

UNRBA's Process for Developing Revised Falls Lake Nutrient Rules

2011 - 2014 Planning and Agency Approvals

- Falls Lake Rules adopted in 2011 (15A NCAC 02B .0275)
- UNRBA Framework for Re-examining the 2011 Falls Nutrient Rules
- UNRBA Monitoring Program and Monitoring Quality Assurance Project Plan
- UNRBA Modeling Framework, Concept Modeling Plan, and Modeling Quality Assurance Project Plan

2014 – 2022 Monitoring Studies, Research Efforts, and Nutrient Credit Development

- Monthly water quality sampling in lake and watershed (August 2014 to October 2018)
- UNRBA and Division of Water Resources Nutrient Credit Development Project
- Session Law 2016-94 formed the NC Collaboratory and set a schedule for research studies and final report
- Session Law 2018-5 revised the schedule for the NC Collaboratory studies and required Falls Rules Readoption to commence following submittal final recommendations and studies
- UNRBA and NC Collaboratory Special Studies: water movement and circulation, lake bathymetry, storm flow and high flow sampling, lake sediment studies, nitrogen and organic carbon cycling, algal toxins, streambank erosion, zooplankton-phytoplankton dynamics, and nutrient loading from onsite wastewater treatment systems

2016 – 2023 Watershed and Lake Modeling

- UNRBA Watershed Analysis Risk Management Framework (combined watershed and lake model)
- UNRBA Environmental Fluid Dynamics Code (EFDC lake model)
- UNRBA Statistical/Bayesian lake model

2022 – 2023 Recommendations for a Revised Nutrient Management Strategy

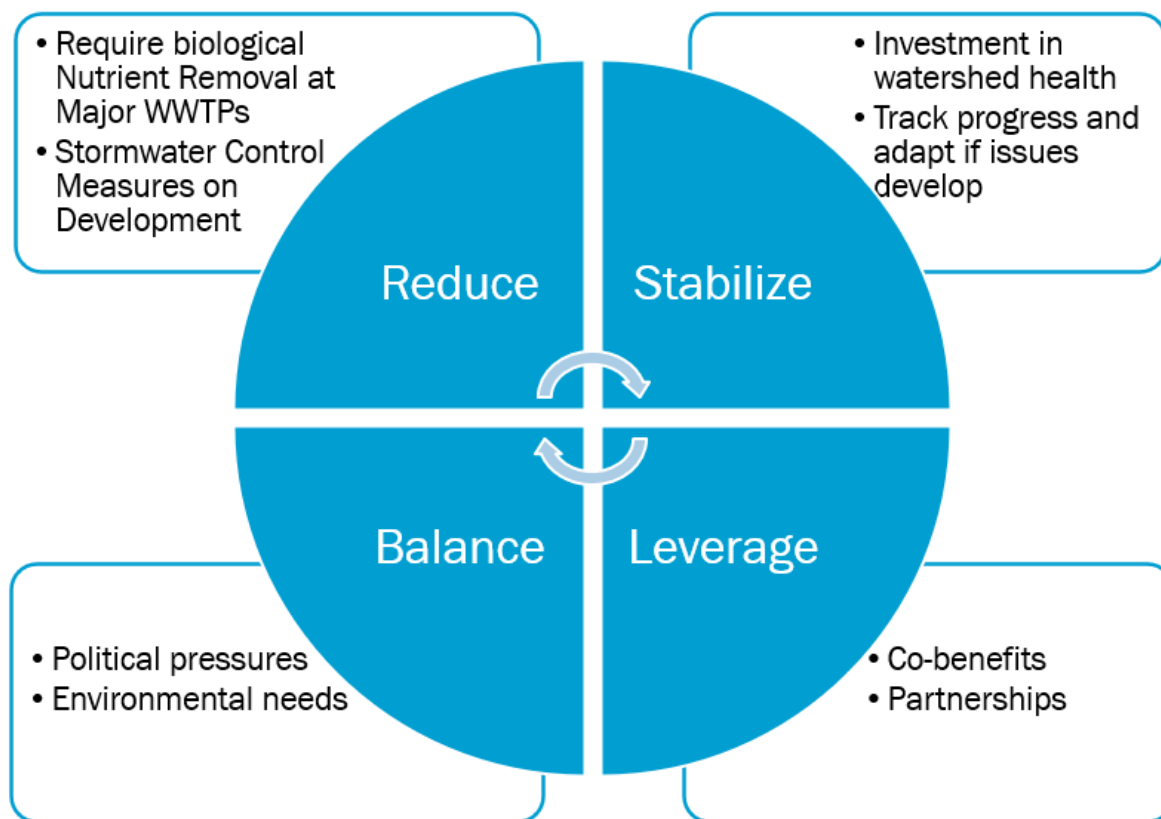
- UNRBA Consensus Principles II and Concepts and Principles for Revised Falls Lake Rules, November 2023
- NC Collaboratory Falls Lake Study Report, December 2023

2024 to 2027 – Rules Development and Readoption Process

- UNRBA Workgroup Process (20 stakeholder meetings between December 2024 and April 2025 including representatives from local governments, utilities, home builders, agriculture, environmental interests groups, land conservation organizations, and NC Division of Water Resources)
- UNRBA Path Forward Committee and Expanded Stakeholder Process (5 stakeholder meetings from May 2025 to September 2025 including an expanded list of representatives from types of organizations listed above plus nutrient credit bankers, river keepers, and operators/owners of minor wastewater treatment plants)
- Iterative reviews of UNRBA draft rule language between each meeting to address stakeholder feedback
- DWR provided the UNRBA with their draft rules on August 25, 2025.
- DWR held one stakeholder meeting on June 24, 2025 to discuss their concepts.
- UNRBA anticipates bringing our draft rules to the EMC in November 2025 as an information item.
- Following development of supplemental fiscal information, UNRBA plans to bring a petition for rule making to the Commission in January or March 2026. This represents a slight delay in our previously discussed schedule.
- UNRBA is working to incorporate some of the DWR rule language into our rule package when their language is simplified or improved relative to ours.

The UNRBA has invested over \$11 million in local, tax payer money to study Falls Lake and its watershed. We have developed well-vetted, science-based rules that are feasible and acceptable to a wide range of stakeholders. Our goal remains to work through the formal process to achieve readopted rules by March 2027.

UNRBA's Integrated Approach to Watershed Management



Links to Reference Documents

- UNRBA [Consensus Principles II](#) to guide development of the revised Falls Lake Rules
 - Based on scientific conclusions resulting from a 10-year evaluation of Falls Lake and its watershed by the [UNRBA](#), [NC Collaboratory](#), and [other organizations](#)
 - Companion document: "[Concepts and Principles for the UNRBA Recommendations for a Revised Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy](#)"
 - History of Falls Reservoir and Falls Rules
 - Summary of [key findings](#) from modeling and monitoring
 - Recommendations for revised nutrient management strategy
- [UNRBA 2019 Comprehensive Monitoring Report](#) (ambient monitoring and special studies)
- NC Collaboratory research studies and Falls Lake Report
- [Falls Lake water quality evaluation](#) conducted by Dr. Marty Lebo to support development of Falls specific assessment methodology
- [UNRBA Watershed Modeling Report](#) (summarizes sources of nutrient loading and importance of rainfall)
- [UNRBA Lake Modeling Report](#) (summarizes historic water quality monitoring data and use support information)
- Final Program Document: Stage I Existing Development Interim Alternative Implementation Approach ([IAIA](#))
- [UNRBA Nutrient Credit Study](#)
- [UNRBA Planning for the Re-examination](#) with Task links available here: <https://unrba.org/resource-library>
- Additional information available online in the UNRBA Resource Library: <https://unrba.org/resource-library>.
- An overview of the UNRBA and our work is outlined on our website: <https://unrba.org/>
- To review past meeting materials and upcoming meeting notices, visit our meeting page: <https://unrba.org/meeting>