

# DENR SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

**POLICY** Eff. Date: Dec 1, 2001

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and its Divisions are expected to take real and permanent steps to reduce unwanted environmental impacts in their daily activities and projects. All DENR Divisions should implement their own sustainability projects and make sure that employees have access to environmental education resources and materials.

## DENR SUSTAINABILITY TEAM

### MISSION

To raise employee awareness of the consequences of our actions and make DENR a model of sustainability by promoting the implementation of positive environmental stewardship initiatives in the Department and by encouraging employee involvement and recognition consistent with the State Government Sustainability Plan.

## DENR SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS - As of April 2005

These are DENR's 39 initial Department wide sustainability projects. The DENR Sustainability Liaisons Team, working on a few projects at a time, started the projects in September of 2000. Completed projects to date are marked with a star. All of the projects are applied wherever possible across all 22 DENR Divisions. Projects with a STOP sign were tried and failed to have at least some success. The list also includes successful projects adopted by the different DENR Sustainability teams that were not initially listed.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

- ★ 1. Work with the Office of Environmental Education to provide monthly Environmental Education training for all DENR employees emphasizing environmental sustainability. *Benefits and savings:* Increase employee awareness and understanding of environmental education concepts. Improve employee awareness and support for environmental sustainability.
- ★ 2. Encourage and offer incentives for State Government employees to receive Environmental Education Certification. *Benefits and savings:* Provide employees with the knowledge to make their constituents aware of environmental education resources in the Department. Ensure that employees adopt a sense of stewardship and a conservation ethic that is expected of this Department.

### PAPER REDUCTION

- ★ 3. Provide electronic copy of Up-Close (DENR Newsletter), DENR Weekly Vacancy Report, and other departmental communications for employees who would prefer electronic copy. Also, encourage divisions and division support groups to adopt electronic communications with interested parties. (For some remote DENR locations, a printed copy may be necessary.) *Benefits and savings:* Reduce copy time, paper use, and distribution expenses.
- ★ 4. Adopt a policy for DENR and State Government electronic forms and paperwork. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce paper consumption and waste, cost savings in decreased paper purchases.
- ★ 5. Put DENR letterhead in an electronic format so that it can be printed on a per-use basis. When names change, update letterhead electronically. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce paper consumption and waste, cost savings in decreased paper purchases and eliminate need for stockpiled letterhead.
- ★ 6. Reduce the margins in letters and use smaller letterhead (including DENR letterhead) *Benefits and savings:* Reduce paper consumption and waste, cost savings in decreased paper purchases.
- ★ 7. Support the use of telephone books on CD. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce paper consumption and waste through phone books that are not recycled.
- 8. Rethink the state initiative requiring forms from outside vendors to be printed double-sided and on recycled paper. Perhaps "request" instead of "require". *Benefits and savings:* Improve compliance with initiative

### RECYCLING

- ★ 9. Install a recycling center in Archdale, Parker Lincoln and other remote sites with colorful and new/larger recycling bins (in addition to existing recycling bins on individual floors and spaces) *Benefits and savings:* Improve use of recycling facilities, less waste disposal, facilitate recycling pickup.
- 10. Expand recycling capabilities to include diverse items such as solvents and scrap materials *Benefits and savings:* Reduce waste disposal and improve recycling.
- 11. Coordinate Raleigh/Wake County recycling effort and composting (possibly in collaboration with the Department of Administration's Services to the Blind). Widely publicize where recycling sites exist and the type of items they accept by county. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce waste disposal and improve recycling.
- ★ 12. Implement coordinated recycling programs for regional offices that extend beyond a single Division's offices. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce waste disposal and improve recycling.
- ★ 13. Purchase recycled construction supplies for new construction projects and for building improvements and upgrades. (Utilize the Environmental Protection Agency's RTP site as guide/model.)
- ★ 14. Encourage the reuse of office materials such as envelopes and folders. *Benefits and Savings:* Reduce waste and expenses for purchasing new materials.
- 15. Organize a universal collection for materials that can be returned to their source for recycling or reuse. *Benefits and Savings:* Reduce waste.
- ★ 16. Construct environmentally sustainable buildings for State Government. *Benefits and Savings:* Energy and water conservation, reduction of waste.

### TRAFIC REDUCTION AND AIR POLLUTION

- ★ 17. Purchase more alternative fuel vehicles. *Benefits and savings:* Decrease air pollution; increase market of alternative fuel vehicles and their support services in North Carolina.
- ★ 18. Install State Employees' Credit Union ATM and snack bars in Archdale, the Parker Lincoln Building, and other remote sites. *Benefits and savings:* Decrease driving; increase productivity, as periodic work absence would decrease.
- 19. Investigate mileage requirement for cars. Some divisions have a minimum mileage requirement for their vehicles and they must meet the requirement in order to maintain possession of the vehicles. In some instances, this requirement has led to those divisions unnecessarily driving the vehicles in an effort to meet the requirement. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce cost and use of fuel, decreased air pollution, reduce loss of employee productivity as a result of less time dedicated to driving vehicles.
- ★ 20. Implement a 4-day week or 9-80 work plan. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce air pollution as a result of decreased vehicles on the roads. Can reduce workplace absence as a result of employees using off-days for personal business rather than taking time away from work.
- ★ 21. Build on existing telecommuting/teleworking pilot and expand pilot to other DENR Divisions. *Benefits and savings:* Reduce air pollution as a result of decreased vehicles on the roads. Can reduce loss in productivity as a result of occasional employee need to stay at home for personal reasons.

22. **Create a system for teleconferencing** *Benefits and savings:* Reduce air pollution as a result of decreased vehicles on the roads.

23. **Create a carpool web site for meeting coordination** *Benefits and savings:* Reduces use of state vehicles, fuel costs, and air pollution.

24. **Create a carpool/vanpool web site for employee travel to and from work.** *Benefits and savings:* Reduces air pollution and employee expenditures associated with travel and parking.

25. **Designate a Motor Fleet Vehicle for those employees who carpool or vanpool to work and which can be used to run personal errands.** *Benefits and savings:* Encourages participation in carpool opportunities.

26. **Implement remote training (outside Raleigh) for Divisions with field offices.** *Benefits and savings:* Reduces use of state vehicles, fuel costs, and air pollution.

#### **MATERIALS REUSE AND REDUCTION**

27. **Develop system for communication and/or web site for materials prior to placing on state surplus.** *Benefits and savings:* Increase usability of materials and reduces waste.

28. **Create a cost-structure with the snack bars to allow for reusable mugs and wares.** *Benefits and savings:* Reduces waste, decreases costs for purchasing disposable wares.

29. **Implement policy of eliminating box lunches and recovering food from meetings, conferences, and award ceremonies for homeless shelter, etc.** *Benefits and savings:* Reduces waste

#### **OTHER**

30. **Create departmental sustainability coordinator position.** *Benefits and savings:* Facilitate implementation of improved sustainability in DENR divisions.

31. **Produce periodic news releases for sustainability initiatives/make Public Affairs campaign a priority.** *Benefits and savings:* Promote State and DENR's efforts to become more environmentally sustainable, will encourage support for sustainability.

32. **Have Division of Pollution Prevention conduct waste assessments on each Division** *Benefits and savings:* Improve implementation of state initiative for waste assessments, potential for decreased waste, energy and water use as a result of assessments.

33. **Create a cost-saving reward program or add environmental sustainability as a category in the existing reward program.** *Benefits and savings:* Create an incentive for employees to promote sustainability, reduce costs through those measures that provide a reduction in expenses upon implementation.

34. **Initiate a mandatory employee environmental sustainability-training program.** *Benefits and savings:* Improves compliance with sustainability initiatives and improves employee awareness.

35. **Encourage cross-departmental collaboration.** *Benefits and savings:* Facilitate implementation of sustainability, as benefits would be spread throughout departments. Depending upon specific action undertaken, costs could be reduced dramatically.

36. **Use small engine equipment that is high in energy efficiency.** *Benefits and savings:* Energy conservation.

37. **Install water saving devices** *Benefits and savings:* Savings in water usage and associated expenses.

38. **Install timing devices for lighting and climate control and purchase and recycle energy conserving bulbs.** *Benefits and savings:* Reduces energy consumption when buildings and rooms are empty and decreases energy costs for normal building usage.

39. **Work with the Division of Water Resources to implement xeriscaping (water efficient landscaping) in the Environmental Education Garden to use as a model for the eventual replacement of the existing irrigation system with drip irrigation for all State Government landscaping. Work with Water Resources to insure more efficient managing of the all of downtown state landscape irrigation.** *Benefits and savings:* Savings in water usage and associated expenses.

#### **★ Non-mandated DENR team projects completed ★**

1. Provide an Electronic Copy of 'Up Close' Newsletter - Now a regular feature
2. Implementing a 4 day work week or 9-80 work week - In the hands of Senior Staff
3. Install or Update Recycling Centers in DENR facilities - All that possible centers are in place
4. Construct Sustainable Buildings for State Government – DENR Representative on State Building Commission
5. Encourage Cross-Departmental Collaboration - Represented on NC Project Green Team
6. Expand Telecommuting / Teleworking Pilot - In hands of senior staff but several divisions are doing on their own
7. Develop Sustainability power point slide orientation - Completed
8. Suspend Use of DENR 'Leave' Forms – Completed
9. Recycle cards for Divisions - Tabled for lack printing and division acceptance
10. Expand sustainability web site – completed but has problem for timely maintenance and updating
11. Adopt a sustainability policy and procedure for DENR – Completed and in force just needs lots of advertising
12. Create and post "Up One, Down Two" signs to encourage the use of the stairs – completed w/ signs posted but follow-up to see if it has reduced the Archdale building electric bill has not been done.
13. Completed a DENR Sustainability Team Manual
14. The DENR Awards Program now has a category for Sustainability (it is on line and waiting for a nomination at any time)
15. The 2004 team completed work on instituting a DENR High Performance Green Building policy Originally started by the 2003 team. Green building procedure was shelved to allow versatility for DENR agencies to achieve energy efficient environmentally construction and renovations/repairs.)

#### **Current Active Team Projects**

- Project No. 34 - **Initiate a mandatory employee environmental sustainability-training program** - *Benefits and savings:* Improves compliance with sustainability initiatives and improves employee awareness - has been progressing slowly under the 2003 Team. Div. of Human resources has only offered to allow handouts for new employee training.
- The 2004 Team is working on establishing DENR wide teleworking and telecommuting, and updating **project 20**. Previous DENR pilot program a few years ago was successful in the participating divisions. However no further movement was made to expand teleworking to other DENR divisions.
- The 2004 Team is operating monthly education program "12 Green Things" what every DENR employee needs to know about sustainability in the office. Each month a different theme is introduced.
- OEE is maintaining an educational series (It seems to be very successful in its secondary effect of building an atmosphere of things can be made better by sustainability.)