

AGENDA
Orange County Commission for the Environment
August 12, 2019
7:30 p.m.

West Campus Office Building, Room 302, 131 West Margaret Lane, Hillsborough

- | <u>Time</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7:30 | I. | Call to Order |
| 7:32 | II. | Additions or Changes to Agenda |
| 7:34 | III. | Approval of Draft Minutes – June 10, 2019
The CFE will consider approval of minutes from the last meeting. <u>Action needed</u> (Attachment 1) |
| 7:35 | IV. | CFE Activities Update
The Chair and members will briefly discuss progress on the list of activities included on page 2 of this agenda. |
| 7:40 | V. | Coordinated Environmental Summit - Update
The CFE will review planning for this joint event, which includes the State of the Environment 2019, for this fall. (Attachment 2) |
| 7:55 | VI. | State of Environment Edits
The CFE will complete final edits to the 2019 State of the Environment Report. The current version of the document may be found at this link (printed copies will be available at the meeting):
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1uxSNpXmLWuiw7oHkAwD6UY4adqiQrfIU |
| 8:40 | VII. | Planning and Development Process - Update
Bouma will update the commission on plans and discussions for coordination with the Planning Department on their review process. |
| 8:50 | VIII. | Updates and Information Items
Staff and/or CFE members will provide updates on the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Climate Council (Bouma will provide an update on formation of this group)➤ Quarter-Cent Property Tax for Climate Action Initiative - Update➤ <i>Any other new information from CFE members and staff</i> |
| 9:00 | IX. | Adjournment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Next Meeting: September 9, Southern Human Services Center, 2501 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill</i> |

CFE Activities – 2019

Item	Resp. Party	Next Steps
SOE issue pages	Exec. Editors	Executive editing group plans to finish the review of the draft SOE issue pages before the June 10 th mtg.
SOE website	B. Saul Others	Collect images
SOE event	C. Fletcher L. Gronback	Partner with other groups for event?
Eco-tips for county newsletter	K. Piracci B. Bouma	Find source(s). Compile in Google Docs.
Forest Management Policy	Land Resources	Land Resources has prepared draft. Pending CFE review and comment.
Rural Buffer Research Project	B. Saul B. Bouma	UNC student may begin working on this in August 2019.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory	B. Ward B. Bouma	Submit request to MPOs for transportation data. Get Solid Waste, utilities data. Finalize report.
Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution	B. Ward	Parry editing. CFE review.
Carbon Fee and Dividend Resolution	Ward/Parry	Draft resolution attached for CFE review. Web site for bill: https://energyinnovationact.org/
Climate Action Plan	Parry/Bouma	
Idling Campaign	B. Bouma	Received signs, need to deliver to schools. Sent a draft cover letter to schools for their use. Discuss expansion to drive-thru establishments.
Landscape corridor planning		Future update from Collaborative Conservation Group?
Best Practices on Roadsides and Rights of Way	B. Saul	Getting this effort going.
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEAPR annual photo contest

Recent Achievements

- BOCC unanimously passed “Best Practices on Roadsides and Rights-of-Way” resolution
- CFE mentioned by BOCC members several times during recent Our Climate Resolutions event

CFE Meeting Ground Rules (Adopted 9/12/11)

1. Keep to agenda topic under discussion
2. Share relevant information
3. One person speaks at a time after recognition by the Chair
4. Everyone is invited to participate in discussions/no one person should dominate discussions
5. Strive to reach consensus first before voting

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Orange County Commission for the Environment
June 10th, 2019
7:30 p.m.

Southern Human Services Center, 2501 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill

CFE Members Present: Bradley Saul, Laura Doherty, Jim Eichel, Carrie Fletcher, Kim Piracci, Bill Ward, Jody Eimers, Alan Parry

Staff Present: Tom Davis, Brennan Bouma, Dave Stancil

I. Call to Order

Saul called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

II. Additions or Changes to Agenda

Ward requested that the CFE allow time to discuss the ¼ cent property tax devoted to combating climate change that the BOCC is going to consider at their meeting on June 11th.

III. Approval of Draft Minutes – May 13th 2019

The CFE considered approval of the draft minutes from the last meeting. A motion to approve was made by Eichel and seconded by Parry. The minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. CFE Activities Update

Staff relayed that additional volunteer assistance has been offered to generate eco-tips. Saul and Stancil then explained the history and current status of CFE engagement on the Forest Management Policy for County lands.

Bouma also mentioned green building standards, and the tree policy may also be something that could be discussed in the future with Planning staff. Eimers asked about county powers versus state powers and what is delegated to the local government. There was additional discussion of what the CFE may be interested in learning more about concerning development and regulatory ability.

Parry then provided some information concerning the status of the draft carbon fee and dividend resolution. At the federal level, David Price has recently signed on as a co-sponsor of the carbon dividend act, so the draft CFE resolution is essentially moot at this point. Bouma informed the CFE of the option that the BOCC could send a letter of thanks to Rep. Price instead of the draft resolution. Fletcher liked the idea of supporting Rep. Price in this endeavor. Ward asked about our senators, but Parry stated that there is not currently a similar bill in the US Senate. Next there was

some discussion of how to proceed. Parry will tweak the draft resolution and then submit it when he is finished.

Davis announced his pending retirement. Stancil discussed plans for new DEAPR staff members and staffing of the CFE as well as some historical background of the CFE and his previous work with the CFE.

V. Preliminary Discussion of Orange County Development Process

Bouma began by discussing some of the overlap between the CFE and the OC Planning Commission regarding environmental concerns. He also reported that he met with M. Harvey of the Planning Dept. who will be available to speak to the CFE in the fall, and also to answer specific questions. Bouma recommended CFE members begin compiling specific questions for the Planning Dept. Bouma specifically asked Planning staff about the 1 inch of rain in 24 hours standard for stormwater control measure design, as an example of possible future topics to discuss. Harvey could also provide information about state versus local regulations. Bouma may also meet regularly with Planning staff in the future so they can update each other as new areas of mutual interest emerge.

VI. State of the Environment Event

Saul discussed a conference call that took place last week with members of the Collaborative Conservation Group, some of whom have expressed some interest in having a joint event around the release of the SOE 2019. This could be an event with representation by regional environmental folks from a four-county area (Wake, Durham, Orange, and Chatham) because this is the area included in the collaborative effort, making this a broader event than just Orange County. The target audience would be elected officials and staff, and it would be a weekday event at the NC Botanical Gardens, tentatively in mid-November 2019. The event would allow other jurisdictions to also participate and present something of interest. Saul asked the CFE members what they thought of this new approach- Eimers expressed concern that we may lose some contact with the OC BOCC but the group discussed that before this event, the SOE report would be presented to the OC BOCC. She also wanted the report to be disseminated to the local earth science classes for their use. Eichel indicated that his daughter (Amanda Eichel, who is the Executive Director, Global Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate) is interested in possibly speaking at the pending event.

VII. State of the Environment Report

Saul led a discussion of how to proceed. There is no July CFE meeting. He asked the group to agree to two rounds of comments on draft issue pages – the first ending the end of June, and the second ending at the August CFE meeting.

A limited mock-up of the report that was developed by OC Public Relations staff was presented. Piracci suggested that the photos included in the report should include some images showing the negative consequences of environmental inaction and not all be beautiful pictures of pristine landscapes. The group asked if some of the

photos that were used were taken in Orange County or not. Group stated that the photos should be only from Orange County.

VIII. Updates and Information Items

Ward initiated discussion of the proposed ¼ cent property tax devoted to combating climate change that will be considered by the BOCC tomorrow evening. He estimated that the tax would raise about \$450,000 each year. Bouma has assembled some ideas for how these funds could be used, including weatherization of low income housing, other energy efficiency efforts, etc. The BOCC will be meeting tomorrow to debate and possibly adopt the proposed budget. Parry indicated that some of the BOCC members appeared to be on the fence concerning this item. He also discussed emails that are circulating that include bullet points of items supporting this proposed tax. Eichel asked how closely related this issue was to affordable housing, which the BOCC is very interested in currently. Ward was unsure of the tie-in to this issue. Piracci thought that the BOCC members were concerned that this proposed tax has not gone through the entire budget process as it only came to light recently. Parry re-emphasized his desire to craft something to send to the BOCC indicating the CFE support for this proposed tax. Parry also said that the BOCC may welcome the support of the CFE. Members asked how they could proceed at this late time and date. Piracci made a motion that some of the CFE members come up with some info that they would send to Saul and he would craft a document to send to the BOCC in support of the proposed tax. Further discussion ensued of who might be able to put together this document. Saul said it could possibly be a very short document. Ward suggested putting together a small committee and having them put something together that would be forwarded to the BOCC before their meeting tomorrow. Piracci withdrew her motion, and then the members decided to quickly draft an email in support of this proposal that the CFE could vote on. The CFE then crafted a short message of support. Eichel offered a motion in support of the message to be sent to the BOCC by the Chair which was seconded by Parry and then approved unanimously. Parry said he would send it to Saul and staff and then Saul would forward it to the BOCC.

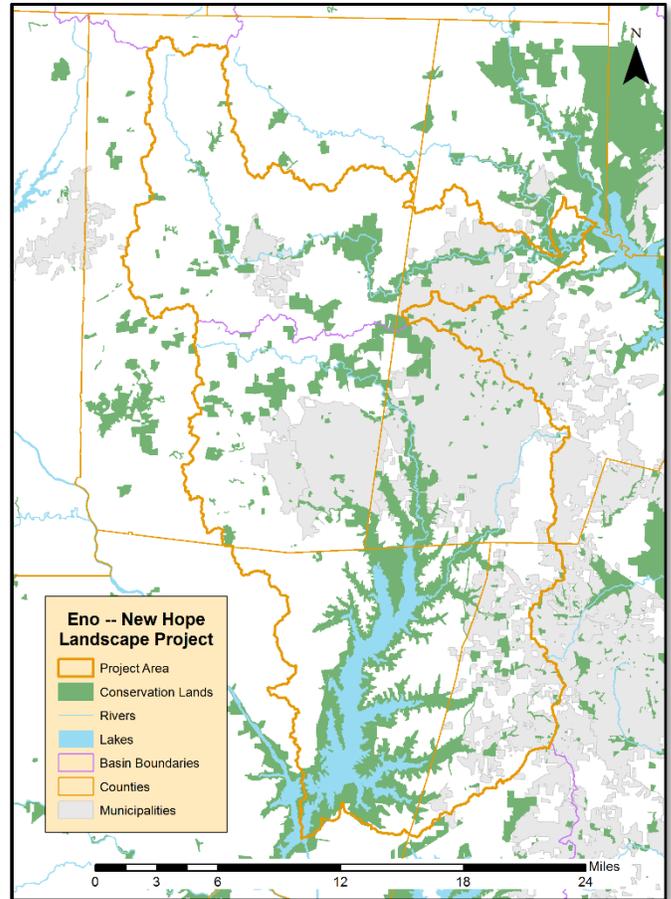
IX. Adjournment

Parry offered a motion to adjourn at 9:11, this was second by Ward and approved unanimously by the CFE members.

Eno-New Hope Landscape Conservation Plan

What is this plan? Local non-profit conservation organizations and governments from Orange, Chatham, Durham, and Wake counties are collaborating to identify high-priority landscape corridors that connect a network of critical wildlife habitats within the Jordan Lake watershed and across the “land bridge” between New Hope Creek (Cape Fear River Basin) and the Eno River (Neuse River Basin). The plan will use scientific analyses to identify locations of important habitats and corridors to help guide conservation efforts on a landscape scale through actions that are relevant and appropriate for the long-term persistence of native species and ecosystem services in a developing region, such as conservation agreements, adjustments to existing land use policies or ordinances, and land acquisition.

Why plan for conservation? The loss of overall biological diversity in North Carolina – across all plant and animal groups – is largely caused by habitat loss and fragmentation. The Jordan Lake watershed is a prime example of an area under intense development pressure, but with the potential to preserve and link existing habitats to ensure landscape connectivity within and between the Eno River and New Hope Creek watersheds. Existing protected areas are in danger of becoming further isolated by roadways and other causes of habitat fragmentation, and in the face of increasing threats and environmental changes, these natural areas require protected landscape corridors to maintain ecosystem functions and processes. Without these connections, the existing patchwork of conservation lands will become further isolated, threatening their value and contribution to the long-term persistence of species and ecosystem services. To ensure the persistence of species and ecosystem services in this developing region, a multi-pronged and proactive approach is necessary to coordinate collaborative conservation action in our communities. Proactive conservation planning secures benefits for protecting water quality, the future of native plants and wildlife, our local economy, and working farms and forests.



Habitat Connectivity is the Key

Wildlife gradually disappear from isolated or thin strips of open space. A critical element of any conservation development is to conserve habitats that are as wide as possible and are connected to adjacent natural areas.



Connected habitat



Fragmented open space

Who is paying for this? The NC Wildlife Resources Commission is providing cost-share assistance through its Partners for Green Growth program. Project partners are contributing staff and expertise. Matching funds are being supplied by Orange County, and the Botanical Garden Foundation, Inc., is leading this project, and welcomes your questions and comments.

How do I find out more? If you are interested in learning more, please contact Johnny Randall at jrandall@unc.edu or 919-962-2380. You can also ask to be added to our e-mail list for periodic updates on the plan. The final project will be presented to a wide audience through public events and meetings with local government advisory boards and elected officials.