

## New Hanover Soil & Water Conservation District

# MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

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On Jan. 19, the New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors provided

comments on the proposed re-development of the New Hanover County Government Center to the Board of County Commissioners. Their comments (provided in full below) applauded county leadership for financing the ownership of the project and encouraged the implementation of Low Impact Development practices.

### Statement to NHC Board of Commissioners from NHSWCD Chair Bill Hart, Jan. 19, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

“Madam Chairwoman, members of the Board of New Hanover County Commissioners. The Board of Supervisors of the Soil and Water Conservation District appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on the proposed change in financing and ownership of a new County Government Center. In a formal action, the Board of Supervisors supports your action to take on the financing and ownership of the proposed construction of the new Government Center instead of leasing the property for 20 years. The District believes this is a vital investment into our community that shows long-term commitment for civic infrastructure that better serves its residents, and we applaud that effort.

As the Soil and Water Conservation District we offer our technical expertise and resources to help the County continue demonstrating to the public its commitment to good governance through the implementation of stormwater best management practices and Low Impact Development systems. By designing and constructing the exterior of the new County Government Center and attendant parking facility in a way that teaches and mimics natural processes in order to capture and treat on-site stormwater runoff, the government complex protects water quality, provides wildlife habitat, and creates a development that serves as a model for future public and private developments to emulate.

At District urging, the New Hanover County School Board adopted a Low Impact Development policy to compliment the LEED policy for new construction. The District Board is impressed by the favorable response of the Chief of Facilities Management to our offer to mobilize expert support. A meeting with the Design Team to begin the conversation has been scheduled. Thank you for this opportunity.”

## Watershed Wednesday Videos Receive Record Views on Social Media

Environmental educators have been turning to social media to provide accessible, safe programming during the pandemic. NHSWCD jumped in on the trend with our own Facebook video series – “Watershed Wednesday.” Since its inception in December, the videos have broken previous engagement records for the district, reaching over 4000 people.

The videos, shared regularly on the platform, have featured best management practices and watershed basics. In January, the district partnered with Cape Fear River Watch and N.C. State University’s Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department to discuss dissolved oxygen conditions and conservation practices on Wilmington’s Greenfield Lake.

In the next few weeks, each new video will focus on a unique watershed in the Wilmington area – highlighting natural and man-made features that affect the health of the surrounding ecosystem.

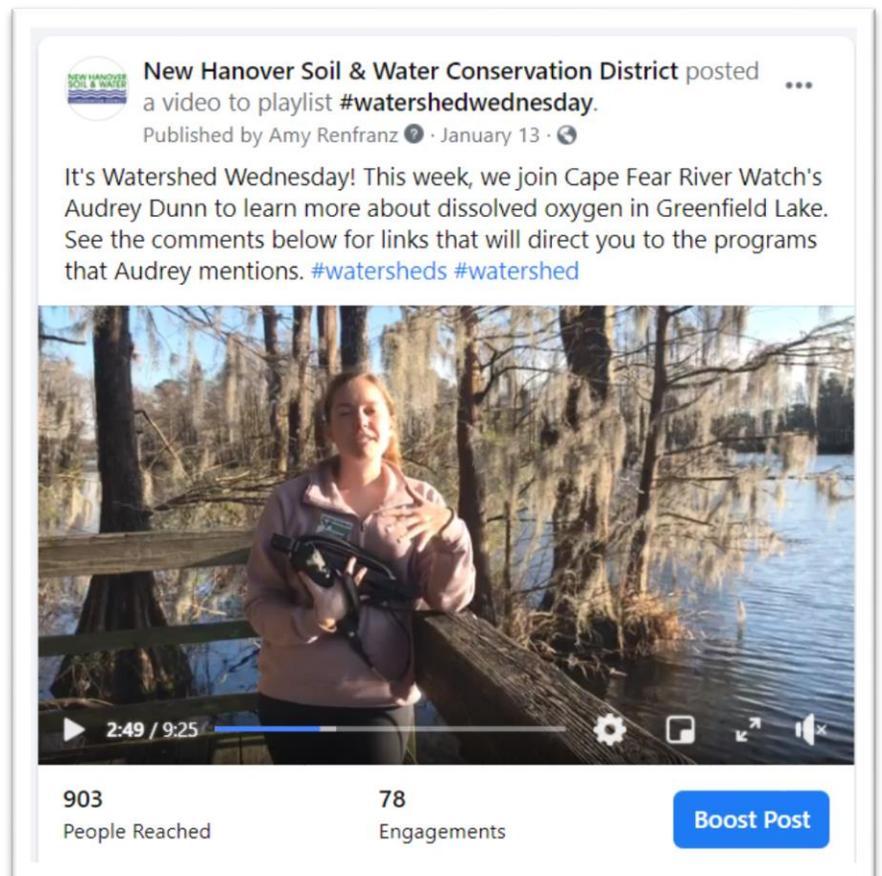
You can find the videos here: <https://www.facebook.com/NHSWCD>

### BMP Highlight: The Importance of Picking Up After Your Pet

Many of Wilmington’s waterways are impaired, but fixing the problem can be as easy as picking up after your pet. Pet waste contains bacteria, parasites, and viruses that are harmful to humans and wildlife. If left on the ground, these dangerous agents can enter waterways during any rain event as stormwater runoff.

To put the issue into perspective: in 2019, there were 55,000 dogs registered in New Hanover County. That many dogs would produce over 41,000 pounds or 21 tons of dog waste every day. That’s a lot of poop!

Bacteria from pet waste can shut down recreational swimming waters and shell fishing harvest beds. Shellfish, like oysters, clams and shrimp, are filter feeders so bacteria accumulates in their



meat, which is the part of the oyster that humans eat. Humans can contract viruses, bacteria, and parasites from swimming in water that is impacted by pet waste.

Luckily, pet waste is a source of pollution we can easily control. The easiest solution is picking up after our pets. By picking up after our pets, we are abiding by the law. Wilmington, Carolina Beach, and Wrightsville Beach all have ordinances that require people to pick up their pet's waste. You can be fined there (up to \$250) if you don't.

Good stewards can also bury pet waste at least 5 inches underground and away from storm drains, ditches, gardens, and other waterways.

However, pet waste or kitty litter should not be flushed down the toilet. It is too bulky and cannot be treated properly by wastewater treatment facilities. Pet waste should never be used as garden compost.



For more information, visit: <https://www.wilmingtonnc.gov/departments/public-services/stormwater/education-outreach/programs/canines-for-clean-water>