# Path Forward Committee (PFC)

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

**Virtual Meeting Only**

Instructions for remote option 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. Review UNRBA IAIA Annual Summary Report**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The fifth year of the Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach (IAIA) ended June 30, 2026. At the request of the UNRBA, DWR extended the program for five years or until the Falls Rules are readopted. IAIA participants have submitted their annual reports for FY2025-2026 to NC Division of Water Resources (DWR) (John Huisman) and copied Forrest and Alix. The individual reports have been compiled to develop the UNRBA Annual Summary Report which will be reviewed and considered for approval by the UNRBA Compliance Group Committee at their November 18, 2026, meeting. The UNRBA Annual Summary Report is due to DWR by November 30th each year. The PFC will review the preliminary draft annual summary report during the meeting and discuss potential updates to the spreadsheet-based reporting template. The PFC will also discuss renaming the program once the Rules are readopted, potentially retaining the IAIA acronym (e.g., Investment Alternative Implementation Approach).

**III. Discuss Budget Approach for FY2028**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): The Board has requested a budget estimate for FY2028 at their November meeting. The Personnel Committee met October 26th and discussed an approach for developing a transition plan and budget for FY2028 that considers the ongoing commitments of the UNRBA, the status of the rules readoption process, and the need to position the Association for implementation of new rules. The transition plan will be discussed during a Closed Session of the Board on November 18th to receive feedback from Directors. For planning purposes, the Personnel Committee asked us to use the FY2027 budget as a placeholder. The Personnel Committee will refine the estimate for presentation to the Board at their January 2027 meeting. Using the FY2027 budget as a placeholder is conservative (the FY2028 budget will not be higher).

**IV. 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 NC Environmental Management Commission (EMC) Water Quality Committee (WQC). On July 20, 2026, UNRBA member representatives met with DWR to discuss the outstanding issues on the draft Falls Rules, and this meeting was summarized for the PFC in the August meeting slides. The PFC discussed the meeting and outstanding items during the August and September UNRBA PFC meetings, and John Huisman provided updates on DWR's internal discussions. On October 14th, John provided updated draft rules which will be discussed during the November PFC meeting. We wanted to provide preliminary responses to the updated drafts and seek input from the UNRBA legal team. That information is being provided to the PFC members ahead of the meeting. We will be requesting input from the PFC on an appropriate schedule for their review and comments on the latest drafts. Input will be compiled and re-circulated with the PFC as needed and then provided to DWR ahead of a meeting to discuss. We realize that this process is likely to take some time and do not want to provide any final

comments until the PFC has weighed in. We do not anticipate a Falls Status update at the November EMC meeting; the EMC and committee meeting agendas have not been posted as of October 28, 2026.

*For additional information and background on the history of the Falls Rules Readoption Process, please see the last page(s) of this agenda.*

**V. Information Sharing of Best Practices for Implementing Falls New Development Rules**

Item Summary (Forrest Westall): Granville County and Wake County identified potential benefits of comparing best practices across local governments for their implementation of stormwater rules and regulatory requirements for new development within the Falls Lake Watershed. In August, the PFC established a workgroup to discuss and gather information for information sharing. The New Development Workgroup met in September to discuss the best approach for providing information on the topics compiled thus far. Workgroup members developed preliminary draft content in October and will discuss in November. The workgroup will also discuss the best way to distribute this information to the UNRBA members.

**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 and Fact Facts
  - UNRBA website: https://unrba.org/ and resource library: https://unrba.org/resource-library
  - 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
- 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 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 Board Meeting Scheduled for November 18, 2026:
*Closed Session: 9:30 AM to 10:15 AM*
*Regular Session: 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM*

Next PFC Meeting Scheduled for December 1, 2026; 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
**This schedule may be revised, and notices will be provided about any change.**

## Background on the Status of the Falls:

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. This session law states that "provisions of the Falls Lake rules which establish Stage I reduction actions and goals shall remain in effect until the Falls Lake rules, as modified under subsection (d) of this section, become effective. The due dates for reduction actions and goals set to be completed by December 31, 2020, and the reduction actions and goals identified as Stage II in the Falls Lake rules are delayed until the Falls Lake rules, as modified under subsection (d) of this section, become effective."

The UNRBA submitted these two documents to the 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.

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. For a summary of the comments received from the PFC and Board during and following their March meetings see the April PFC meeting slides.

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 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 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 provided a draft Wastewater Rule for our review on April 22, 2026. The PFC discussed this latest draft at the May 2026 meeting. Member representatives from the UNRBA met with DWR on July 20, 2026, to continue refining the draft rules. The UNRBA PFC and Board discussed this meeting and follow-up input from DWR at their August and September meetings. DWR provided revised drafts for UNRBA review in October 2026.

# Remote Access Instructions for PFC Meetings

| Equipment Type | Access Information | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Computers with microphones and speakers | Join Microsoft Teams Meeting<br>**Please mute your microphone unless you want to provide input.** | 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 | Join Microsoft Teams Meeting<br>(888) 404-2493<br>Passcode: 371 817 961#<br>**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<br>Passcode: 371 817 961# | Dial the toll-free number and enter the passcode.<br>**Please mute your phone unless you want to provide input.** |

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