

Group Tries To Answer River Flow Questions

State Rep. E. David Redwine (D-Brunswick) was to meet Wednesday morning, Feb. 23, in Raleigh with personnel from several state agencies to begin studying a persistent problem of low water flow in the Waccamaw River.

At a Feb. 7 meeting at the Waccamaw Community Building, a crowd of approximately 100 people told Redwine, Rep. Dewey Hill and Sen. R.C. Soles Jr., state and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials that they want something done to maintain water flow in the river.

Water level is high only a few weeks out of each year and at other times drops dramatically, leaving sand banks and pools of water and hurting boating and fishing on the river.

A system of dams on the river or a series of flow regulation devices in drainage canals entering the river both have been proposed as possible solutions.

"We're just following up on what we talked about," Redwine said. Representatives of the Water Resources Division, the Division of Parks, the N.C. Wildlife Commission, and Soil and Water Conservation will begin trying to identify the source or sources of the problem.

The problem may be related to low water levels experienced elsewhere in the Waccamaw system. State officials plan to meet with Lake Waccamaw residents on March 1 regarding a state study of that watershed.

Redwine said Lake Waccamaw residents are

concerned about the low water level in the lake at the head of the river, while South Carolina residents also report low water on their stretch of the river below Pireway.

"We're not looking for a quick fix kind of thing," said Redwine. "It will take considerable effort and study. I suspect there will be a lot more meetings. If we're lucky enough to identify the source of the problem, it may take a while to identify a solution that is good both for people and the aquatic life in the river."

"It's not a simple thing to look at." The legislative delegation has pledged to meet again with Ash area residents on July 18 to discuss their findings.

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