



## UNC Coastal Studies Institute

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Release: Immediate

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Date: November 1, 2005

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### **OUTER BANKS HYDROLOGY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RELEASES FINDINGS REPORT**

MANTEO- The Outer Banks Hydrology Management Committee, a group appointed by Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight to review issues related to flooding and stormwater problems facing Dare and Currituck counties, today released its final report. The report discusses numerous problems currently facing the Outer Banks, such as roadway flooding and swimming advisories for coastal waters. It also reviews causes for these problems such as the rapid pace of development, inadequate management programs, and difficulties associated with inter-governmental coordination. The report outlines a framework of recommendations for conducting both innovative and sustainable stormwater management as well as addresses areas needing routine maintenance.

Senator Basnight created the committee after he grew increasingly concerned about the impacts of stormwater facing the Outer Banks.

“Improving management of our community’s stormwater run-off is vital to protecting property, infrastructure, roads and the environment,” said Basnight. “I appreciate the hard work of the Study Committee and look forward to continuing to work with all in our county to address this serious issue.”

The committee’s findings include several recommendations for communities and state agencies. Among them, communities are encouraged to reclaim their roadside drainage systems to improve storage and filtration capacity and to develop comprehensive guidelines for both landscaping and water conservation to minimize runoff and encourage water reuse. State and local governments should remove barriers and develop incentives for the use of low impact development (LID). They should also improve inter-agency communication and coordination to reduce the volume of water discharging into coastal water via storm water outfalls in addition to providing solutions to current inconsistencies in policies and practices regarding septic tank siting and cistern use.

Other recommendations include the possible formation of stormwater utility districts and an oversight committee supported by a combination of state and local resources to pursue funding sources and mechanisms to handle the costs of the proposed remedies that are implemented.

The study committee, convened by Senator Basnight, was tasked with the challenge of developing a set of recommendations to address the pressing and negative effects of excess storm water and runoff. The committee is comprised of representatives from Dare and Currituck county governments, all the towns in Northern Dare, the N.C. Division of Water Quality, N.C. Division of Environmental Health, N.C. Department of Transportation, N.C. Homebuilders and Realtors Associations and the N.C. Coastal Federation. The committee held eleven meetings over 45 hours and heard 15 speakers on a variety of topics relating to the hydrology of the Outer Banks.

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“Senator Basnight’s foresight in addressing the growing stormwater issues of the Outer Banks communities provides us with an opportunity to be proactive about addressing these problems,” said Dr. Nancy White, the committee chair and director of the UNC Coastal Studies Institute. “The dedicated and expert members of this committee have compiled a document that gives the Outer Banks an opportunity to be at the forefront of innovative hydrologic and environmental management.”

For questions about the report’s findings or recommendations, please contact Nancy White at 252-475-3663. To receive a copy of the report, please contact Marie Magee or John McCord at the Coastal Studies Institute at 252-475-3663 or by e-mail at [mmagee@csi.northcarolina.edu](mailto:mmagee@csi.northcarolina.edu) or [jmccord@csi.northcarolina.edu](mailto:jmccord@csi.northcarolina.edu). The report will be posted on the Coastal Studies Institute’s new Web site by the end of November.

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