BCC Hooks Donation

The South Brunswick Islands King Mackerel Tournament recently donated \$1,000 to the Brunswick Community College Foundation. Pictured, from left, are BCC President W. Michael Reaves, tournament co-founder Wayne Long, South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President Susanne Sartelle and 1991 tournament chairman Don Warren. More than 120 boats participated in the 1990 fishing tournament. This year's event is scheduled Labor Day weekend. For more information, call the chamber of commerce, 754-6644.

State DOT Wants Permit To Fill Local Wetlands

BY DOUG RUTTER

The N.C. Department of Transportation is seeking a federal permit to dump dirt in wetlands south of Shallotte as part of the ongoing project to widen U.S. 17.

Plans submitted with the state's permit application show that about 12 acres of wetlands at 10 sites bordering the highway would be affected by the construction, according to a public notice from the Army Corps of Engineers.

The 12.01 acres includes an estimated 5.5 acres of pocosin wet-lands, 5.41 acres of bottomland hardwood wetlands and one acre of pond habitat. All of the wetlands are located in either the Shallotte of Calabash river basins.

The DOT wants the permit so work can continue on the four-laning of U.S. 17 between Shallotte and the South Carolina state line—a project expected to last several more years.

Six of the 10 sites where the state. proposes filling wetlands are located beside the highway between Thomasboro and the state line, according to a map accompanying the public notice.

The four other sites are spread out between Thomasboro and Shallotte. The biggest area that would be filled is 5.5 acres of wetlands located south of Grissettown.

To make up for damage to local wetlands, the state plans to restore degraded wetlands outside Brunswick County and turn over several acres of state-owned wetlands to the

federal government. The DOT plans to restore degraded wetlands in Sampson County to account for the 5.5 acres of local pocosin wetlands that would be filled, according to the corps public notice.

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Wayne Wright, chief of the regulatory branch at the corps district office in Wilmington, said the state also proposes to give 5.41 acres of bottomland hardwood wetlands to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Wright said the wetlands are located in the Company Swamp Mitigation Bank, a state-owned "bank" of wetlands in the Roanoke River Basin in Northampton County.

DOT hasn't proposed any specific measures to offset the one acre loss of surface water wetlands. But state officials expect construction pits that would be left as ponds would cover at least an acre, the corps notice stat-

Based on available information, the corps district engineer isn't aware that the proposed activity would affect threatened or endangered species or their habitat, according to the public notice.

"The benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments," the notice states. "The decision whether to authorize a proposal, and, if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur. are therefore determined by the outcome of the general balancing pro-

Besides the corps permit, the state DOT needs permits, easements or other forms of approval from four other state agencies before work can begin.

The Corps of Engineers will accept written comments on the proposed work through May 11. They can be mailed to Ernest Jahnke, Wilmington District, Corps of Engincers, P.O. Box 1890, Wilmington, N.C. 28402-1890.

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Calabash Proposes Additions To Planning Board BY DOUG RUTTER Calabash officials will hold a

public hearing next week on a proposal to add two members to the town's planning board-a group that has been at the center of controversy in recent months.

Commissioners propose adding one regular planning and zoning board member from each of the town's two voting districts to even out representation on the advisory

If approved, the planning board would be expanded to include five voting members from District 2 and two from District 1. The five-to-two split would be identical to the split on the board of commissioners.

The planning board still would have two voting members from the extraterritorial area (ETA), which covers land within a mile of town. Each of the three areas also have one alternate member who can sit on the planning board and vote when a regular member is absent.

Commissioners will accept public comments on the proposed change in planning board membership Tuesday, April 23, at 7 p.m. in town hall.

The planning board, which was revamped last January following the merger of the old Town of Calabash and the Carolina Shores golf community, lost two of its regular members last week.

Warren "Bud" Knapp, chairman for the past year, resigned effective last Wednesday, and Hank Mattutat announced his resignation at a town commission meeting last Tuesday. Both are residents of District 2.

Knapp said he resigned from the board to give somebody else a chance to serve and so he could devote more time to other interests. Mattutat said he stepped down partly because of a lack of communication between planning board members and commissioners.

Calabash Commissioners had

Meeting Planned On Highway Work

Area residents will have a chance to tell state transportation officials which highway projects they want built at an upcoming meeting in

The public meeting is scheduled Thursday, April 25, in room 212 of the Social and Behavioral Science Building at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Speakers can register at 1 p.m. and the meeting starts at 2 p.m.

The local meeting is one of 14 scheduled across the state between now and May 23.

Public meetings are the initial phase of the board's annual update of its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is the N.C. Department of Transportation's blueprint for highway construction over the next seven years.

In addition to highway projects, the TIP contains funding schedules for aviation, public transportation, rail and bicycle projects.

"We were all learning I think for the first year."

> -Stu Thorn Commissioner

scheduled a special meeting Wednesday night to fill the two vacancies.

The planning board has been the topic of debate since February when town officials learned that Brunswick County Commissioners had never formally appointed the planning board's three representatives from the ETA.

County commissioners later appointed three new members to the board, but a few ETA residents questioned the validity of recent town actions, including the enforcement of zoning ordinances in the

In a March 5 letter to the town, N.C. Attorney General ruled that the town's ordinances are valid and enforceable even though some planning board members weren't appointed according to state law.

The planning board canceled its two meetings in April and postponed its election of officers until the membership issue is worked out.

Announcing his resignation last week, Mattutat said commissioners haven't used information that planning board members have provided them. "It's very disturbing when the commission acts unilaterally," he

He said the planning board studied sewer service for the waterfront area and found 66,000 gallons per day of treatment capacity was available through Carolina Blythe Utilities, a private company that serves part of Calabash.

Mattutat said a local developer purchased the excess treatment capacity. He said Calabash could have gotten it if the town commission

hadn't let "the cat out of the hat" and sent an "ill-written letter" to the

company. Mattutat said he learned through a newspaper article that the town was taking bids from engineering firms to study the town's sewage collection, treatment and disposal needs.

He said commissioners should

have talked with the planning board about the proposed study. "We were never consulted," he said. "Nobody ever asked for our input."

Commissioner Stu Thorn, who acts as a liaison between the town commission and planning board, admitted that communication between

the boards has been poor in the past. Thorn and two other commissioners asked Mattutat to reconsider his resignation from the planning board. "We were all learning I think

for the first year," he said. Commissioner Ray Card said the two town boards need to make a 'religious effort" to communicate

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