

CSRWG 26 June 2008

Hooper

To: George Givens
Coastal Stormwater Rules Working Group

June 20, 2008

I want to thank you for your efforts to bring to conclusion an update of the Coastal Stormwater rules. I am writing as president of Carteret County Crossroads, a local environmental group with 300+ members. We feel you have conducted a very thorough and effective review of the proposed rules. Needed clarifications were made, language was simplified, and the rules were examined in their entirety. Numerous position papers were reviewed and studied. Every voice was given an opportunity to "make their case." You accomplished this within a very tight timeframe and we thank you.

We commend the group for maintaining flexibility in the rules. True innovation will take place when local builders, contractors, home owners, landscapers, and engineers develop methods to meet the intent and spirit of the rules. They will find a way to build a home or business so that the revised rules will have the least possible negative economic impact. Clarification and discussion will take place between DWQ staff and builders, on the ground, on site as they figure out how "to get it done". The bottom line is that there will be more rainwater retained on site and fewer pollutants will be flushed into our extremely valuable estuarine waters

I am also writing as a commercial fisherman, one who has produced farm raised clams from the estuarine waters of Carteret County, NC since 1985. My clams are distributed solely in North Carolina from Cape Hatteras to the Triangle. I am currently involved in a study with researchers from the Duke Marine Lab to investigate water quality decline in Midden's Creek, the area where I grow clams. In this area, increased acreage was closed to shellfishing and the closure line moved closer to my operation. In 2007, the waters of creek were extensively sampled. In general there is a tremendous increase in fecal coliform counts after significant rainfall events (>1 1/2" in a 24 hour period). This year we are working with waterfront homeowners to help them make land use practice changes to attempt to reverse water quality trends. We are talking with homeowners about the same set of options as the revised rules. You would be amazed at the creativity of the residents; they understand the problem and are willing to help.

As we say in my trade, it's time to go to the dock, tie her up, wash her down, and walk away knowing you did your best. Good job, may your good work prevail.

Thank you,

Mark Hooper
President, Carteret County Crossroads
Owner, Hooper Family Seafood