

Stakeholder Perceptions of Water Quality in Jordan Lake



Grant Parkins
UNC Institute for the Environment
parkins@unc.edu

Collaborators: Kathleen Gray, Megan Rodgers, Victoria Triana



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Research Question

How do stakeholders view **water quality** in **Jordan Lake** and potential **solutions to water quality challenges**?

- 4 focus groups (n=61)
 - Triad area real estate & building industry
 - Triad area municipalities
 - Triangle area municipalities
 - Environmental nonprofit organizations
- Group interview with NC Farm Bureau Federation (n=3)



Agreement Among Groups

- Good water quality is...
 - “Non-polluted,” has “low turbidity”
 - Can be **used for drinking** and **recreation**
 - **Highly valued** by all stakeholders
- Jordan Lake is **failing to meet water quality standards**
- Achieving and maintaining good water quality is a **shared responsibility**
- **Government** should play an important role
- Concerns:
 - High **costs**
 - **Fairness** of the current system



Differing Viewpoints: Severity of the Problem

- Triad Groups & Ag
 - Impairments in **isolated** areas
 - Jordan Lake's continued **use for rec & drinking water**
- Triangle Municipalities & Environmental Group
 - Concern about **swimming**
 - **High cost to treat** water for drinking



Differing Viewpoints: Who Should Be Responsible?

- Triad Municipalities
 - **Water users** should bear more of the burden
- Triangle Municipalities & Environmental Groups
 - More responsibility on those **contributing to impairments**



Differing Viewpoints: Who Should Be Responsible? (cont'd)

- Triad Groups, Triangle Municipalities, Environmental Group
 - **Agriculture** should play key role
 - Agriculture & forestry are **not regulated**
- Agriculture
 - Currently **meeting its nutrient goals**
 - **Unfair to ask a shrinking number** of farmers to meet the same goals as larger land uses



Research Results That Could Inform Decision Making

Need scientifically based decision making in finding solutions

- How are different **land uses contributing nutrients**?
- What role does **water movement** within the lake play?
- What are the **costs** of achieving water quality goals?
- What **management strategies have worked** in other places?

