

**Path Forward Committee (PFC)**  
April 7, 2026, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM  
**Remote Only 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 seek cooperation with DWR on a rule package that has a level of acceptance by the UNRBA that would support 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), the Chair of the EMC, and leadership from the NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Division of Water Resources (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 points of agreement achieved, and redistributed this draft 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 summarize comments received from the PFC and Board during and following their March meetings.**

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 any 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.

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 current pending readoption, as required by the General Assembly (all 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and to the Board ahead of their January meeting. During the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, DWR again requested additional information. They asked for more justification on the flow projections based on population growth and planning documents. In response, we 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.

#### **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 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 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. Review UNRBA Presentation from the 2026 WRRRI Annual Conference**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): Forrest presented on the status of the Falls Lake Rules Readoption Process at the 2026 Water Resources Research Institute (WRRRI) Annual Conference. He will review the presentation during the meeting.

**IV. FY2027 Budget and Contract Process**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The Board approved the budget for FY2027 and sources of funding proposed by the PFC at their March meeting. The Executive Director will work with the contractors to develop draft contracts and scopes of work for review by the PFC at their May and June meetings. These contracts include the Brown and Caldwell contract for the Modeling and Regulatory Support and Communications Support Project and the WSP contract for subject matter expert services provided by Dr. Martin Lebo. Following review by the PFC, the contracts and scopes of work will be finalized for approval by the Board at their June meeting.

**V. 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.

**VI. 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
- Coordinating with DWR on an all stakeholders meeting prior to submission of rules to the EMC
- Providing status updates to the EMC
- Provided 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.

**VII. Other Items**

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

**Upcoming meetings**

**Next PFC Meeting Scheduled for May 5, 2026; 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM**

**Next Board Meeting Scheduled for May 20, 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.