

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 903

Short Title: Water Resources Management Partnership Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Yarborough and Wray (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Appropriations

April 26, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY FOR REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS TO ESTABLISH
WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIPS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds that the encouragement of voluntary cooperation and partnerships among local governments, water and wastewater system users, and other stakeholders is necessary to make better use of limited local resources for water infrastructure and water resources management, to facilitate implementation of the State Water Infrastructure Authority's Statewide Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Master Plan, and to assist water and wastewater facilities in developing resiliency with respect to extreme weather events. The General Assembly further finds that these activities are complementary to and support the work of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Environmental Quality the sum of one million six hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$1,650,000) in nonrecurring funds for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the sum of one million six hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$1,650,000) in nonrecurring funds for fiscal year 2018-2019. Of these funds, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) shall be allocated to each of the State's 16 regional councils of government in each fiscal year. These funds shall be used by each regional council of governments to collaboratively develop and set priorities for non-regulatory regional water infrastructure and water resource management improvements through voluntary cooperation and partnerships among units of local governments, water and wastewater system users, other stakeholders, and the Department of Environmental Quality. The Department may use up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) of the funds appropriated by this section in each fiscal year for tasks related to the administration of this act, including review of the annual plan of work submitted by each regional council of governments and monitoring work performed by the council under the plan of work.

SECTION 3. Each regional council of governments shall develop and carry out a plan of work that shall include defined deliverables and schedules, and that may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) Establish partnerships for water infrastructure and resource management improvement to support sound economic development and address multiple, related issues impacting aging water and wastewater systems, including treatment facilities, drinking water distribution systems, and wastewater



1 collection systems, including response to drought and floods and long-term
2 water supply planning.

3 (2) Develop incentives and convene coalitions of local government units and
4 stakeholders to encourage strategic, regionally important water, wastewater,
5 and stormwater infrastructure investments.

6 (3) Coordinate resources and standards to develop water and wastewater asset
7 inventory and assessment plans that are specific to individual units of local
8 government, including the creation of current and digital water, wastewater,
9 and stormwater infrastructure maps, diagrams, and capacity attributes in
10 order to improve project identification and prioritization activities statewide.

11 (4) Identify multijurisdictional projects and activities that address water
12 quantity, water quality, and water infrastructure issues, including the
13 identification of opportunities for connections between water systems and
14 wastewater utility providers to achieve efficiencies and make systems more
15 drought resistant.

16 (5) Ensure that the projects and improvements set forth in this section
17 coordinate with water quality and watershed restoration projects funded by
18 the section 205(j) and section 319 grant programs administered by the
19 Department of Environmental Quality.

20 **SECTION 4.(a)** Funds appropriated by this act shall be paid in two equal
21 installments. The first payment shall be made only after compliance with subdivision (b)(1) of
22 this section, and subsequent payments shall be made only after compliance with subdivision
23 (b)(2) of this section.

24 **SECTION 4.(b)** Each regional council of governments receiving funds under this
25 act shall comply with the following requirements:

26 (1) Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the council shall submit to
27 the Department of Environmental Quality, the Joint Legislative Oversight
28 Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources, and the
29 Fiscal Research Division the council's annual plan of work, goals,
30 objectives, and proposed expenditures for the program.

31 (2) Each council shall submit to the Department of Environmental Quality and
32 the Fiscal Research Division a report no later than September 30 following
33 the end of each fiscal year for which funds are appropriated by this act
34 regarding the council's accomplishments, quality control measures, work
35 product time lines, and expenditures of funds appropriated by this act during
36 the prior fiscal year.

37 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.