

Path Forward Committee (PFC) and Rules Review Meeting Agenda

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

Butner Town Hall with Remote Option

Note: This is an in-person meeting.

Instructions for remote access 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

II. Status and Timeline of Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The UNRBA has continued to cooperate with DWR on a rule package that has a level of acceptance by the UNRBA that supports submittal to the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) Water Quality Committee (WQC). UNRBA (Board Chair, Co-Chairs of the PFC, and the Executive Director and team) and DWR met to discuss key provisions of the Purpose and Scope Rule, Existing Managed Lands Rule, and New Development Rule on October 7, 2025. In October, the UNRBA revised its draft rules based on this discussion, our understanding of the agreements achieved, and redistributed to the PFC, Board, and DWR. DWR referenced the UNRBA October drafts in their revisions to the drafts they had provided in August 2025. Meetings were held in December to discuss DWR's draft Existing Managed Lands Rule and New Development Rule and in February to discuss DWR's draft Purpose and Scope Rule. DWR provided updated drafts of these three rules in February along with their proposed Agriculture Rule. Today, we will provide an update on the recent drafts and summarize progress or concerns that have developed.

Leading up to the UNRBA's work with DWR staff, the UNRBA leadership 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 wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) with enough nitrogen allocation to cover at least the next rules readoption cycle (10 to 15 years). These meetings have also reviewed the status of updating the other rules based on the meetings in September and October. 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 put forward. As of the date of this agenda, DWR has yet to provide a proposed draft of the Wastewater Rule they are recommending for readoption.

Today, the PFC will consider DWR's draft rules, as they currently exist, resulting from these discussions. The feedback from the PFC ahead of the March 18th Board meeting is critical. We are seeking the reaction of our full membership to the current content and direction of the draft rules developed by DWR.

Relative to the Wastewater Rule and 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 (shared with the PFC previously) which shows a reduction of nearly 400,000 pounds per year of nitrogen since the baseline year (2006). These reductions are the result of several factors, including reduction actions in the watershed, changes in air deposition, and reduced nutrient loading from lake sediments resulting from lower nutrient loading inputs from the watershed. Following DWR's review of that

information (with really no feedback from DWR or any alternate information from the Division about alternate calculation methods), the UNRBA leadership met with DEQ and DWR Leadership and the EMC Chair on December 2, 2025, and January 13, 2026, to continue discussions. DWR noted that the conditions in the rules would need to be evaluated in 10 years following this readoption, as required by the General Assembly (environmental rules must be reviewed every 10 years for applicability, continuation, or modification). The UNRBA and our members with WWTPs previously provided information on the need for increased nitrogen allocation moving into the future. During the December 2nd meeting, DWR requested additional information to justify why more nitrogen load allocation would be needed above the 2006 baseline loads to cover the next ten years. We worked with the WWTP operators on this document and provided it to DWR ahead of the January 13th meeting and to the Board ahead of their January meeting. During the January 13th meeting, DWR requested additional information to justify the flow projections based on population growth and planning documents. We again worked with the WWTP operators to compile their planning information and engineering studies. Forrest provided an updated version of the projections document to the PFC and Board. The UNRBA met with DEQ and DWR Leadership on February 2, 2026, to continue discussions. DWR indicated they would provide a draft Wastewater Rule for our review in mid-February. We will provide a status update during the meeting, and a draft once received.

The draft rules that we have from DWR (Purpose and Scope, New Develop, Existing Managed Lands, and Agriculture) were provided to the PFC ahead of this meeting. We will do a quick overview of key parts of these rules and discuss concerns about the current rule language. It will not be possible to review these in detail during the meeting, but PFC members will be encouraged to provide comments to Forrest and Alix.

The UNRBA comments provided on the most recent DWR draft rules and sent to you before this meeting represent the proposed response of the UNRBA to DWR's proposals. [We will be seeking input from the PFC at the meeting.](#) We will be looking for your input to help develop a position to carry to the State's leadership team that we have been working with (DWR/DEQ/EMC Chair). The UNRBA team has done its best to provide constructive input on DWR's draft Falls Lake Rules. However, we have been clear in our communications to DWR, DEQ, and the EMC that rules that do not provide fair, science-based, technologically achievable, and realistic nutrient management strategy requirements for implementation in the Falls Lake Watershed are not acceptable.

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 the models developed 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. At the May 2025 meeting of the EMC, we learned that DWR had begun preparation of a set of draft Falls Lake Rules. No notice was provided to the UNRBA that this effort was underway, nor was there any information provided to the Association on how DWR planned to use the information developed during the extensive workgroup process to provide preliminary draft (draft-draft) rules. A rule readoption status update was provided at the January 6, 2026, PFC meeting.

On June 24, 2025, DWR hosted a Falls Rules Readoption Stakeholder Meeting. DWR provided the UNRBA with their draft rules on August 25th. The Executive Director, support team, and PFC Co-Chairs met with DWR staff on August 28th, August 29th, and September 16th 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 and the concepts outlined in the draft rules developed through the workgroup process. The October drafts were updated to reflect the compromises discussed at the October 7, 2025, meeting with DWR Leadership. 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.

III. **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 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, vetted through the PFC and the Board so that the Team can 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 the ability of governments and people in this watershed to operate and provide services and support to its citizens. 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 meeting on November 19, 2025, 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. During the meeting on 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 will review. 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. An update will be provided at the 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 of the readopted rules 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. An effective and fair monitoring plan must include commitment from DWR to provide an acceptable level of ongoing monitoring for the lake and the watershed. The previous lake loading tributary monitoring program has not been supported by DWR for several years. An effective monitoring effort will require updates to the previously developed monitoring program and monitoring quality assurance project plan. The role of the UNRBA in this effort will need further clarification depending on the final resolution of the readopted Falls Lake Rules. 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](#), either through a readopted rule provision or through a specific rule-making process. These future efforts were included in the five-year budget projections discussed by the Board in November.

IV. 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.” This will be an excellent opportunity to share information and go over the procedures being used within the watershed. With the recent General Assembly action that revised new development requirements for single and duplex lots in the watershed that are not part of a common plan of development, it will be important for jurisdictions to be consistent in how projects of these types are handled.

V. 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
- 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 26, 2026
- Planning for a workshop for UNRBA members on implementation of Falls New Development Rules
- Planning a meeting with staff from the NC Office of State Budget Management in coordination with DWR

- Planning additional meeting(s) with EPA

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.

VI. Other Items

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

Upcoming meetings

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

Next PFC Meeting Scheduled for April 7, 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 |
|--|---|---|
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| 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. |

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