nature of all UNRBA meetings remains a key component of a transparent communications approach. The tremendous amount of information presented at the PFC and Board meetings is truly remarkable. The linked presentations in the discussion of the development of our recommendations provide the modeling and regulatory support information we presented just over the last 8 months. We encourage member representatives and interested individuals to speak up about ideas and opportunities to communicate our work and the importance of our recommendations on a revised strategy and a site-specific standard.

IV. Other Status Items

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): Brief statements on ongoing activities:

- Intensive work and coming deadlines make it important to manage expectations and resources— Recommendations are due at the end of 2023.
- Ongoing DEQ/DWR Items—DWR Neuse Watershed Model; delivery factors for WWTP
- The UNRBA provided comments on DWR 20-yr status report for the Neuse and Tar-Pam Estuaries— We understand that DWR is following up on the comments for this document

V. Closing Comments— Co-Chairs Michelle Woolfolk and Terry Hackett

Next PFC Meeting: September 5, 2023, 9:30 AM to Noon

Next BOD Meeting: September 20, 2023, 9:30 AM to Noon

This schedule may be revised, and notices will be provided about any change.

Remote Access Instructions for the MRSW and PFC Meetings

Equipment Type	Access Information	Notes
Computers with microphones and speakers	Join Microsoft Teams Meeting Please mute your microphone unless you want to provide input.	Press control and click on this link to bring up Microsoft Teams through the internet. You can view the screen share and communicate through your computer’s speakers and microphone.
Computers without audio capabilities, or audio that is not working	Join Microsoft Teams Meeting (888) 404-2493 Passcode: 371 817 961# Please mute your phone unless you want to provide input.	Follow instructions above. Turn down your computer speakers, mute your computer microphone , dial the number through your phone and enter the passcode.
Phone only	(888) 404-2493 Passcode: 371 817 961#	Dial the toll-free number and enter the passcode. Please mute your phone unless you want to provide input.

Remote Access Guidelines

- If you dial in through your phone, mute your microphone, and turn down your speakers to avoid feedback.
- Unless you are speaking, please mute your computer/device microphone or phone microphone to minimize background noise.