

## **Path Forward Committee (PFC) and Rules Review Meeting Agenda**

February 3, 2026, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM

### **VIRTUAL MEETING**

Note: Instructions for this virtual meeting are provided on the last page of this agenda.

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

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

**A. PFC Meeting Formats**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The PFC Co-Chairs have decided to hold virtual PFC meetings when the information is primarily status updates. For meetings where significant discussion is anticipated, the meetings will be in person with a remote option. This is particularly true when key decisions are before the PFC or recommendations to the Board are required. The February meeting is a status update. The March meeting is anticipated to be in person to facilitate discussion of the FY2027 budget and with some expectation that significant updated rule language may be available following coordination with the Division of Water Resources (DWR).

**B. Status and Timeline of Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The UNRBA continues to work with DWR on a rule package that can be submitted to the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) Water Quality Committee (WQC). The UNRBA draft rules reviewed by the Board in October 2025 have not been revised. DWR indicates they agree in concept with the compromises that the UNRBA made with DWR leadership on October 7, 2025, regarding key provisions of the Purpose and Scope Rule, Existing Managed Lands Rule, and New Development Rule. UNRBA's October drafts reflect these key concepts, and DWR indicates they are considering the October drafts in their work products. The UNRBA support staff met with DWR staff in December to discuss the Existing Managed Lands Rule and New Development Rule. We are scheduling meetings with DWR staff to discuss the Purpose and Scope Rule. We will provide an update on the recent meetings and summarize progress or issues that have developed.

The UNRBA has been meeting with DEQ/DWR leadership and the EMC Chair since September 2025 to discuss the Wastewater Rule and work toward a compromise that can provide the WWTPs with enough nitrogen allocation to cover at least the next rules readoption cycle (10 to 15 years). Regardless of the results of these discussions and language in updated drafts from DWR, the UNRBA members with WWTPS will have to decide whether or not to accept the compromise that DWR is willing to accept. The whole of the UNRBA (recommendation from the PFC and decision by the Board) will consider the revised rules coming from these discussions. During the October 7, 2025, meeting, DWR requested documentation of the amount of nitrogen load reduction that has been achieved since the baseline year (2006). UNRBA developed this documentation which shows a reduction of nearly 400,000 pounds per year of nitrogen since the baseline year (2006). Forrest distributed a revised version of this document to the Board ahead of this meeting (revisions do not change the overall findings). The UNRBA also met with DEQ and DWR Leadership and the EMC Chair on December 2, 2025, and January 13, 2026, to continue discussions. During the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, DWR requested information

to justify why additional nitrogen load allocation would be needed above the baseline loads to cover the next ten years (before the next rules readoption cycle which occurs every ten years). We worked with the WWTP operators on this document and provided it to DWR ahead of the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and to the Board ahead of this meeting. During the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, DWR requested additional information to justify the flow projections based on population growth and planning documents. We are continuing to work with the WWTP operators and others on compiling their planning information. Forrest will provide an updated version of the projections document to the PFC and Board when available. We will update the PFC on our progress. The UNRBA has a meeting scheduled with DEQ and DWR Leadership and the EMC Chair on February 2, 2026, to continue discussions. We will provide comments related to the outcomes of that meeting.

On November 12, 2025, the UNRBA provided an information item to the EMC Water Quality Committee (WQC) regarding progress on the rules readoption process from the perspective of the UNRBA and discussed the status of approval of the UNRBA Models. The UNRBA submitted the modeling reports for the watershed and lake models to EMC and DWR for review and approval in December 2023 and December 2024, respectively. DWR provided email confirmation that the models were developed in accordance with the DWR-Approved UNRBA Modeling Quality Assurance Project Plan in July 2024 and February 2025. The UNRBA developed a [summary](#) of the re-examination efforts relative to the requirements of the adaptive management provision of the Falls Rules. This document demonstrates the extensive effort that the UNRBA conducted to build updated scientific tools and incorporate feedback from stakeholders into the re-examination process and revised Falls Rules. The UNRBA has not asked the EMC to approve its models at this time. We may request approval at a later date if this action is beneficial to the objectives of the UNRBA.

#### **Background on the Status of the Falls Rules Readoption Process:**

As a reminder and per [NC Session Law 2018-5](#), the Falls Lake Rules Readoption process was triggered by the NC Collaboratory report submittal in December 2023 and the UNRBA submittal of the [UNRBA Concepts and Principles for the Reexamination](#) and [Consensus Principles II](#). These UNRBA documents were sent to NC Division of Water Resources (DWR) and the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) on November 22, 2023. The UNRBA submitted their [final watershed model report](#) in December 2023 and [final lake model report](#) in December 2024. DWR has responded that the reports have been accepted and approved under the reexamination provision of the Falls Lake Rules. Relative to rule readoption work, the UNRBA initiated an informal stakeholder process started in December 2024 with four rule [workgroups](#). A summary of the drafts produced by the workgroups and later updated by the PFC and stakeholders has been discussed by the PFC at their May 6, 2025; June 3, 2025; July 1, 2025; August 5, 2025; September 2, 2025; October 7, 2025; November 4, 2025; and December 2, 2025, meetings. On June 24, 2025, DWR hosted a Falls Rules Readoption Stakeholder Meeting. DWR provided the UNRBA with their draft rules on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Director, support team, and PFC Co-Chairs met with DWR staff on August 28<sup>th</sup>, August 29<sup>th</sup>, and September 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss DWR's drafts. In September, the UNRBA updated their draft rules to include the DWR language that was consistent with Consensus Principles II. The October drafts were updated to reflect the compromises discussed at the October 7, 2025, meeting with DWR Leadership. As of December 2025, additional revisions have not been made to the UNRBA's draft rules. The principles and concepts outlined in our October draft rules form the basis for our input

to DWR on their latest draft rules that we are working through following the leadership meetings with DWR/DEQ/EMC. The UNRBA has met and exceeded the requirements for consideration of the UNRBA's recommendations for revised Falls Lake Rules. We have been clear in our communications to DWR, DEQ, and the EMC.

## II. **Discuss Budget for FY2027**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The UNRBA continues development of draft rules for Falls Lake and fiscal information to support the regulatory impact analysis. In FY2027 (July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027), the UNRBA will continue to support this process including presentation of the rule package to the EMC (hopefully with DWR), a formal comment period, public hearing(s), and ultimately readoption of the rules (likely in the mid-2027). For FY2027, the UNRBA needs to provide sufficient funding for this ongoing effort and the objective of securing appropriate, revised Falls Lake Rules. As has been demonstrated in the ongoing delays of achieving rules, it is essential that the members of the UNRBA have a distinct and insistent voice to DWR, DEQ, and the EMC. Furthermore, alternate strategies to achieve this goal must be considered by the UNRBA Team and for the Team to provide technical and policy direction to the Legal Team. If the normal, agency-managed, rules readoption process continues to drag and not provide a reasonable solution, the UNRBA will have to seek more effective approaches. The success of achieving realistic and implementable revised rules is essential to governments and people in this watershed. In order to efficiently use the resources of our members while continuing this essential work to support the UNRBA, as discussed at the [November 19, 2025, Board meeting](#), unallocated funds from the FY2025 and FY2026 Modeling and Regulatory Support and Communications Support project can be used to offset dues for FY2027. The level of funding set aside for modeling was not fully expended in FY2025. It is likely that the full FY2026 budget will also not be fully expended because charges did not begin until January 2026 (instead of July 2025 as originally contracted). UNRBA Board members requested a budget amount to consider during the local government annual budgeting process. During the November 19, 2025, meeting, the Board discussed a planning-level total budget of \$769,400 for FY2027 which would be reduced by \$160,000 from anticipated unspent FY2025 and FY2026 funds, for a dues funding level of \$609,400. At the January 21, 2026, the Personnel Committee presented their preliminary recommendations to the Board which are still being finalized. The recommendations will be finalized prior to the March PFC meeting when the PFC plans to finalize their recommendation for the FY2027 budget and bring a final recommendation to the Board at their March meeting. As soon as a final funding level is ready for recommendation, it will be provided to the PFC and Board for consideration and use in budget planning. At the January Board meeting, the Co-Chair of the PFC, Michelle Woolfolk, indicated that the PFC could consider shifts in the program budget for FY2027 to help fund an increase in the Executive Director budget. The developments that occur on this question will be summarized at the February PFC meeting.

After the rules are submitted to the EMC and the formal stakeholder process is underway, the UNRBA will transition to development of a water quality protection plan (WQPP) or a "program plan" for implementation and to provide guidance on how the rule requirements can be met. If we use a WQPP (which is the route in the October UNRBA rule draft) this plan will include the elements listed in [§ 143-214.14](#) including coordination of monitoring in the watershed. The UNRBA will likely need to design and implement some level of monitoring in the future. This would require updates to the previously developed monitoring program and monitoring quality assurance project plan. In the future, the UNRBA will need to provide reporting and assessment of the data to

support the evaluation of changes in the watershed. The UNRBA will also work with DWR and stakeholders on development of a site-specific chlorophyll-a standard for Falls Lake as described in [§ 143-214.3](#). These future efforts were included in the five-year budget projections discussed by the Board in November.

**III. Planning PFC Workshop on Best Practices for Implementing Falls Rules**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): Granville County and Wake County have requested a comparison and best practices across local governments for their implementation of stormwater rules and regulatory requirements within the Falls Lake Watershed. Earlier this year, the PFC discussed a workshop approach for UNRBA members to discuss and gather information. We will continue planning for this workshop which will occur after we get to a more stable status on the rules' drafting process with DWR resulting hopefully in a set of draft rules to the WQC that the UNRBA can "accept."

**IV. Communications**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The work with DWR on the revised Falls Lake Rules continues. 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:

- Reviewing existing information for jurisdictional use in developing presentations and handouts
  - [Infographic](#)
  - [Fact Facts](#)
  - Presentation materials as requested
  - These documents were printed and provided at the January Board meeting
- DWR established a [list serve for Falls Lake](#)
- Coordinating with DWR on an all stakeholders meeting prior to submission of rules to the EMC
- Providing status updates to the EMC
- Planning for a Falls Lake rules status presentation at the Water Resources Research Institute Annual Conference March 25 and 26, 2026
- Planning for a workshop for UNRBA members on implementation of Falls New Development Rules

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.

**V. Other Items**

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

Upcoming meetings

**Next PFC Meeting Scheduled for March 3, 2026; 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM**

**Next Board Meeting Scheduled for March 18, 2026; 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM**

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

### Remote Access Instructions for PFC Meetings

Equipment Type	Access Information	Notes
Computers with microphones and speakers	<a href="#">Join Microsoft Teams Meeting</a> <b>Please mute your microphone unless you want to provide input.</b>	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	<a href="#">Join Microsoft Teams Meeting</a> (888) 404-2493 Passcode: 371 817 961# <b>Please mute your phone unless you want to provide input.</b>	Follow instructions above. <b>Turn down your computer speakers, mute your computer microphone</b> , 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. <b>Please mute your phone unless you want to provide input.</b>

#### 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.