

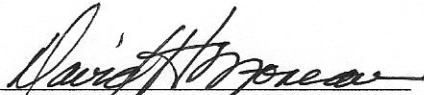
**Cooperative Agreement between the
Environmental Management Commission, the Division of Water Resources,
and the Lumber River Council of Governments**

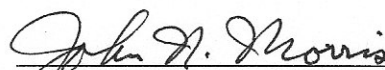
October 14, 2004

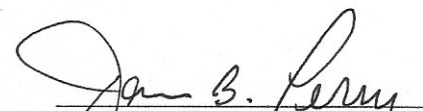
This cooperative agreement between the Environmental Management Commission, the Division of Water Resources, and the Lumber River Council of Governments (which represents local governments and stakeholders in Bladen, Columbus, Hoke, Robeson, Sampson and Scotland Counties) will assure that ground water levels and withdrawals are monitored and recorded, that a regional plan for long-range, sustainable water supply sources is developed, and that ground water level declines are managed to avoid damage to the aquifers. The EMC will review progress at least annually to assure that the specific milestones are met. The agreement allows local water users the opportunity to take responsibility for planning and managing water resources on a long range, sustainable basis. The EMC retains the authority to begin the development of capacity use area rules at any time if it determines that progress under this agreement to resolve water management problems is not satisfactory.

The region's water users and the LRCOG will undertake the following strategies and objectives:

- improve the regional monitoring well network with a goal of investing \$150,000 per year over five years
- By February 2006, Smithfield Foods, Inc. is expected to develop a plan for sustainable water sources either acting alone or in partnership with Bladen County and possibly with other users. The plan must be satisfactory to the Division of Water Resources. Smithfield Foods or a partnership of water users, if such a partnership is formed, will make quarterly progress reports to the Division starting in January 2005.
- alternative water sources planning assistance by LRCOG to regional water users, including: shifting users to surface water sources, using reclaimed water, reducing waste of water and improving water use efficiency, developing shallower aquifers, and adding interconnections among water systems
- arrange a 2005 agricultural water use survey by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services with periodic updates
- develop conservation and reuse strategies for each sector of water supply, including assistance from the Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance with industrial users; efforts by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension with irrigators, agri-business and intensive livestock users; and efforts by LRCOG to promote water efficiency rate structures and public water system transmission line integrity
- develop regional water supply plans for 2030 that encompass additional water sources, environmental protection, inter-system cooperation, and regional water resource management


Dr. David H. Moreau, Chairman
Environmental Management
Commission


John N. Morris, Director
Division of Water Resources


James B. Perry, Executive
Director
Lumber River Council of
Governments