



PENDERWATCH & CONSERVANCY

The Advocate

Responsible Advocates for the Environment

Pender County, North Carolina

Winter 2010

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visit us onLine.*

www.penderwatch.org

From the President

As the President of the Pender-Watch organization, I want to close the 2009 year and begin 2010 with a message of hope.

It is easy to get lost, or to feel helpless, when faced with the magnitude of disastrous events taking place right now in our global environment. But we at PenderWatch know that we can—and should—all take part in the fight for our planet. We know that every action, no matter how small, counts. After all, often the battles most spectacularly won are those we fight in our own backyards.

We are simply asking for your involvement—at ANY level! We can show you how to become active in your own community in a meaningful way, by participating in any number of our diverse programs, including the following:

1. Engaging and educating our youth to take stewardship of their planet
2. Grass root movements through our web site
3. Rejuvenating and harnessing the unbelievable power of Oysters in our Pender waters
4. Advocating our government and industry towards accountable standards that we can live within our county
5. Participating with our county government to make sure that the

environment is represented in sustainable growth



6. Monitoring our coastal waters

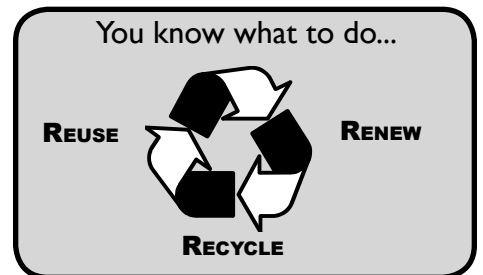
7. Strategic planning and organization participation

Please come to this year's annual membership meeting on Monday, February 22nd at 6:30 p.m. at the Hampstead Community Building, 14435 Highway 17, to learn more.

PenderWatch strives to preserve the natural environment of Pender County for current and future generations by acting now! We will help you to harness whatever resources you might have available, to put those efforts back into the edification of our county and, subsequently, our planet.

You CAN make a difference. We can help. Thank you.

- Jim Milne



PenderWatch Youth Program inspires

Editors Note: The PenderWatch environmental youth program is in its second year of development. The program was designed to teach “hands-on” science inquiry to our local student body by taking them out of the classroom and into the field. Here they collect water quality data on a weekly basis and learn firsthand the different environmental influences that affect the recruitment and settlement of baby oysters, known as “spat,” in our local estuaries. The reason this information is so important is the alarming rate at which our oyster reefs are disappearing and the constant decline of water quality due to their loss.

Below is an account of the program through the eyes of one of our students, Courtney Weaver. We are proud of all our participants and are encouraged by Courtney’s story. If you are interested in the program and would like to make a donation or join PenderWatch in the stewardship of our local environment, please call Jim Milne at 910.352.3681 or go to our website: penderwatch.org.

- Pat Donovan-Potts



Courtney Weaver with Board member Pat Donovan-Potts at the PenderWatch Youth Program party.

The PenderWatch Youth Program is where kids from South Topsail Elementary, Topsail Middle, and Topsail High School take turns collecting data on oyster spat. I got started with the program in fifth grade with a group assembled by my teacher Mr. Charlie Baker. This is my second year participating in the program, and I have learned a lot and had fun while learning.

I think more kids should be involved because they would be outside having fun while helping the community understand the purpose of this project. With this project we hope people will see that many children are interested in protecting our coastal water and resources.

What we do in the program is done after school, so we really thank the teachers that are part of this project who volunteer their time to help us. When getting started at a site, we drop a spat collector into the water and leave it for six weeks. Along with this we test the air and water temperatures, the salinity and pH of the water. We keep a log of our data at each site, and the data is sent to UNCW’s marine center for their use and is also put onto the PenderWatch website.

I enjoy this program very much and thank all the teachers and volunteers that make this program happen. I will stay in this program as long as I can for two reasons: one, it is helping people understand how important our coastal resources are, and two, because I love it!

-Courtney Weaver

Youth Program participants



PenderWatch Is Major Player in Anti-Titan Campaign

Jack Spruill and Allie Sheffield of PenderWatch's Titan Cement Committee spent the past year hard at work against the proposed Titan Cement kiln and quarry.

Titan wants to build the nation's 4th largest cement manufacturing plant and quarry in Castle Hayne, on the border of New Hanover and Pender Counties. The proposed kiln will produce over one million tons of toxic emissions, and the company wants to use over 1,200 acres of wetlands adjoining the river to mine limestone to burn in the kiln. Most likely, expansion of the quarry operation in future years will all be just over the county border in Pender County, near Hampstead.

PenderWatch was one of the first organizations to oppose Titan, and we are proud that we are one of the leaders of StopTitan, the regional coalition against Titan. Jack and Allie have spent the past

year lobbying NC legislators; fundraising, speaking to individuals, groups and organizations about Titan and the threat it presents, meeting with state regulators, testifying before the federal EPA, the Pender County Commissioners, and the NC Division of Air Quality, and much more. We are very proud that the fish fry, co-hosted by PenderWatch and Atlantic Seafood in Hampstead, raised almost \$4,000 to hire experts to assist our lawyers in the fight against Titan.

Without a doubt, the emotional high point of the year for Titan opponents was the Division of Air Quality (DAQ) hearing on October 20. It was attended by over 1,500 people, most of whom wore red to signify their position against Titan. Hundreds more were turned away by the fire marshal.

At that hearing, local Titan opponents from every possible demographic group got their first

chance to officially express their views about Titan. About 130 local citizens expressed that opposition strongly and clearly. One man got a standing ovation when he told the Hearing Officer to "go back to Raleigh and tell the folks at DAQ that there are a lot of very angry people in Wilmington." Several PW officers and board members testified against the draft air permit at that hearing.

Most recently, on December 10, PenderWatch, along with the NC Coastal Federation and Cape Fear River Watch, filed a lawsuit, our first but probably not our last, in Wake County Superior Court, alleging that the state violated the law when it ruled that no SEPA environmental impact study of the Titan project is required for the state air permit.

-Allie Sheffield and
Jack Spruill

PenderWatch remains active in County Government

Pender County is blessed with a magnificent ocean coastline, beautiful rivers and streams, lush wetlands and forests, productive farmlands, and unique and varied plant and animal life. PenderWatch is working with county government to keep it that way.

PenderWatch was originally formed in 1986 as an advocacy group to encourage Pender County to develop in environmentally sensible ways. We continue to take this mandate seriously.

As the county's population has grown, however, Pender County's patchwork land use planning and permitting system has come under increasing stress.

Patrick Davenport, the county planning director, has recently led a major initiative to produce a new, first-ever Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Unified Development Ordinance. Two citizen advisory committees were appointed to help ground the process, and PenderWatch board members

Don Ellson and Allie Sheffield have been active participants.

The draft Land Use Plan is now in its final stages of approval by the County Planning Board and Board of Commissioners. It uses the county's expanding water and sewer infrastructure to guide future growth, focusing primarily on three high-growth areas – Hampstead and Scotts Hill, Rocky Point, and the US 421 industrial corridor. And it relies heavily on modern environmental concepts like Smart Growth and Low Impact Development to limit development's damage to our fragile ecology.

The next step will be the draft Development Ordinance, which will provide detailed, enforceable regulations to ensure the Land Use Plan is followed. It should be approved in April 2010. Both documents are scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2010.

When the economy improves and rampant development resumes, the county will be better

prepared. PenderWatch will watch carefully to make sure the new policies achieve our goals.

-Don Ellson

Miss Something?

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e-Notification
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We will let you know about upcoming events and speakers in a e-mail sent directly to your computer.

Send your e-mail address to **Vufinder@mac.com** to join this free service. Be sure to put "PenderWatch Notification" in the subject line.

PenderWatch Collects Old Shells To Promote New Growth

As you may already know, PenderWatch & Conservancy sponsors an active oyster shell recycling program in our county. Oyster shell recycling is very important for the growth of future generations of oysters in our community. To grow and thrive, juvenile oysters, or spat, must attach themselves to hard surfaces in the water within a few days of their conception. When we remove oysters from our Pender County waters for consumption, we also remove the many empty shells that would have provided perfect homes for these spat. It's important that we return these shells to the water, so we may provide each new generation of oysters with places to grow.

With the cooperation of several local businesses, our organization places bins in various locations throughout the county where members of our community can

bring their empty oyster and clam shells for recycling. Our volunteers then collect and bag the donated oysters, using them to build reefs in our immediate coastal waters.



The great nautical theme paintings and signage on the trailer were kindly done by Sherry Lovett's Girl Scout Troop and assisted by Desi Horton.

Previously, PenderWatch was in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in this collections process. However, when DENR began taking our recycled Pender County oysters and putting them in the waters of other

counties, our organization decided to solely, and exclusively, take control of the recycling program in our county. This way, we can ensure that the shells we collect are only going into our county's waters.

Please support oyster growth in our local coastal waters by bringing your oyster and clam shells to any of our recycling locations: Hampstead Ace Hardware, Surf City Ace Hardware, Herrings Outdoor Sports in Surf City, Atlantic Seafood Retail Market in Hampstead, Hilltop Grocery in Hampstead, and Hudson's Do It Best Hardware in Castle Hayne. We appreciate the support of these local businesses and hope that you will take advantage of the recycling opportunities they help to provide. Thank you.

- Ronald Sheffield
Oyster Shell Recycling Coordinator,
and Lorna Fertig
With Special Thanks to
Jack Spruill and David Askins

Pender County Recycles

Did you know that as of October 1st of this year, it is illegal to put plastic bottles in the trash?? You probably may not have known that this is now a state-wide law; plastic bottles must be recycled.

Many Pender County citizens want to do their part in recycling, but they are not exactly sure what can be recycled. So to assist you in your desire to help protect the environment, Melinda Knoerzer at Pender Waste & Recycling was contacted for her assistance. Below is what you need to know. Also please do not put plastic bags in the recycling bins; please dump out your bags. Reuse them if you can, and if not, then dispose of the bags properly if they cannot be salvaged. Brown corrugated cardboard goes in a separate bin at the recycling center as do metal objects other than cans.

Thanks for your help in protecting the environment Your support is greatly appreciated

Guidelines

Paper: Newspaper, Magazines, Junk Mail, Soft Cover Books, White Paper, Computer, PaperCereal Boxes, Corrugated Cardboard (No Waxed Boxes)

Glass: Clear, brown, and green glass containers (Remove lids and wash out the containers)

Plastic: Recyclable rigid plastic containers that are required to be labeled (#1-#7), that have a neck smaller than the body of the container and that accept a crew top, snap cap, or other closures: Examples include: #1 plastic containers PETE (i.e. 2-liter soft drink bottles), #2 plastic containers HDPE (i.e. plastic milk bottles) Remove lids or plastic neck-rings and wash out the containers.

Metals: Aluminum and steel (cans only). Rinse out the cans.

Got Shells?

Recycle them at:

Hampstead Ace Hardware
Surf City Ace Hardware
Herring's Outdoor Sports, Surf City
Atlantic Seafood Retail Market,
Hampstead
Hilltop Grocery, Hampstead
Hudson's Do It Best Hardware,
Castle Hayne

PenderWatch with our business partners,
recycle shells of all types for use as new
homes for baby oysters.

PenderWatch
Recycles

Adopt-A-Highway & More

For more than 20 years PenderWatch has demonstrated its civic pride by helping Hampstead and the coastal community keep its landscapes clean and attractive. We have taken responsibility for a busy two-mile stretch of US 17 and the full length of the ocean beach on Lea/Hutaff Island, participating in both the NC-DOT's Adopt-a-Highway program and the statewide Big Sweep annual beach cleanup.

Highway 17 Adopt-A-Highway

Every three months, dedicated volunteers don their bright orange vests and take their pick-sticks and orange bags and venture out along our two-mile stretch of Highway 17 from Country Club Road south to Hoover Road to clean up litter along the highway. Volunteers who regularly assist with the clean-up are Preston & Julia Somers, Dolores & Allen Brown, Gene & Lorraine Noris, Don Ellson, David Askins, Adam Crowell and Nick & Linda Marryat. Ann Stewart and Mary Wilson are two of the newest members to join our team. Adam Crowell and Nick Marryat are our youth volunteers. The volunteers collected about 20 large bags of litter and about five bags of recyclables during our last two clean-ups held on May 30 and September 12. Many thanks go to these dedicated and hard-working volunteers who make up our highway clean-up team. You are very much appreciated. Please contact Lisa Crowell at manatee4c@yahoo.com or at 910.270.6234 if you would like to help.

Lea/Hutaff Island Beach Sweep

On October 24, 2009, nine volunteers ventured to Lea/Hutaff Island aboard four boats to perform our annual autumn beach sweep. The volunteers were pleasantly surprised that there wasn't nearly as much litter on the island as there has been in past years. The first two boats launched for Lea/Hutaff about 8:30am. The volunteers were Adam Crowell, one of our youth volunteers who regularly assists with the highway clean-up, Ronald Sheffield, Edward Babb and Lisa Crowell, beach sweep coordinator. Eddie Treusch brought his ATV to the island to haul the trash to the pick-up areas. The last boat launched for the island about 10:20am. The volunteers on board were Gerald & Fifi DeVito and Allie & Mary Sheffield. The volunteers collected eight tires, several large pieces of wood, some rusty pieces of metal, an ocean gill net and seven bags of litter and recyclables. A big thank you goes out to all these volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the beach sweep. Your support is very much appreciated. -Lisa Crowell



The *Advocate* is an authorized publication of PenderWatch & Conservancy. Questions and comments should be directed to: PenderWatch, P.O. Box 662, Hampstead, NC 28443.

President Jim Milne

Editor Alan Cradick

Layout/Design Alan Cradick

State Representative Carolyn Justice to speak at Annual Meeting

Plans are underway for our next PenderWatch Annual Meeting. Mark your calendar for the evening of Monday, February 22, 2010. Our bylaws require us to hold our annual general meeting during the first quarter of the calendar year. It will be held in the Hampstead Community Building on Highway 17.

Our featured speaker will be State Representative Carolyn Justice, who represents parts of Pender and New Hanover counties. Rep. Justice is a highly respected and leading member of the House Environmental Affairs Committee. Carolyn is also a resident of Hampstead and a longtime member of PenderWatch. We expect she will provide a fascinating briefing on the state of legislative efforts to manage North Carolina's environmental concerns.

The agenda will also include recognitions and awards for members' contributions to PenderWatch programs, as well as an update on this year's accomplishments and next year's plans. As before, the meeting will be preceded by a brief wine & cheese social. All PenderWatch members will receive invitations to the meeting as well as information on pending decisions by email or US mail. The interested public is also welcome.

We look forward to seeing you there.

PenderWatch e-Notification

Have you missed some of the exciting events, speakers and outings offered by PenderWatch?

Have you been reading about what PenderWatch has done instead of doing it?

Why not enroll in our e-mail notification service?

Send your e-mail address to Vufinder@mac.com to join this free service. Be sure to put "PenderWatch Notification" in the subject line.

PenderWatch & Conservation meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month beginning at 7 pm in the Hampstead Library. Our meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to attend.

And then she remembered...



She had forgotten to renew the family membership in PenderWatch!

PenderWatch & Conservancy
P.O.Box 662
Hampstead, NC 28443



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