

Lincoln County Source Water Protection Plan Summary

Lake Norman is one of Lincoln County's most valuable assets, serving as the County's primary drinking water source and key community amenity. While robust economic development benefits our community and our quality of life, the rapid growth we are experiencing threatens some of our natural resources, including Lake Norman. This Source Water Protection Plan is designed to help protect Lake Norman, both today for our community and for future generations.



This plan was drafted by a committee of local citizens (the SWP committee). The plan includes six land use recommendations to provide long term protection of the County's eastern drinking water source and its immediate 1,497-acre watershed. The recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Purchase and protect (with a conservation easement) a key 116-acre tract of forestland located in the watershed (most important recommendation);
- 2) Pursue the conservation of other land in the watershed as practical;
- 3) Enact and implement a storm water ordinance;
- 4) Enact an overlay district for the watershed with stricter regulations for controlling contaminants;
- 5) Assumption by the County of current NC State enforcement of the Lake Norman shoreline buffer; and
- 6) Research ways to reduce sewer spills from the lift stations in or near the watershed.

The Committee strongly recommends adoption and implementation of this plan to help ensure the purity and adequacy of the drinking water drawn from Little Creek Cove. In addition to cleaner water, implementation of this plan will provide needed park land and nature preserve, and will raise awareness in the community of the importance of the lake, sources of contamination and the lake's vulnerability.

Adoption of the plan may also make Lincoln County eligible for a low interest-long term (1%, 20 year) loan program through the NC DENR for purchase of the vulnerable and important 116 acre parcel (recommendation #1 above). The loan, along with proposed funding from NC Parks & Recreation Trust Fund would provide needed capital for purchase and protection of the 116 acres which is now under option by Lincoln County.

Update - After receiving a \$1.65 million low-interest loan from the NC Public Water Supply Section, the county took possession of the 116 acre tract of property in August of 2008. One of the few remaining undeveloped pieces of property surrounding 5,600 linear feet of sensitive stream flowing into the county's water supply of Little Creek Cove will now be protected for the future.