



⊠ North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission ⊠

MEMORANDUM

Date: 14 August 2007

To: Chatham County Planning Department

From: Jacquelyn Presley Wallace, Urban Wildlife Biologist

Re: Barber Lands Subdivision

Please accept my comments on the proposal to construct the “Subdivision of Barber Lands,” consisting of 48 lots on 59.54 acres, located off SR-1859, South Langdon in Fearington, Williams Township.

The Barber Lands subdivision is sited to occur within a highly sensitive and biologically important area of Chatham County. As shown on the attached map, this subdivision will be located:

- **Within the Big Woods Road Upland Forests Area, an NC Significant Natural Heritage Area** (shown in brown dots on the attached map),
- Within a Triangle Greenprint priority conservation area (shown in green dots on the attached map)
- Within a TNC (Nature Conservancy) designated Ecoregional Portfolio Site (shown in purple hatch marks on the attached map)

The Big Woods Upland Forests Area was designated by the state’s Natural Heritage Program as a Significant Natural Heritage Area because of its unusual topography and its importance as an unbroken wildlife corridor that links two arms of Corps Land on Jordan Lake.¹ The Big Woods area has also been identified as a conservation priority by 1) the Triangle Greenprint, a regional conservation plan for which the Chatham County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution of

¹ Documentation of the site’s environmental value can be found on pgs. 201-202 of the “Inventory of the Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitats of Chatham County, North Carolina” A copy of this document can be obtained by calling Kristen Sinclair with the NC Natural Heritage Program at (919-715-8687).

support in May 2002, and 2) The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Planning Process, also a regional conservation planning effort.

To protect the state-designated Significant Natural Heritage Areas, we strongly suggest that the following measures be incorporated into this subdivision's plans:

- First, we typically recommend that **no built structures** (other than boardwalks, trails, or other passive recreational structures) **be placed within the boundaries of Significant Natural Heritage Areas** (shown in brown dots on the attached map).
 - Buildings, associated infrastructure, and resulting sedimentation will seriously damage and possibly eliminate the environmental value of Significant Natural Heritage Areas.

- However, we recognize that this entire subdivision is sited to occur within part of this SNHA. If this development is to be approved, then we recommend the applicant:
 - Contract with a qualified environmental professional to conduct an **environmental impact assessment** to identify 1) negative impacts this development will have on the SNHA, and 2) strategies the applicant could take to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for these impacts.

 - Document the presence of the **SNHA boundaries on all plats** (preliminary and subsequent plats) as well as on all subdivision applications.

 - Follow **conservation subdivision design principles** in this development, which would involve:
 - Permanently protecting the most environmentally valuable 50% of the site as open space (which could be determined through an environmental inventory or assessment)
 - Clustering the homes away from the most environmentally valuable areas as identified through an environmental assessment or inventory
 - Highlighting any protected parts of the heritage area as an environmental asset to add real estate value to the home sites

Due to this site's proximity to Jordan Lake, we further recommend that this project implement the measures outlined under the section "General Mitigation Measures for All Watersheds" in NCWRC's *Guidance Memorandum to Address and Mitigate Secondary and Cumulative Impacts to Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife Resources and Water Quality*. This document can be downloaded from

http://www.ncwildlife.org/pg07_WildlifeSpeciesCon/pg7c3_impacts.pdf

As is described in this document, we specifically recommend the development plans be revised to:

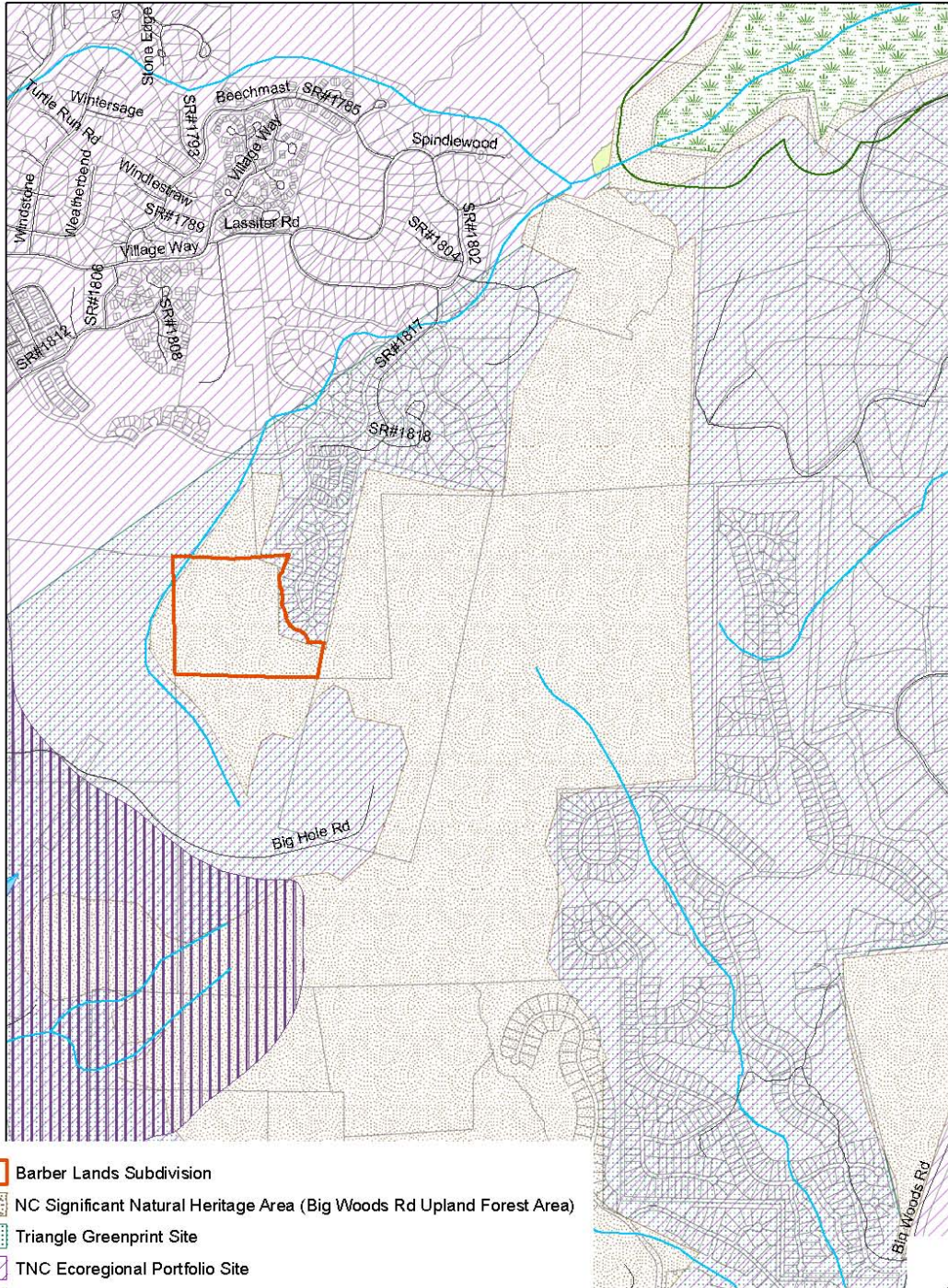
- Establish **100-foot native, forested stream buffers along EACH SIDE of any perennial streams** on site, as identified through field survey using NCDWQ methodology (such as the stream in the northern part of the parcel)

- Establish **50-foot native, forested buffers along EACH SIDE of intermittent streams** on site, as identified through field survey using NCDWQ methodology,
- **Disperse stormwater discharge** through a vegetated buffer **outside of the protected riparian buffer zone**, and eliminate any design that involves direct discharge of stormwater streams on site.
- Minimize any grading that will occur as part of construction activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this subdivision proposal, and for considering these comments. If you would like further guidance on how to best preserve the wildlife value of this site alongside residential development, please contact me at (919) 360-9680. Also, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at any time.

cc: Jeff Marcus, NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Shari Bryant, NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Sarah McRae, NC Natural Heritage Program
Vann Stancil, NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Kristen Sinclair, NC Natural Heritage Program
Allison Weakley, Chatham Environmental Review Board

Barber Lands Subdivision



-  Barber Lands Subdivision
-  NC Significant Natural Heritage Area (Big Woods Rd Upland Forest Area)
-  Triangle Greenprint Site
-  TNC Ecoregional Portfolio Site
-  Sub-Watershed with Federal Endangered Fish/Mussel
-  NCWRC Game Land