North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes Committee Minutes
February 18, 2026, 10:00 AM-11:27 AM
Conference Call Number: 984-204-1487
Conference ID: 237605680#

Attendees:

Committee members present:

- Steve Troxler, Commissioner of Agriculture
- Will Summer, N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
- Sarah Ward for Dr. Myron Floyd, N.C. State of College Natural Resources
- Shannon Deaton for Kyle Briggs, Executive Director, NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Chester Lowder, Sentinel Landscape Partnership Liaison
- Jaime Simon, External Affairs and Communication, DoD REPI Program
- Denise Evans, Community Planner, 4th Civil Engineer Squadron, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base
- Marty Korenek, Government and External Affairs, Marine Corps Installations East

Other Attendees: In Person: Evan Davis, Veronica Jamison, Kelsey Pearce, Allison Rodriguez, Cameron Dawson, Dewitt Hardee, Mikey Fulk, Jon Lanier, Neil Oakley, David Smith, Addie Thornton, Bill Edwards, Sara Ward, Bailey Butler.

Online: Joe Austin, Edward Davis, Addie Thornton, Brian Rubino, Erin Ananian-Gentile, Weston McCorkle, Guenevere Abernathy, Amanda Sand, Mark Pfanstiehl, Sarah Weavil, Lisa Shealy, Jaime Simon, Michelle Lovejoy, Kevin Johnson, Rhonda Murray, Reva Orr, Rodney Woolard.

Reading of Ethics Reminder: Under the State Government Ethics Act, the chairman is required to remind all members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest or appearances of conflicts of interest. If you have any conflict or appearance of conflict of interest with respect to any item on the agenda, please state this for the record and refrain from inappropriate participation on that item.

The minutes from December 9, 2025, meeting were presented for approval. Chester Lowder made the motion, and Will Summer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- Evan Davis presented for the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Evan presented the current open contract with military partners, the Boyd Farm with USAF-SJAFB. The project in Washington County is moving toward the finish line, expected to close in early 2026. Next, he reported on completed easements with military partners to date, along with a table showing total contributions for those easements. He also reported on

the MOU with NC MAC, which has a balance of $127,321.33. Davis introduced Marty Korenek with Government and External Affairs with Marine Corps Installations East. He spoke on the $7 million match from the Marine Corps for the Camp Bryan project, and he also welcomed Anita Kennedy back from maternity leave after having twins.

- Rick Long with Veterans Affairs could not attend due to a scheduling conflict, but sent his materials along to be included in the presentation. His report as provided by Evan Davis discussed the completion of the NCMAC MOU, that there were seven Military Child of the Year semifinalists from North Carolina, made note of the results of the Military Childcare Round Table, and highlighted the XVIII ABC LTC Gavin Joint Innovation Outposts Open. The next slide covered upcoming events through the end of April.

- Will Summer reported on the upcoming grant cycle for the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. They are taking applications until March 1, 2026. He reported the deadline for certification of 2025 donations for Conservation Tax Credit recently passed, and he said there were 41 applications covering 4,062 acres.

- Sarah Ward reported for the NC State of College Natural Resources. She noted Kate Jones efforts working alongside the Forest Service and the Black Family Land Trust.

- Shannon Deaton reported for Kyle Briggs for the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. She reviewed the progress of the RASP — N.C. Wildlife has treated 1,412 acres with prescribed fire in the Holly Shelter Game Lands in the Bear Garden footprint. Staff also planted 128 Long Leaf Pine in the Bear Garden, and have planned sales and replants in November/December 2026. She also reviewed the Mayo project which closed in November, and the Jordan Timber project that closed in January covering 2,018.7 acres in Scotland County. She reported on the Southern Aquatic Resources Partnership, and said that all data is uploaded into a larger SARP database. She gave everyone a handout and went over the new online tools to help identify fish, wildlife, and plant species. The online tool is helpful for users to find SWAP, and priority actions will be updated. An online map viewer is being developed the will allow users to find recommended Conservation Opportunity Areas.

- Chester Lowder reported for the Partnership, and said he will be looking forward to Dr. Chris Baillie coming back from paternity leave, with hopes that baby and mother are all doing well. He reported on the REPI Challenge,

saying that he was waiting for formal notification about the REPI Challenge decisions. He reported on the MIRR kick off — the Military Installation Readiness Review Meeting — for Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station New River, held in January. He also reviewed the easement closing with The Nature Conservancy that included a 492-acre United Methodist Foundation tract in Richmond County. Lowder said this will help generate a lot of matches for REPI. He said there are three other properties next to Holly Shelter Game Land in Pender County. He also discussed the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Longleaf Stewardship Fund, a TNC-led proposal requesting $2 million with $1.48 million in match over three years. It would support 50,298 acres of controlled burning, 2,205 acres of long leaf establishment, and 3,368 acres of other longleaf habitat enhancements. Lowder proposed immediately on Baillie's return from paternity leave that he would like to see the hiring committee, comprised of federal, state and NGO partner representatives to interview and narrow down a list of candidates for so we can share suitable candidates with the NC Sentinel Landscape Committee for their responsibilities.

- Jeremy Goodwin with N.C. Department of Transportation stated that he had nothing to report this meeting, but hopefully will have more when the legislature passes a budget.

- Jaime Simon, the Community Planner with the DOD REPI Program, reported on the partnership with Working Lands Trust, the previously-mentioned $7.4 million funding for the Camp Bryan project near Cherry Point. She also spoke on the SERPPAS meeting in Southern Pines on April 27-29 at the Carolina Hotel. She said Addie Thornton can give more details. There is also going to be a SERPPAS annual meeting in Indiana on May 14.

- Denise Evans, Community Planner with the 4th Civil Engineer Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, said she had nothing to report at this time but was happy to represent SJAFB.

- Marty Korenek with Government and External Affairs, Marine Corps Installations East, presented a slide showing the priority tiering map, and explained that Tier 1 areas are where partner activities have a direct benefit and the most support from DOD for funding of projects. He said that Tier 2 had some similarities but was considered a little lower in priority. Tier 3 areas are where partner activities have more indirect benefits and will need letters of support. He also reported on the Futral project, partnered with Working Lands Trust, which recently closed and preserved 465.13 acres in Onslow County. This project also included partnership with the U.S. Navy and the N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. The total purchase

was $635,000, with the Navy's sharing totaling $317,500.00. He also went down the list of REPI projects that they are planning to close in 2026.

- Amanda Sand made a presentation for the N.C. Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation that detailed her organization's outreach and partnership efforts since 1999. She said the Foundation has a portfolio of 21 education and outreach projects with funding over $4.7 million. These projects have included educational and interactive resources the districts have focused on primary and secondary education to create the next generation of conservationists. She reviewed the Careers in Conservation Scholarship Program and the banner program which has reached 91 counties. Sand highlighted the Market Based Conservation Initiative and manure management initiatives as examples of their environmentally-focused programming. Projects that have built conservation capacity at the county level include their work with district equipment rental and demonstration days. She closed by reviewing the Foundation's strategic plan from 2026 through 2030.

- Commissioner Troxler asked if there was any other business for the committee. He thanked all the partners for their efforts.

- Addie Thornton spoke on the upcoming SERPPAS meeting in Southern Pines and said she would like to see NCDA&CS and Chris Baillie represented there. She also provided a link to the meeting.

- Commissioner Troxler spoke on his back problems, and said the one good thing coming from UNC Chapel Hill is their spine doctors. He thanked the committee for their hard work, and said he is hoping for some additional money from the legislature to support the ADFP Trust Fund.

- Evan Davis told the committee that the next meeting would likely be sometime in June.

- Commissioner Troxler asked a motion to adjourn. Chester Lowder made the motion and Will Summer seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:27 AM.