



West Craven Highlights

News From Along The Banks Of The Neuse



VOLUME 12 No. 23

JUNE 15, 1989

VANCEBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

PHONE 244-0780 OR 946-2144

(UPSP 412-110)

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Gov. Martin Plans Talks With Fishers

Neuse Included On List Of Rivers With Problems

Gov. Jim Martin, concerned about the disappearance of fish and fishermen from the Neuse, Pamlico and Pungo rivers, plans to meet with local fishermen in Raleigh later this week, possibly today, according to a spokesman for the governor.

Local fishermen, who met Monday with Martin's representative and state health, environmental and fisheries officials, said they appreciate the interest being shown at the state level in their problems.

A fish kill in the Neuse was discovered over a week ago.

But some say the state action may have come too late to save their livelihoods on the rivers.

"I'm glad to see something's being done about this," Tammy Paul said in an interview after the meeting. "We've just about given up."

"The commercial fisherman can't make a living on the river any more," she said. "The river just doesn't have the marine life it used to have."

Eltes Henries Sr., another fisherman at Monday's meeting, said fishermen are leaving the Pamlico River to fish in other rivers.

"We've got fishermen leaving the river and fishermen leaving the industry," Henries said in an interview after the meeting.

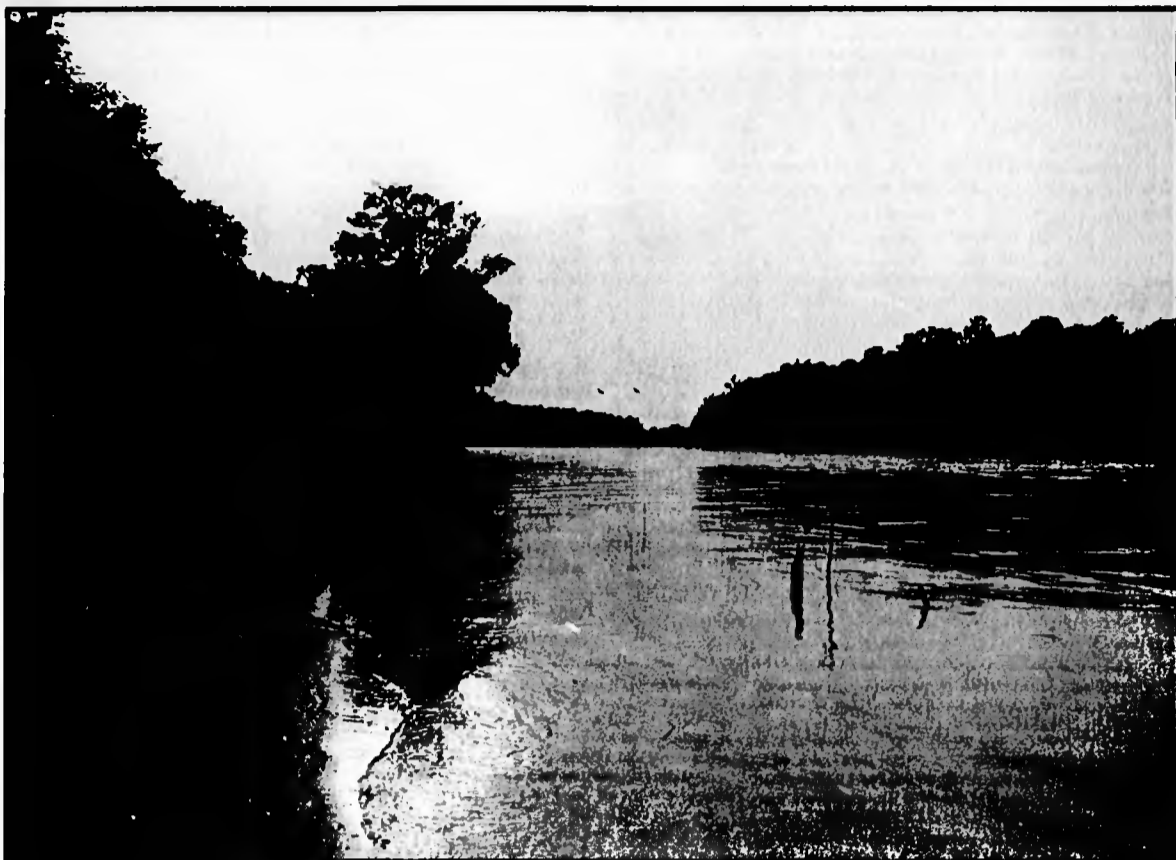
The meeting was at the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development's regional office in Washington. It was called by Gov. Martin in response to questions from local fishermen concerned about a possible cover-up in investigation of the fish kills, according to Ed Sweeney of Martin's eastern office in New Bern.

"Governor Martin is personally involved with this now," Sweeney said.

The governor, he said, will discuss with local fishermen the ongoing fish kill that began Memorial Day weekend and has affected the Pamlico, Pungo and Neuse rivers.

Meeting with the fishermen were Dr. Greg Smith, environmental scientist with the state Division of Health Services; Dr. Michael Dykstra, scientist with the N.C. State University College of Veterinary Medicine; William T. Hogarth, director of the Division of Marine

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Lee Schweltzer photo

No More

Less than 50 years ago folks crossed this body of water on a ferry. Now, the sun crosses Streets Ferry near Vanceboro and sets on the horizon. For years the ferry was transportation across the water, a place to catch up on news and a

place to enjoy a ride on the river. In the hurry-up world of today, the ferry has been replaced by a bridge and a way of life has been taken away. But there are those who remember ferry as more than just a ride to the other side. They remember how life in one section of the county used to be.



Protestors erect signs warning of pollution

River Contamination Protest Warns Of Dioxins Pollution

By Betty Gray
Special to the
West Craven Highlights

Members of three environmental groups began posting signs along the Neuse River today near New Bern warning people not to eat fish or shellfish caught there.

The action is in response to the "unacceptable" amount of dioxin found in fish samples taken from the two waterways by the Environmental Protection Agency, a spokesman for the groups said today.

The groups erected signs near Plymouth on Wednesday in the Roanoke River and in Welch Creek. In a telephone interview Wednesday morning, Steve Tedder, head of the state's Division of Environmental Management water quality section, said from Raleigh the protest was based on "too few data."

Dangerous levels of dioxin are believed by the environmentalists to be contained in the discharge from Weyerhaeuser Co., which operates a pulp and paper

products facilities near Vanceboro and Plymouth. Tedder said Weyerhaeuser is taking fish samples from the two waterways to be tested for dioxin and a related chemical, polychlorinated dibenzofurans.

Members of Greenpeace U.S.A. and Greenpeace Action and residents who live along the Pigeon River in western North Carolina were in boats today posting signs to be placed in the river, William Rostov, of Greenpeace U.S.A. said in a press conference on the waterfront in downtown Plymouth on Wednesday.

The group also asked that chlorine be eliminated from the bleaching process at paper plants across the nation and that alternative methods be used in pulp and paper processing by 1993.

"Greenpeace challenges the Weyerhaeuser mill in Plymouth and others like it to be good neighbors," Rostov said. "Chlorine-based pulp mills must shift away from such toxic processes to alternative technologies."

John Pritchard, technical service manager for Wey-

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Soil Office Offers Assistance With Animal-Waste Problem

By Tim Etheridge
SCS Conservationist

Most of us enjoy sitting down to a good meal of ham, pork chops or pork barbecue. The things that we are eating are quality products.

To produce these quality products, there are by-products that the producer has to worry with. The by-product in this case is animal waste.

A producer should have a method or system of handling this waste.

The Soil Conservation Service offers help with planning, design and construction for the adequacy of the animal waste management systems.

This system takes into consideration the size of the operation, adequacy of the site and use of the waste through land application.

There are waste management practices through which cost share help for construction of animal waste systems is available.

The first part of such a waste management system is best known as a lagoon. Most producers have a pit called a lagoon used for storage of animal waste. These lagoons usu-

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Eye On The Storm

Emergency Offices Practice To Be Perfect

By Mike Voss
Editor

Area emergency management officials took the 1989 hurricane evacuation drill seriously, even down to the inflated air mattress in the corner of one of the offices.

Taking part in what is billed as the biggest emergency storm drill ever held in the United States, the officials last week tracked "Hurricane Lucy" and its mock 130-mph winds, coordinated evacuation plans and began recovery efforts.

Doug Hoell, Area A coordinator, said the air mattress in his office last Thursday meant he would spend the night "to answer phones."

Katy O'Keefe, public information officer assigned to the Area A office here for the drill, said federal officials observing the drill "are impressed" and think it has been an "outstanding" exercise.

"There haven't been any major problems and it has shown us some little snags, which is what it is supposed to do," she said. "The local, state and federal officials observing are really applauding it," said Ms. O'Keefe.

Officials at the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) headquarters in Raleigh said no one has called in with the impression Lucy is real. Tom Ditt, a SERT spokesman, said the drill included all coastal counties and 20 inland counties.

The exercise began last Wednesday and concluded last Friday.

Using a map with radiating area from the Outer Banks and a overlay representing Lucy, officials tracked the mythical storm. When the outer edge of the hurricane touched the outer arc of the area marked for Ocracoke, evacuation was ordered by the local emergency management committee.

Depending on speed, size and direction of Lucy and various conditions of the area, officials could refer to a chart and see how much time they had to evacuate their areas before the brunt of the storm hit, said David Humphrey of the Area A office.

To combat rumors, a "rumor control" number was established to assist the media in public in receiving accurate information. As Lucy drew nearer the coast, evacuations were ordered for Dare and Currituck counties between 2 p.m. and 2:20 p.m. last Thursday. The evacuations were based on the strength, speed and direction of the hurricane and estimated time to evacuate areas thought in danger, said officials. Limited evacuations were ordered for mainland Hyde, Pasquotank and Camden counties.

Messages received during the exercise included information about a fire at a motel at Nags Head, power lines down in Dare County, the

Kitty Hawk shelter opening and N.C. 12 closed because of flooding, flooding at Hatteras Village and persons trapped in their homes at Avon because of flooding.

As of 6 a.m. Friday, Lucy had maximum sustained winds of 110 knots and was located about 120 miles southeast of New Bern. Lucy's leading gale-force winds had a radius of 140 miles and had a forward speed of 14 knots. The eye of the storm was "expected" this afternoon near the Onslow County-Carteret County line, bringing the stronger edge of the hurricane into the Pamlico Sound and Neuse River areas.

Ms. O'Keefe said Friday officials had requested field kitchens and a helicopter for the simulated recovery efforts. She said the exercise would swing into recovery efforts once evacuations were complete.

"It's going great. I'm really impressed," said Hoell when asked how the drill was progressing. "If it goes this well in the real event, I will feel very comfortable. It's a good training ground for us," said Hoell.

Hoell was interrupted to make decisions on ferry service during the storm, obtaining equipment to remove debris after the storm passed and passed on information about a real severe storm headed toward Swan Quarter.

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Lee Schweltzer Jr. photo

Facelift

Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park just outside of Bridgeton is getting a facelift. Operator George Shaffer is sprucing up the campground and generally getting the camp-

ground and accompanying buildings ready for the summer season. Wonder if Yogi's friends will pay a visit and bring a picnic basket later this summer?