

# Yes In My Backyard! Creating YIMBYS in Wilmington, NC



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# Does this look familiar?



# Why the opposition?

- Misunderstanding
- Fear
- Lack of involvement
- IF only they knew the facts

# Presentation Includes

- Case study of Burnt Mill Creek and the snowballing support for stormwater management
  - A brief history of Burnt Mill Creek
  - Our approach to involving citizens
  - Two solid examples of YIMBYISM in the making
  - Top tips for fostering YIMBYs

# Local Watershed Planning 2001-2002



## Sponsored NC Ecosystem Enhancement Program

- Public kick-off meeting
- Conducted Situation assessment
  - i.d. stakeholders, conflicts, focus watersheds
- Convened local watershed group
- Focus on Burnt Mill Creek & 2 other watersheds

# Burnt Mill Creek: 303(d) stream



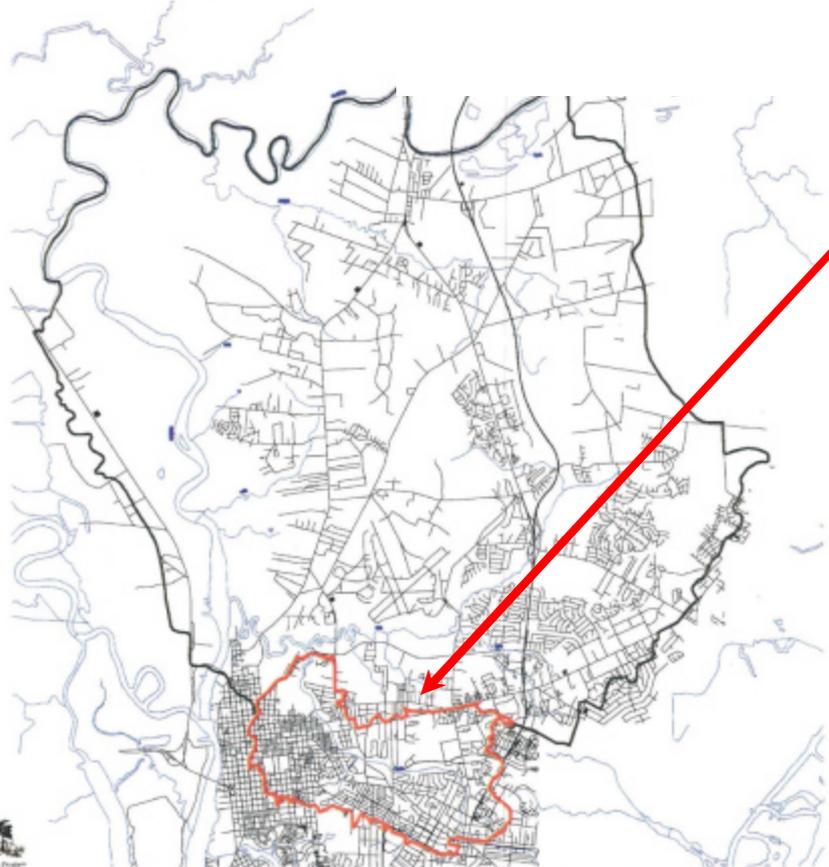
Burnt Mill Creek Subcatchment



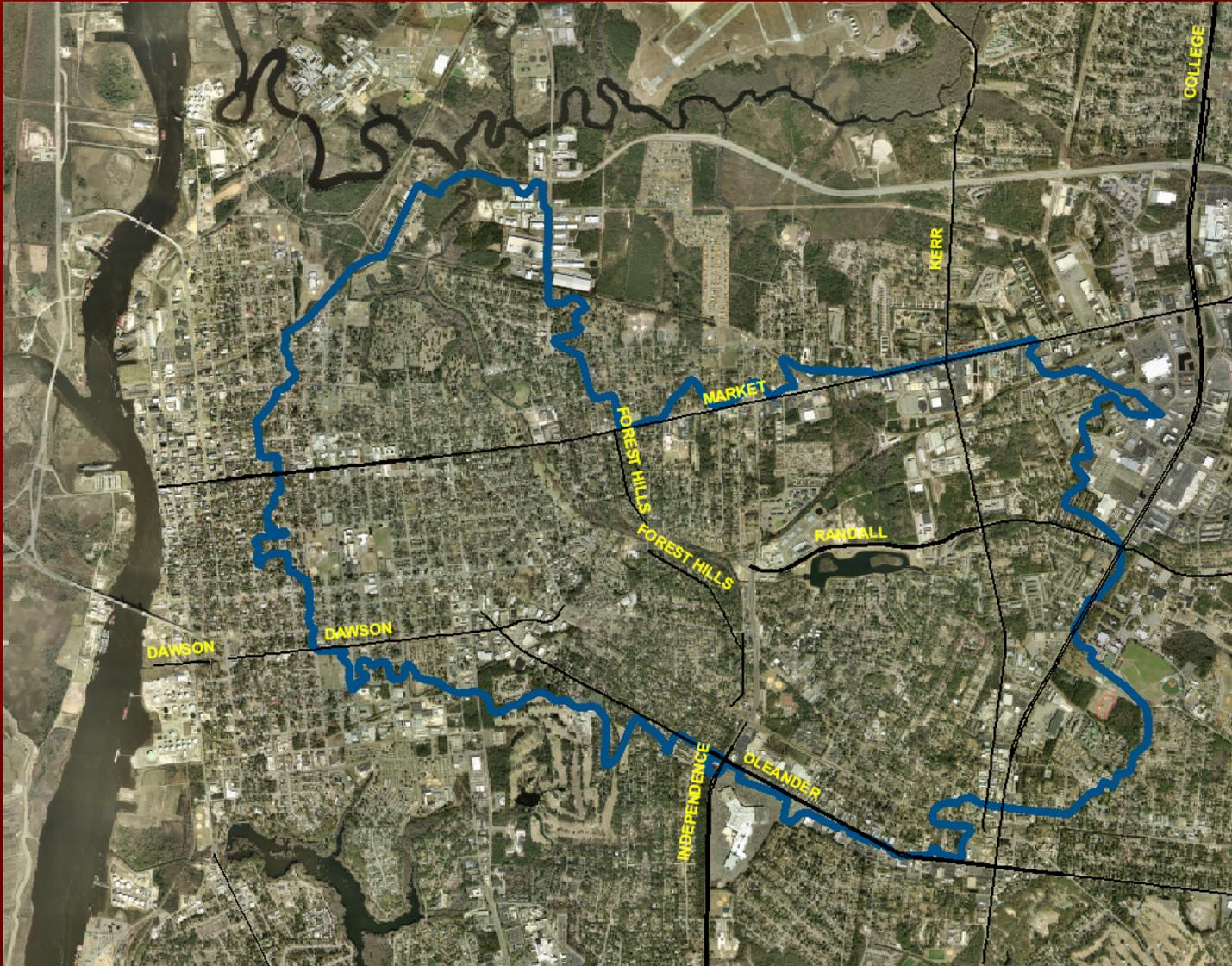
-  Burnt Mill Creek Subcatchment
-  Hydrologic Unit Boundary
-  Streams
-  Roads



6000 0 6000 12000 18000 Feet



# Burnt Mill Creek Watershed, Wilmington, NC



# Local Watershed Plan: Burnt Mill Creek stressors

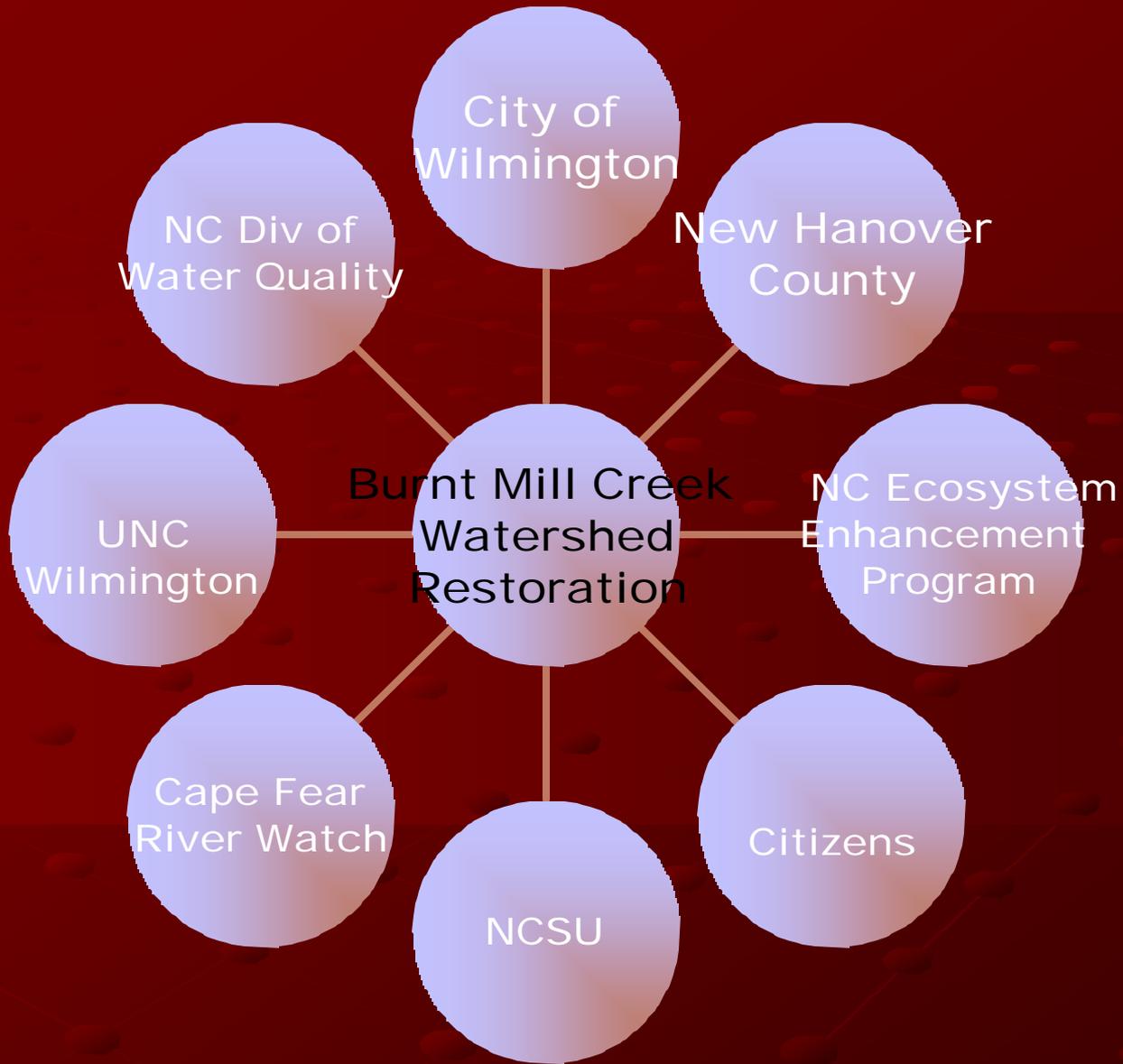
- Heavy urbanization=  
increased stormwater  
flows
  - Polycyclic aromatic  
hydrocarbons  
PAHs(toxic!)
  - Bacteria



# Burnt Mill Creek Recommendations

- Widespread stormwater BMPs retro-fits
  - reduce stormwater flows & remove pollution
- Stream restoration
  - NCEEP restoring creek section and Mineral Springs branch
- Public education to increase acceptance of BMPs, reduce pollutants





# EPA 319 Grant



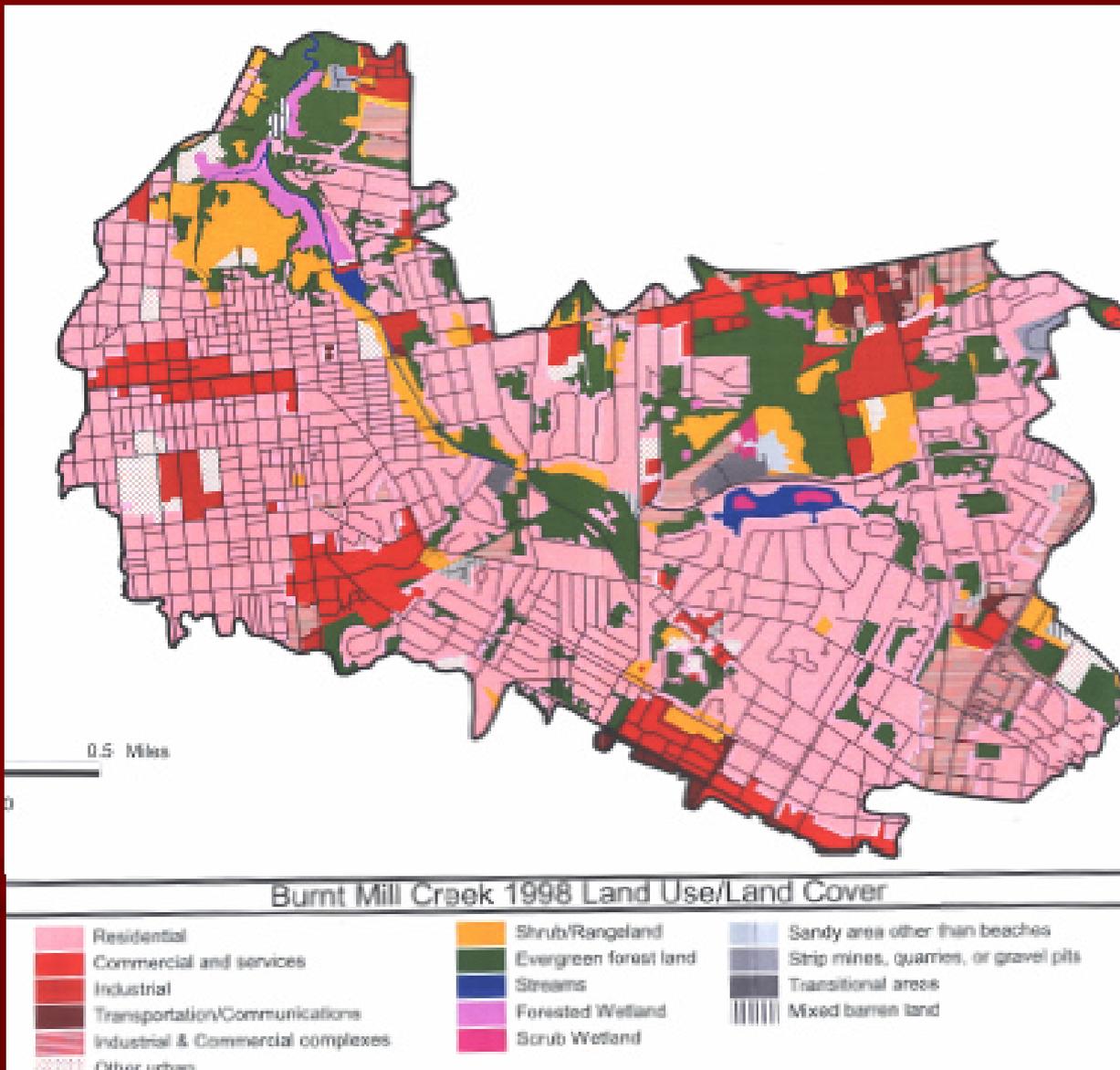
1. Design and construct retro-fit BMPs
2. Community outreach and involvement, resulting in many small backyard BMPs
3. Water quality monitoring

# 2002-2004 EPA grant-City of Wilmington

- Demo BMPs in city park
- Media campaign & workshops
- Final survey (UNC-W) indicated:
  - Residents familiar with *nonstructural BMPs* (pet waste pickup, for example)
  - Education needed on *structural BMPs* for these to actually be installed
  - Targeted, intense outreach efforts needed to get BMPs in the ground

## Burnt Mill Creek Land Use

- 55% Residential
- 19% Commercial & industrial



# Challenges

- Identifying locations for BMPs
- Convincing landowners to participate in installing BMPS!

Residential:  
Single family  
Multi-family homes

Public Parks

Commercial &  
Industrial

# Targeted outreach approach

1. Approach potential partners
2. Come to them with presentation
  - At their meetings, home, business
  - Ask @ their interests
3. Design BMPs to address their concerns
4. Involve volunteers in installation
5. Promote efforts through media and signs
6. Provide maintenance guide book
7. Follow-up - are they happy?

# BMPs in multi-family residential

- Stonestrow Townhomes wetland



# BMPs in community spaces

- Family YMCA BMP treatment train





# BMPs at Commercial sites

Port City Java Corporate  
Headquarters  
parking lot raingarden





# YIMBY Ex. #1: Wetland proposed in Municipal Park



# A Walk in the park?

- Concerns raised
- Second workshop planned to address impacts on:
  - Recreation
  - Aesthetic
  - Environment
- Will involve L.A.



# YIMBY Ex. #2: Residential backyard BMP retro-fits

- Criteria for selecting target area
  - An area where larger BMPs not likely due to land constraints
  - Benefit an underserved community
  - Potential for replication



- ✓ older, economically diverse community
- ✓ subject to frequent floods
- ✓ small lots

# New partnership: Bottoms Empowerment Group

- Their goals:  
improving safety, uplifting community



# To Work in the Bottoms

## BEG said:

- Yes- we want to work with you and will help!
- Install neighborhood demonstration BMPS
- Interest will be yard beautification
- Hold workshops in a community space

# Bottoms Demonstrations

- Gregory Elementary School of Science and math





Gregory Elementary School



# FREE WORKSHOP: BEAUTIFUL YARD, STRONG COMMUNITY & A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT!

ONE YARD AT A TIME! LEARN HOW ON SATURDAY, JUNE 10

Call Jennifer Butler, City of Wilmington Stormwater Services,  
Jennifer.butler@wilmingtonnc.gov, or 348-4777. RSVP requested, but not required.



#### Workshop Participants will:

- Learn how storm water pollutes streams & contributes to flooding and health problems
- Learn how to use rainwater to beautify your home, church, school, or business
- Help identify places in the community that may be good sites for trees
- Potentially qualify for free rebs, and other help with it
- Enjoy snacks and lunch to

#### Sponsored by:

- The Bottom Empowerment Group
- North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension
- City of Wilmington

**SATURDAY, JUNE**  
At the Williston Midd  
Cafeteria, 10th Street



# Raingardens in the Bottoms



Residents' backyards



Anderson Tabernacle Church

# Rainwater Harvesting

- 10 Residential rainbarrels
- 2 at Neighborhood Community Center
- Cistern at Gregory Elementary





★  
BMPs

★  
Represents  
many  
potential  
backyard  
BMPs

# Results so far...

- Parking lot, road, & rooftop runoff treated
  - Townhome community wetland
  - YMCA treatment train
  - Port City Java raingarden
  - Gregory Elementary raingarden
  - Church raingarden
  - Backyard raingarden (2 so far)
- Rainwater harvesting at homes, community center
- BMPs incorporated into school and afterschool curriculums

# Top 6 Tips for Fostering YIMBYISM

6. B-4 acting assess the situation
5. Involve the public early and frequently to create sense of ownership
4. Ask partners how to involve their community (and use their suggestions!)



# Top 6 Tips for Fostering YIMBYISM\*

3. Be flexible but also communicate the project constraints (\$, time, etc.)
2. Incorporate landowner concerns into BMP designs
1. Embrace conflict as a creative opportunity!

*\*and having \$ for BMPs doesn't hurt...*

With thoughtful public  
involvement,  
Pretty soon, they'll be saying  
**YES! IN MY BACKYARD!!**



# Public Involvement resources

- Training collaborative skills to watershed groups:

[www.ncsu.edu/WECO](http://www.ncsu.edu/WECO) (resources)

- International Association for Public Participation

[www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

