

**Testimony to the Environmental Management Commission**  
**CONCERNED STUDENTS IN THE TRIANGLE**  
Andrew Campbell, WakeUP Wake County  
July 1, 2010

Chlorophyll A, low oxygen levels, cyanobacteria, fish kills, contaminants, closed for swimming, high nutrient levels, ecological collapse, drinking water. One of these terms just does not fit.

As a student, I moved to Wake County to study at a nearby university and am continually impressed by how intelligent, well-educated, and well-informed Triangle-area residents are. As the nation's 'smartest region', how did we reach this point? Why is our drinking water contaminated?

Throughout my academic experience at NC State professors, researchers, and practitioners have all heralded LID or low impact development strategies as the primary solution for stormwater challenges. For many years, other communities in the United States like Seattle Washington, Montgomery County Maryland, and Boston Massachusetts have all updated watershed protection rules and generously incentivized and in many cases, mandated LID practices as a baseline standard. Why has the Triangle fallen behind with Falls Lake? **The problem is clear** - poorly designed development around the watershed and associated stormwater runoff are responsible for polluting the lake. So, why do we allow outdated development practices to continue, particularly in a watershed that supplies over 400,000 Triangle residents with drinking water?

As a relative newcomer to the Triangle, a life-long North Carolinian, a student, future taxpayer and potential long-term resident of Wake County I am worried about the future of my drinking water. In 25 years I will be 47. When I am 47, I would like to celebrate a cleaner Falls Lake, one devoid of terms like chlorophyll A and cyanobacteria. A Falls that is safe to swim in. A Falls that won't cost billions of dollars to treat with chemicals just so that the water is safe to drink. **There is no time to remodel or delay the cleanup process, we must act now by cleaning up the entire lake and instituting stronger development standards and retrofit requirements in the watershed.** My generation will inherit the successes and failures of the present. Together, we can make the Falls Lake cleanup process a success!