

**Minutes of the 23 June 2009**  
**Public Hearing of the Yancey County Board of Commissioners**  
**Solid Waste Management Plan**  
**Held at 5:30 o'clock p.m. in the Commissioner's Meeting Room**  
**Yancey County Courthouse, Burnsville, North Carolina**

Present at the 23 June 2009 public hearing of the Yancey County Board of County Commissioners were Walter Savage, Chairman, Members Johnny Riddle and Jerri Storie, County Manager Nathan Bennett, Clerk to the Board Jason Robinson, and members of the general public.

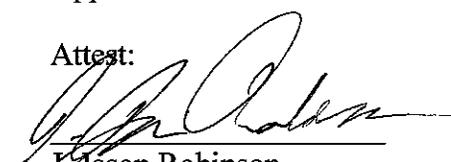
Chairman Savage called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence for reflection within ourselves. Chairman Savage then asked for a motion to approve the agenda. (Attachment A) The motion was made by Commissioner Storie and was seconded by Commissioner Riddle. The vote to approve was unanimous.

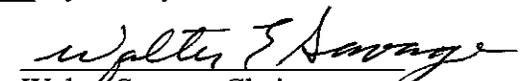
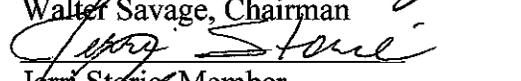
Chairman Savage stated the purpose of the public hearing was to hear public input about the Solid Waste Management Plan (Attachment B). This plan is mandated by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources to be done every ten years with updates to the plan every three years. Chairman Savage stated that the plan dealt with solid waste matters and made sure that solid waste was handled properly and in a cost efficient way. Chairman Savage then opened up the floor for public comment about only the Solid Waste Plan.

Mr. Jim Landry was recognized and stated that he lives at Wolf Laurel and asked for introductions from the Commissioners. After the Board introduced themselves along with the County Manager and Clerk to the Board Mr. Landry stated that he needs clarification about some things. Mr. Landry first asked about the waste reduction goal being moved from 40% to 5%. Chairman Savage stated that the goal of the plan is to reduce the amount of waste. County Manager Bennett stated that the numbers in the plan are real numbers that come from Yancey and Mitchell Counties and that the state takes the numbers and projects them over 10 years. Mr. Landry then asked if the tonnage of waste and the expenditures were inclusive of the Town of Burnsville. County Manager Bennett told Mr. Landry that the numbers in the Yancey County plan does not include numbers from the Town of Burnsville, that they do their own plan. Mr. Landry then had a question about the types of plastics that the County accepts. County Manager Bennett explained that it was a typo in the plan and that the County accepts #1 and #2 plastics. Mr. Landry also had a question about the revenues and expenditures on page 9 and why was the General Fund revenue included. Manager Bennett told Mr. Landry that he wasn't sure himself why that was included but that the state wanted it included. Mr. Landry further mentioned that the Yancey residents of Wolf Laurel have to use the solid waste centers in Madison County to avoid driving an hour to Cane River. County Manager Bennett asked Mr. Landry if they had access to the Egypt Ramseytown Convenience Center. Mr. Landry stated that the residents of Wolf Laurel were not guaranteed access to the gate because it was owned by the Preserve. Mr. Landry further went on to say that Madison County had imposed a \$190 per year fee on all land owners to fund solid waste operations and that Madison County stated that the state was making them do this. Mr. Landry asked if the state had mandated Yancey County to do this as well. County Manager Bennett stated that the state has mandated us to do a lot of things but that wasn't one of those things. Mr. Landry stated that he would be getting in touch with the county manager soon about a possible solution to the problem. Mr. Landry thanked the Commissioners for answering his questions. Chairman Savage then asked if anyone else had any comment about the Solid Waste Plan. No one else volunteered to speak so Chairman Savage asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Storie and was seconded by Chairman Savage seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approved and authenticated on this the 7<sup>th</sup> day of July 2009.

Attest:

  
Jason Robinson  
Clerk to the Board  
(county seal)

  
Walter Savage, Chairman  
  
Jerri Storie, Member  
  
Johnny Riddle, Member



# YANCEY COUNTY

110 Town Square, Room 11 • Burnsville, North Carolina 28714  
PHONE: (828) 682-3971 • FAX: (828) 682-4301

Nathan Bennett, *County Manager*

Walter Savage, *Chairman*

Jerri Storie, *Commissioner*

Johnny Riddle, *Commissioner*

## AGENDA

### Solid Waste Plan Update Public Hearing

June 23, 2009

5:30 pm

- I. Call to Order---Chairman Savage
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Information about the Solid Waste Plan Update
- IV. Opening of the floor for public input about the Solid Waste Plan Update
- V. Adjourn\*

\*Action by the Board of Commissioners on the Solid Waste Plan Update will be done at the special meeting scheduled for June 23, 2009 at 7:00 pm

*Attachment B*

**YANCEY COUNTY  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE  
JUNE 30, 2009**

Yancey County Government  
110 Town Square, Rm 11  
Burnsville, North Carolina 28714

## **INTRODUCTION**

In June 1997, the Yancey County Board of Commissioners adopted the Yancey County Solid Waste Management Plan in accordance with NC General Statute 130A-309.09A. The plan covered all aspects of solid waste management in Yancey County, including the Town of Burnsville, for a ten-year planning period (FY 1996/97 through FY 2005/06). This update covers the same geographic area for the period FY 2007/08 through FY 2018/19. The update outlines Yancey County's intended solid waste management and reduction programs, and sets waste reduction goals for the next ten year period.

## **Geographic Area and Economic Characteristics**

Yancey County is located in the western part of the state, in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Yancey County borders the counties of Madison, Buncombe, McDowell, Mitchell and also borders the state of Tennessee to the northwest. Yancey County has a total area of 313.03 square miles, with 312.22 square miles of land area. The average elevation is 2,817 feet above sea level. The Town of Burnsville is the county's only incorporated municipality, and the county seat.

Yancey County has experienced moderate population growth since 1970. According to the US Census, the county has increased in population from 12,629 in 1970 to 17,774 in 2000, representing a 41% increase. This rate of growth is less than the growth rate of the state between 1970 and 2000 of 58%. Population growth in the townships of the county has been rather inconsistent. Only the townships of Burnsville, Jacks Creek, Price Creek and South Toe experienced a population increase in each of the census years since 1970. In 1970, 46.04% of the county's population resided in these four townships. This figure increased to 55.41% in 2000. The Town of Burnsville experienced a 20.4% increase in population between 1970 and 2000. Only Egypt Township had a smaller population in 2000 than in 1970, decreasing by 32.23%. The 2000 Census shows Burnsville to have a population of 1,623.

Yancey County will continue to have one of the state's highest median ages with a projected median age of 45.59 for 2010, and 49.98 for 2020. This is indicative of a county with aging population and is one of the factors of relatively slow population growth.

Unemployment is above the State average in Yancey County. In 2008, the annual unemployment rate was 7.8%. The county's 2000 median family income of \$29,100 ranks 98<sup>th</sup> in the state. The county's economy is in transition, with a significant loss of manufacturing jobs in the past five years, and only moderate gains in new job creation. Tourism is a notable aspect of the local economy.

## **UPDATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The update was developed by the Yancey County Public Works Department and Yancey County Administration, with assistance from High Country Council of Governments. Drafts of the update were presented to management and public works staff of the Town of Burnsville for

comment. A public hearing was held to gather citizen input on the draft update, and copies of the draft were made available to the public for review.

## **WASTE REDUCTION GOALS**

The Yancey County Solid Waste Management Plan for FY 1996/97 through FY 2005/06 set the following waste reduction goals:

40% waste stream reduction by June 30, 2001.

40% waste stream reduction by June 30, 2006.

These reduction figures were based on a 1991 baseline per capita disposal rate of 1.01 tons/year (provided by NCDENR, Division of Waste Management, Solid Waste Section). These goals were changed to 5% waste reduction by 2006 and 10% by 2013 in the Solid Waste Management Plan Update for 2000. Based on Yancey County's County Waste Disposal Report for FY 1998/99 (provided by Solid Waste Section), the per capita disposal rate for the county was 0.733 tons/year.

Based on Yancey County's County Waste Disposal Report for FY 2001/02 (provided by the Solid Waste Section), the per capita disposal rate for the county was .65 tons/year. This figure represents a 36% decrease in the waste stream per capita as compared to the baseline per capita rate of 1.01. Therefore, the county set the following waste reduction goals for the planning period covered by the 2003 update.

38% waste stream reduction by June 30, 2006.

40% waste stream reduction by June 30, 2013.

With a per capita disposal rate of 0.64 for FY 2004-05, the 2006 goal was achieved. Therefore, the County retained the FY 2012-2013 goal of 40%, and set a new FY 2015-2016 goal of 40% as well.

Yancey County's FY 2007-08 per capita disposal rate was 0.79, a 23% increase over FY 2004-05. The County's new FY 2018-19 will be 40%.

## **WASTE STREAM ANALYSIS**

Yancey County has not conducted an analysis of the composition of its waste stream. The Quick Waste Stream Analysis provided by the Solid Waste Section was used in developing this update. A copy of the Quick Waste Stream Analysis for Yancey County is attached.

## **PLANNING ELEMENTS**

The following solid waste management planning elements were analyzed during development of this update. Analysis of the elements included examination of current programs and feasibility of additional programs/efforts. Following the narrative discussion of these elements are Plan of Action spreadsheets for each element.

### **1. Source Reduction**

Individual counties, especially rural counties, are somewhat limited in the amount of solid waste reduction that can be realized, regardless of programs that could be implemented. Packaging by manufacturers and national consumer preferences for convenience determine a great deal of waste stream in any county. Even the most conscientious efforts to reduce waste are limited by the fact that many goods can be obtained only in wasteful packaging. Rural counties (such as Yancey) do not have a sufficient number of businesses and industries to effectively promote waste exchanges, financial incentives, or other programs that would result in a significant source reduction.

### **2. Collection**

At the time of development of the ten-year Solid Waste Management Plan in 1997, Yancey County operated one staffed convenience center and 11 unstaffed green box sites. The county currently operates six staffed convenience centers and no green box sites. The convenience centers accept residential solid waste and the following recyclables: cardboard, aluminum, plastics, magazines, glass, and newsprint. One convenience center is equipped to accept used motor oil. The convenience centers are open from 7:00 AM until 7:00 PM, Monday thru Saturday. Solid waste and recyclables are also accepted at the county transfer station, from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, and from 8:00 AM until noon on Saturdays.

The county contracts with GDS for the transportation of solid waste from the collection sites to the county transfer station. In FY 2007/08 collection fees to GDS cost \$202,956.29, and operation of the convenience centers cost \$331,421.15.

In FY 2007/08, the county provided solid waste collection service to 9,660 households, and managed 12,829.16 total tons, at a total program cost of \$1,029,311.66. Total cost per household was \$106.55, and total cost per ton was \$80.23.

The Town of Burnsville contracts with GDS for curbside residential solid waste collection. In FY 2007/08 the Town managed a total of 599.02 tons of solid waste. The Town's overall program cost was \$74,025.

### **3. Recycling and Reuse**

Yancey County collects recyclables at its transfer station site and the six convenience centers. Materials accepted include glass (three colors), aluminum, plastics, cardboard, magazines, and

newsprint. The county has a full-time Recycling Coordinator who oversees recycling collection, recyclables marketing, and public education regarding recycling. The county has also hired two fulltime Solid Waste and Recycling Technicians.

The Town of Burnsville contracts with GDS to operate a residential curbside recycling program. Materials collected include glass (three colors), aluminum, plastics, cardboard, magazines, and newsprint. GDS also contracts with businesses in the town to collect cardboard. In FY 2007/08 the total tonnage of recyclables recovered by the Town was 98.26 tons. The Town provided recycling service to 596 households, collecting 9.29 tons of mixed glass, 5.06 tons of mixed plastic, 2.96 tons of aluminum cans, 30.00 tons of newsprint, and 50.96 tons of cardboard.

In FY 2007/08, the county provided recycling service to 9,660 households, and recovered 1,328.96 tons of recyclables. This total includes 71.65 tons of glass, 64.47 tons of plastics, 820.75 tons of white goods, 6.13 tons of aluminum cans, 60.14 tons of newsprint, and 305.82 tons of newsprint.

The county does not currently operate any reuse programs. However, the county supports local thrift shops and other charitable reuse programs.

#### **4. Composting and Mulching**

Yancey County does not currently operate any composting programs. Certain LCID materials are accepted at the C&D Landfill, which is scheduled to close in May 2009. The county collects Christmas trees every year. The trees are chipped and the mulch is given to county residents free of charge.

The county has been renting a tub grinder to grind the mulch to either sell it as cheaply as they can to county residents or give it away.

#### **5. Incineration with Energy Recovery**

Due to the volume of solid waste produced in Yancey County, the air quality issues associated with incineration facilities and the high capital costs of implementing a solid waste incineration facility, incineration is not a viable option for the county.

#### **6. Incineration without Energy Recovery**

Due to the volume of solid waste produced in Yancey County, the air quality issues associated with incineration facilities and the high capital costs of implementing a solid waste incineration facility, incineration is not a viable option for the county.

#### **7. Transfer Outside Geographic Area**

Yancey County currently contracts with Republic/GDS for transfer and disposal of solid waste. GDS collects solid waste at the Mitchell/Yancey County transfer station, and transports it to the Foothills Landfill in Caldwell County, North Carolina. The distance from the Mitchell/Yancey

County Transfer Station to the Foothills Landfill is approximately 50 miles. The Foothills Landfill currently has an expected lifespan of approximately 37 years. The county's contract with GDS for this transfer/disposal service expires in 2010. Under the contract, the transfer/disposal fee is \$47/ton.

In FY 2007/08, approximately 11,500.86 tons of solid waste was transferred out of Yancey County for disposal at landfills outside the county at a cost of \$413,428.03 in transfer/disposal fees, and a cost of \$81,506.19 for the operation of the transfer station. Based on population projections for Yancey County, it is estimated that 20,078 tons of solid waste will be transferred out of the county in FY 2018/19. The waste reduction goals set by the county would reduce the FY 2018/19 figure to 12,126.

## **8. Disposal**

Solid waste generated in Yancey County is disposed of under contract by GDS at its Foothills MSWLF facility in Caldwell County, North Carolina. The contract with GDS includes transfer and disposal for a fee of \$47 per ton. The County's contract with GDS expires in 2010.

Yancey County's permitted C&D landfill (located adjacent to the county's closed MSWLF site and transfer station) will close in May 2009.

The closed Mitchell/Yancey County MSWLF is the site of a Methane Gas to Energy project. The project, conducted by a non-profit agency, consists of the construction of a methane collection system within the closed landfill. The methane is used to fuel burners that heat greenhouses and operate a pottery kiln. The facilities are being used by local high schools, Penland School art students, and Mayland Community College.

The county has received an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to incorporate innovative green technology to remove woody items from the waste stream and generate electricity on-site.

## **9. Education with the Community and Through the Schools**

Yancey County incorporates solid waste management education into its High School curriculum. Solid waste issues are addressed in the Physical Science, Biology, and Applied Biology/Chemistry courses. In addition, the school system has added an Earth/Environmental Science course that addresses solid waste issues.

## **10. Special Wastes**

Tires are collected free of charge at a mobile collection unit operated by the county. In FY 2007/08, the county collected 290.65 tons of tires. The tires are currently being transferred to U.S. Tire Recycling Facility in Concord, NC for disposal.

White goods are collected free of charge at the Yancey County Transfer Station and at the convenience centers. 820.75 tons of white goods were collected in FY 2007/08. Freon is

removed from refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners and the materials are transferred to Tri-State Scrap Metal and sold as scrap.

Used oil is collected at the East Yancey Convenience Center. When the collection tank is full, a private contractor collects the oil for a nominal fee.

In FY 2007/08, the county collected 2,258 gallons of antifreeze.

The local NC Cooperative Extension Agency office periodically offers household hazardous waste collection programs. The county has no plans at this time to duplicate this effort.

Requests to the county concerning disposal of lead acid batteries are referred to local service stations that are equipped to collect and store the batteries.

#### Motor vehicle oil filters

Receptacles for these items are in place at each convenience center and at the county landfill.

#### Beverage containers

Beverage containers have been banned from the county landfill.

#### Recyclable rigid plastic containers

Receptacles for these items (plastics #1 and #2) are in place at each convenience center and at the county landfill.

#### Wooden pallets

The county has applied for a permit from NCDENR to create a processing/grinding area for pallets and woody products. Ground woody material will be either sold as fuel for power or used by Energyxchange as an alternative energy source. The county has received an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to incorporate innovative green technology in order to remove woody items from the waste stream and generate electricity. Final determination of woody product disposal will depend on the outcome of the DOE grant, and a pending request for additional federal stimulus funding.

#### Computer equipment and televisions

The county is currently evaluating the ability of area contractors to accept these items.

### Abandoned manufactured homes

Yancey County anticipates having a plan in place regarding the disposal of intact abandoned manufactured homes. This plan will be contained in the county operations plan and will establish handling, disposal, and other procedures. The county will designate a site to accept abandoned manufactured homes, and will remove all white goods, asbestos, and all thermostats containing mercury. The county will establish a fee for this operation.

### **11. Illegal Disposal/Litter**

Yancey County currently has an ordinance prohibiting illegal dumping, littering, and promiscuous dumping. The ordinance is enforced by an Environmental Officer, who works within the Yancey County Sheriff's Department. Complaints received by Yancey County Administration regarding illegal dumping are referred to the Environmental Officer. Illegal dump sites are cleaned up by the Yancey County Public Works Department.

### **12. Purchasing Recycled Products**

Yancey County does not have a policy regarding the purchase of recycled products. The relatively small volume of products used by the County would make such a program uneconomical and have a relatively insignificant impact.

### **13. Disaster Response**

Yancey County is currently in the process of updating its disaster response plan to include staging sites at the 6 county convenience centers, and mass animal mortality events. In the event of a natural disaster, Yancey County anticipates excess volumes of LCID and C&D materials (trees, metal, building materials, etc.). The county has adequate room at its transfer station site to stockpile these materials. The county will contact the Division of Waste Management in order to have these potential disaster debris sites approved. Upon evaluation of the materials, the county will consider renting a tub grinder to process the trees and clean wood, and will dispose of C&D material using approved contractors.

Given the rural nature of the county, the majority of the storm debris will have few adverse affects on the residents. The majority of the fallen trees will be cut up and used for firewood. Therefore, the county feels the areas at the transfer station and convenience centers will provide more than adequate sites for any storm debris that may be collected.

The county's farms are overwhelmingly used for crop production and are not engaged in large animal farming/breeding activities. In the unlikely event of a mass animal mortality incident, the county will follow the disaster response plan.

### **COST ANALYSIS**

Yancey County's solid waste management programs are paid for out of the county's general fund, and tipping fees collected for non-residential solid waste. Additional revenue comes from

reimbursements from the State's Tire Tax and White Goods Tax funds, and from the sale of recyclables and scrap metal.

**Revenues (FY 07-08)**

Tipping Fees	\$144,593.93
Sale of Recyclables	\$ 22,957.00
Sale of Scrap Metal	\$ 20,576.00
State Tire Tax Reimb.	\$ 20,637.00
State White Goods Tax Reimb.	\$ 5,502.27
General Fund	\$16,544,897.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$16,759,163.20</b>

**Expenditures (FY 07-08)**

Transfer/Disposal Fee to Waste Management	\$413,428.03
Collection Fees to GDS	\$202,956.29
Operation of Transfer Station	\$81,506.19
Operation of Convenience Centers	\$331,421.15
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$1,029,311.66</b>

**Town of Burnsville**

	<b>Solid Waste Collection</b>	<b>Solid Waste Disposal</b>	<b>Reduction, Reuse and Recycling</b>	<b>Mulching, Composting and Other Programs</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
<b>Program Cost</b>	\$70,181	\$3,344	-	\$500	\$74,025

The county recently purchased a skid loader for recyclables. The condition of current county solid waste infrastructure and equipment is good. Within the next ten years, the county will evaluate the need to expand the transfer station, as well as the need to purchase new recycling processing equipment, such as a horizontal baler and new scales.

**Executive Summary**

Yancey County will continue to provide all county citizens with waste collection services and waste reduction opportunities through the six convenience centers, and the transfer station. Projected growth in the county does not warrant additional collection sites at this time. The current recycling methods will continue and be maintained. The county has a mulching

operation at the transfer station to provide mulch to county residents at little or no cost. Current procedures for handling special wastes are adequate and will continue.

With a per capita disposal rate of 0.64 for FY 2004-05, the 2006 goal was achieved. Therefore, the County retained the FY 2012-2013 goal of 40%, and set a new FY 2015-2016 goal of 40% as well.

Yancey County's FY 2007-08 per capita disposal rate was 0.79, a 23% increase over FY 2004-05. The County's new FY 2018-19 will be 40%.

### **Yancey County Waste Reduction Goals**

- Goal 1.** To meet the County's waste reduction goals.
- Goal 2.** To provide everyone in the community with efficient and cost-effective waste collection services and waste reduction opportunities.
- Goal 3.** To increase the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the solid waste program.
- Goal 4.** To provide educational materials to businesses and communities wishing to increase the effectiveness of their solid waste reduction programs.
- Goal 5.** To protect public health and the environment.