Florence-Darlington Stormwater Consortium
Minutes

September 22, 2011
10:00 a.m.
Florence County Extension Office

This meeting was held at the Florence County Extension Office on the corner of Irby St. and 3rd Loop. Present were members of Florence County, City of Florence, Darlington County, Kalmia Gardens, URS-BP Barber and Clemson Extension. As Terasa was at the installation project of the new Florence Cultural Garden, Geoff Smith (URS/BP Barber) opened the meeting with a discussion on the draft document of the TMDL for Black Creek.

TMDL Black Creek Draft Document
Geoff and members present talked about the technical nature of the Black Creek TMDL and the comment period currently underway. Comments on the TMDL are due Thursday, September 29, 2011. The MS4s are going to comment in a document together. Geoff is drafting the comments and welcomes any that each MS4 wants to submit. Terasa said she talked to Cal Sawyer, with Clemson University. They both thought it was a good idea for the MS4’s to send concurrent comments, but Cal felt that Terasa should not sign the document as a part of the Consortium because they (Clemson/Carolina Clear) strive to keep a non-partisan relationship with state and federal agencies. The consortium members present understood and supported that decision.

Doug presented a comment to the group about the language of the abstract. The comment asks DHEC to change the language of the abstract to make it more “stakeholder friendly” and put it in layman’s terms. Geoff responded that the TMDL was actually a technical document aimed at the permitted entities affected by the TMDL. He mentioned that while it was a good idea, it needed to come from environmental groups, such as Black Creek Land Trust or the Black Creek Protective Association. Geoff stated that the comment would carry more weight from them.

Julie stated she would email the comment to Jay James, Ben Williamson, and Jennie Peze and ask if anyone would consider submitting it.

Geoff stated that most of the comments that would be submitted from the MS4’s are on the grounds of grammar and the way data was gathered. Although the data itself would not be challenged, Geoff stated that the comments would suggest that bad grammar may reflect poorly on the credibility of the data. Geoff asked that MS4s review and email all comments to him by Monday afternoon (September 26, 2011), so that he can finish the comment document by Tuesday afternoon (September 27, 2011).

Terasa asked if Ben Williamson was able to get his questions answered regarding the TMDL document. Doug stated he thought not, and that there were 17 questions. Doug reported that Ben was quite frustrated about it. Terasa suggested that Dara Park might be able help. Geoff volunteered to review the questions and get in touch with Ben. Doug gave Geoff a copy of the email with the questions. Geoff will contact Ben Williamson to offer assistance.

Doug reported on the efforts by Sonoco, Progress Energy (PE), and Darlington County to appeal the proposed new flood plain which markedly changes the flood zone. This discussion was in conjunction with placement of monitoring stations. Some of the concerns regarding the TMDL document are the stations that are impaired versus ones that have been inactivate or will not be
monitored again (because they were random sample stations). It was felt among the consortium that these stations were contributing to misleading data, and that future problems could be seen with the implementation activities if there was no way to track results. Doug stated that a representative of the engineering firm hired by Sonoco and PE suggested that 319 grant monies might be a funding source to place a monitoring station at the mouth of Black Creek where the dam from Prestwood Lake is located (dam side) to check pollution levels in the flow, thus providing data upstream from the impaired stations downstream to see if what is coming out of the lake is contributing to the impairment. Geoff stated that 319 Grant monies cannot be used for upfront monitoring, but could be tied into long-term water quality monitoring once the TMDL is implemented, extrapolating daily load and flow reduction data. He also stated that having that station in place would certainly help in identifying where the point/non-point sources are impacting Black Creek. Doug stated that he thought that pre-disaster mitigation grant funds might be an avenue to use for funding this project, and he will talk to Mac MacDonald about that. Geoff stated that although he did not know the cost, NOAA or National Weather Service (NWS), as well as the USGS, might have funding avenues. Terasa will call her contact at Coastal Carolina University to inquire about their funding to keep a monitoring station active.

Geoff stated that the TMDL will never go away, it is a document designed to be a guide for the life of the waterbody (forever). The contaminant will never change for this TMDL (fecal coliform), but testing for the contaminant will become to change over in the next 10-15 years from fecal to E. coli, instead.

Database
Terasa thanked everyone for getting their information entered. She asked that everyone review the printed database (theirs and everyone else’s) for errors. Members are asked to get reviews to her by next Thursday (September 29, 2011) with a statement regarding the impact education is having (MCM 1 & 2).

Terasa will get a draft Annual Report to Consortium members by October 17, 2011. Members are asked to review it at that time and get any changes to her with requests for copies by October 24, 2011. Terasa will get printed copies to us by November 7, 2011.

Education/Outreach Activities
Terasa stated that the commercials were great, but expensive, as are billboards. She asked for ideas from the Consortium for advertising. Mark-on Pepsi Banners were proposed to be used around the MS4s.

Volunteers were discussed for the banners and storm drain markings. The school district Public Information Officers can help. Terasa stated she knows some of the science teachers, as well. Volunteers, such as church youth groups (through a program called “Caring for Creation”), scout troops, and public, private, and home schools, were discussed to “create” the message and layout the graphics for the banners and to mark storm drains. March is water month in the schools, so that is an outreach time looking ahead that can be used. Terasa will contact these groups to recruit volunteers. Dan will get relevant information to Terasa for more volunteers for the Darlington/Florence area.

Members talked about door hangers for a storm-drain marking campaign. After some ideas were discussed, the group decided to go with door hangers that offered a chance to win a rain barrel
via registration at the FDSC website, as well as maybe some other prizes such as Sonic treats in Hartsville. No decision was made one way or the other to get the detachable door hangers with magnets. This door hanger campaign was to be in conjunction with neighborhood storm drain markings by volunteers. **Terasa will order door hangers and get a survey put on the website for this event.**

**Communication / E-News**

During the discussion on outreach, reaching out to teens and twenty-something’s came up. Someone suggested an “app”. Geoff stated that this was a really good idea. **Terasa will contact the IT person for Clemson to explore and possibly create an app for stormwater education.**

Terasa asked the partners if they remembered the e-news letter she sent out and asked how it was received. She stated she could put anything in the newsletter and asked the partners about content. Partners stated that putting upcoming events in all MS4’s or neighboring communities (such as Hartsville or Darlington) and receive it every 2 months would be a good idea. **Terasa will “tweak” the E-News Communication with upcoming events and send out to the partners every two months.**

**Upcoming Activities**

September 30 – Fall Plant and Flower Show at Pee Dee State Farmers Market  
Oct. 1 – River Jamboree at Lynches River County Park  
Oct. 5-15 – Eastern Carolina Agricultural Fair in Florence  
Oct. 9 – Sweet Potato Festival in Darlington – Terasa stated she thought Alma would be there  
Oct. 15 – Howl-o-ween Benefit for Florence Area Humane Society @ Timrod Park in Florence  
Nov. 5 – Pecan Festival in Florence  
April 14 – Earth Day at Kalmia Gardens

**Other Information**

Doug asked if there was a possibility that the Consortium could sponsor a workshop on Maintaining Septic Systems. He stated that he knew the City of Florence did not have many, if any, of those, and that the workshop could have a FOG component. The audience was briefly discussed, and the idea of appealing to both the general public and commercial businesses was acceptable to the group. **Terasa will check to see if 319 grant monies can be used to sponsor this workshop and if not the group could discuss it at a later date.** A spring timeframe was proposed and accepted for the workshop.

**Next Meeting**  
Our next meeting is Thursday, November 17, 2011 @ 2 p.m.

Meeting adjourned approximately 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Ritz