



Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting Agenda June 18, 2025, 9:30 AM to Noon

In Person Meeting at Butner Town Hall, Camp Butner Room

[Remote Access Option \(see last page for instructions\)](#)

Materials related to this BOD Meeting have been placed on the UNRBA website unless noted otherwise on the [Meeting Page](#). See items under the June 18, 2025, meeting date.

I. Opening—Wendy Jacobs, Chair

- A. Introductions and Announcements
- B. Roll Call for Quorum
- C. Identification of any Conflicts
- D. Review and Approval of Agenda

II. Action Items

- A. Approval of [May 21, 2025, Draft Board Minutes](#)
- B. Approval of the [Treasurer's Report](#)
- C. Approval of FY2026 Contracts and FY2025 Contract Amendment for Dr. Martin Lebo

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): Four contracts to support the UNRBA efforts in **FY2026** will be discussed and considered during the meeting: Executive Director Services; Modeling, Regulatory Support, and Communications (MRSC); and Website Maintenance and Hosting. The Board has reviewed and approved the budgets for these three contracts at their March meeting.

An **FY2025** contract amendment for Dr. Martin Lebo has been prepared to revise the scope of work to include evaluation of a stability metric to include in the draft Falls Rules and support meetings with DWR regarding assessment of Falls Lake, and to fully utilize the Board-approved not-to-exceed amount of \$30,000 (this limit is already in the contract).

[The UNRBA Board will be asked to review and approve these four contracts.](#)

III. Status Reports and Informational Items

A. Status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process and Extension of IAIA Program

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The UNRBA submitted the [UNRBA Concepts and Principles for Reexamination](#) and [Consensus Principles II](#) to DWR and the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) on November 22, 2023. The NC Collaboratory submitted their final report in December 2023. These submittals trigger the initiation of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process. The UNRBA is engaging on every aspect of this process and how management options or proposals may impact our efforts to achieve a balanced, realistic, technologically feasible, and effective set of new rules. The UNRBA will continue to reference the scientific basis for appropriate rules as reflected in our 10-year evaluation and the work of the Collaboratory. The following activities are ongoing:

- The UNRBA has completed the workgroup stage of developing very preliminary draft Falls Rules (“draft-draft-draft”) to support the Falls rule readoption process. The workgroups included representatives from local governments, agriculture, environmental interests, land conservation organizations, developers, DOT, and DWR. The work products from these efforts were distributed to the UNRBA Path Forward Committee (PFC) and additional stakeholders and discussed during the May 6, 2025, PFC meeting. Comments were due from the PFC by May 20, 2025, to support further discussion at the June 3, 2025, PFC meeting.

- Staff from DWR Planning attended the June PFC meeting and confirmed they are drafting rules to submit to the EMC in November 2025. DWR has not shared their drafts or an outline of their concepts with the UNRBA. We have scheduled a meeting with DWR for June 20th to discuss our path forward with a focus on areas of difference. Our goal is to bring draft rules for the Board to discuss and consider at the September 18, 2025, meeting.
- DWR has scheduled an “all stakeholder” virtual meeting on June 24th (10 AM to noon) to “to gather useful stakeholder input on concepts.” DWR indicates they will not be sharing draft rule language ahead of that meeting. Unfortunately, DWR did not coordinate with the UNRBA on scheduling the meeting, and key UNRBA team members have conflicts on that date. The meeting will be recorded.
- During the May 21, 2025, the Board discussed and approved the Chair to execute on half of the Board a letter of clarification to the EMC regarding DWR’s May 8, 2025, update to the EMC. The letter requested re-engagement of DWR in the UNRBA process and a schedule for the UNRBA to provide updates on our efforts to the EMC moving forward. We received confirmation from the EMC that the letter was received. The Chair of the EMC acknowledged receipt of the letter and extended appreciation to the UNRBA for their significant investment of resources in the study of Falls Lake and rules readoption. No response was received from DWR or DEQ. Forrest will provide an update at the July meeting of the EMC or its Water Quality Committee.
- The UNRBA continues its efforts to engage DWR on the Rules Readoption Process. After the EMC and our communication with them and the DWR leadership, we discussed with them on May 13, 2025, how to move forward efficiently. While our goal remains to develop a joint set of rules to submit to the EMC, we are far apart on some critical components of the rules. We have clearly noted and discussed in detail in the workgroup process several key issues that we may not be able to resolve ahead of the Board’s consideration of draft rules in September 2025. However, we will work to see if we can reach some level of consensus on these issues. The UNRBA and DWR will discuss these items on June 19th, and we will provide the Board an update following the meeting. Because so much work and stakeholder input has gone into the current UNRBA rule drafts, we have continued to encourage DWR to use this draft as the basis of continued discussions. This way we can avoid unnecessary confusion and difficulty in correlation of any competing drafts. DWR can use the current draft to note their concerns, and this will allow us to identify differences and frame up our discussions of areas of disagreement. DWR’s noted issues with this approach are not compelling.
- The Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach (IAIA) was developed as a five-year program with an option to extend the program until the Falls Rules are readopted. The five-year period ends June 2026, and the schedule for Falls Rules readoption targets March 2027 as the adoption date. Thus, the IAIA program will need to be extended. During the November 19, 2025, UNRBA Board meeting, we will include a Compliance Group Committee (CGC) meeting, and they will consider submitting a request to the EMC to approve an extension of the IAIA program for five additional years or until the Falls Rules are readopted and an updated watershed protection plan is developed and approved by the Commission (i.e., an updated [Program Document](#)). During the November meeting, the CGC will also review and consider for submission the UNRBA IAIA Summary Report for Year Four which ends June 30, 2025. Annual reports from each individual participant are due by September 30, 2025, to DWR with a copy to Forrest and Alix to allow for generation of the UNRBA Summary Report.

B. Continued Rule Development for Jordan Lake and High Rock Lake Watersheds

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): We continue to monitor DWR's draft proposal for nutrient management rules for the High Rock Lake Watershed and their rules readoption process for the Jordan Lake Watershed. We remain concerned that these processes could negatively impact the Falls Lake rules readoption process, both in timing and in trying to "set" an approach for nutrient management that could be inconsistent with the recommendations of the UNRBA. The UNRBA seeks to ensure that productive programs continue in Falls and are not put at risk by seeking new and potentially more restrictive requirements which could generate considerable push back by stakeholders. Our preliminary look at the proposals that have recently been distributed have not adequately addressed our concerns. We should not let these other processes hamper the well-developed and researched UNRBA recommendations for the Falls Lake Rules readoption.

C. Modeling and Regulatory Support Status and Evaluating a Falls Lake Assessment Methodology and Site-Specific Chlorophyll-a Water Quality Standard

Item Summary (Alix Matos): Modeling files and reports for the WARMF watershed model, WARMF lake model, EFDC lake model, and statistical/Bayesian lake model have been submitted to the Division of Water Resources (DWR) for review and approval. Modeling reports and summaries of key findings are available at <https://unrba.org/resource-library>. Email communications from DWR staff indicate the agency has no additional comments on these reports and accepts them as the final submittals. The Executive Director has requested a formal statement from DWR as specified in Section (5)(f)(iii) of the [Falls Lake Rules](#) which require that "the Division shall assure that the supplemental modeling is conducted in accordance with the quality assurance requirements of the Division." The UNRBA submitted and the Division approved the [UNRBA Quality Assurance Project Plan](#) for this purpose. This submittal completes the documentation of the work completed before the UNRBA developed its recommendations which were made based on the conclusions reached in the modeling evaluation. No issues with the formal review step are expected. The UNRBA's re-examination effort form the basis of our proposed revisions to the Falls Lake Rules.

These models are providing ongoing support to our efforts to develop draft Falls Lake Rules. We are currently running scenarios related to the proposed rules we are developing to review potential water quality effects of the recommendations on the lake's quality.

The UNRBA continues to focus on our primary priority: coordination with DWR and stakeholders in the development of a revised management strategy through the rules readoption process. Timing is important in assessing the current "use-support" processes used by DWR, and the Purpose and Scope workgroup decided to address 303(d) assessment in the draft rule. We continue to keep development of a site-specific chlorophyll-a standard as an important long-term goal, but we do not want to deter moving forward with revised rules and a Falls specific 303(d) assessment methodology. Dr. Martin Lebo is coordinating with the statistical modeling effort on his continued evaluation of a Falls Lake-specific assessment methodology and site-specific chlorophyll-a. We greatly appreciate that the NC Collaboratory is provided additional funding to Dr. Nathan Hall to provide input on some of the ecological processes in Falls Lake (including algal species and edibility of higher trophic level organisms) related to development of a Falls Lake-specific assessment methodology and site-specific chlorophyll-a.

D. Communications Support

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The work with DWR on the revised Falls Lake Rules continues and will have additional meetings to gather input from NC Collaboratory staff, researchers, and representatives of NGOs. As we have continued to do, we encourage our jurisdictions to identify additional communication needs and to request support from the UNRBA team as needed. Recent, ongoing, or upcoming activities are noted below:

- Status updates to the EMC
- Planning a meeting with the new Secretary of DEQ
- Planning a meeting with staff from the NC Office of State Budget Management

The “open” nature of all UNRBA meetings remains a key component of a transparent communications approach. 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. We also continue to look to our engaged membership representatives to use materials developed to help with communication within their jurisdictions. We remain available to assist with any presentations/meetings that are set up to discuss Falls Lake and the status of our work and the rules readoption process.

E. Ongoing Discussions/Issues:

Item Summary (Forrest Westall):

- Ongoing NC State University UNRBA and Jordan Lake One Water research study
- Impacts on implementation of nutrient requirements in light of PFAS/PFOS and other emerging requirements on wastewater management costs to local governments

F. Closing Comments—Board Members and Chair

Next PFC Meeting: July 1, 2025, 9:30 AM to 10:30, VIRTUAL ONLY

Next Board Meeting: September 17, 2025, 9:30 AM to Noon

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

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- If you dial in through your phone, mute your computer 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**
- UNRBA meetings are open meetings; however, please **limit the discussion to UNRBA Board Members** to facilitate moving through action items