

Inside the MGTF

Volume 2, Issue 1

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Our Mission:

- To facilitate regional planning responses to growth challenges, exacerbated by the substantial increase in military personnel.

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PlanIt EAST Forum Promotes Regionalism

An exciting new partnering strategy is at work in the region. The regional planning forum known as "PlanIt EAST" took a firm hold in our eight counties right from its beginnings in a hotel ballroom in New Bern in February. Regional thinkers and leaders came together in a first-of-its-kind seminar to survey their respective landscapes and identify what they consider to be their most glaring growth and planning challenges.

MGTF Director Mark Sutherland, one of several people who envisioned this planning partnership, started off the two day event with a warm welcome. "We will provide the forum and facilitate the process for those who want be involved in the planning processes, who are committed to attendance, and who want to take action. These are enlightened, positive, energetic people."

The forum featured several speakers who led the crowd into discussions of regional issues. One of the most significant regional challenges is limited water resources, particularly in light of future growth pressures. Dr. Richard Spruill, Associate Professor of Hydrology at East Carolina University led an energetic presentation on overburdened aquifers, salt-water intrusion, and increasing water demand. "The best part about this region is when there's a problem, people come together to solve it," said Dr. Spruill.

Bill McNeil, Certified Planner with the

Piedmont Triad Council of Governments and key leader in the state's Sustainable Communities movement, gave his perspective on how regions can change their approach to growth to create sustainable communities. "There is so much momentum in this room. If you try something, you make a plan, and it doesn't work, you're going to figure out what to do with it. Stick it back in the hopper and try again."

The PlanIt EAST delegates had to work together through exercises to identify existing conditions and anticipated trends if planning stays the same in the future. Some mapping exercises put the delegates to work by county, others by constituency: military, agriculture, conservation, local government, and developer. They also got some insight into what "outsiders" think of eastern North Carolina. Carron Day, Certified Planner with Planning Associates, presented them with "A Regional Planner's Overview," which detailed her findings while spending two months studying the region last summer. "The character of your communities is changing. And with planners across the region working in almost total isolation versus regionally, the area will continue to grow unsustainably."

The next PlanIt EAST forum will be held May 18-19 in Havelock. The delegates will begin identifying priority issues across the region and formulating a three-year work plan.



Duplin County



Jones County



Onslow County



Pender County

MGTF Receives Grant

The Eastern Region Military Growth Task Force has received a grant to continue working on comprehensive regional growth plans and projections. The MGTF was one of nine communities or organizations to receive grant money from the North Carolina Sustainable Communities Task Force (NCSCTF). This state task force was created last year by the General Assem-

ble to help prepare communities for population growth. The NCSCTF defines sustainable communities as ones that promote economic, human, and natural assets to meet the transportation, housing and other needs of residents.

The MGTF will receive \$13,000 over the next year to implement regional

plans across our eight counties. This includes the support of a regional planner, as well as the development of a sustainable corridors strategy (which analyzes the impacts of major transportation projects on workforce housing and land use plans).



The Military Growth Task Force is the topic of study for students pursuing a Master's degree in Public Administration at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

The Spring 2011 Capstone class at UNCW, led by Drs. Tom Barth and Laurie Paarlberg, will study the impact of the substantial increase in military personnel on eastern North Carolina. Professors Barth and Paarlberg decided on the topic after sifting through many proposed projects from community leaders, and after several discussions

MGTF Subject of College Class

with faculty and students.

MGTF Executive Director Mark Sutherland was invited to the UNC Wilmington campus in January to talk to the students and brief them on growth challenges in our 8 county region. He also gave them the opportunity to be a part of *PlanIt EAST*, the MGTF's regional planning partnership forum that kicked off in February.

Drs. Barth and Paarlberg wrote in an email sent to the MGTF and the class that this project is ideal because "it will allow student teams the freedom to choose one aspect of the broad topic that is of interest to them, whether it be sociological, political, economic, environmental, infrastructure, etc." Dr. Barth said this is a chance for the students to take on a real world problem of huge significance.

Before beginning their research, the students were introduced to the military and to the region during a tour of facilities, including the Onslow County Planning Department, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune's G-10 impact area, Marine Special Operations Command at Stone Bay, and the flight line at Marine Corps Air Station New River. They also looked over maps and engaged in discussion and questions with Mark Sutherland, Senior Analyst Amber Kumor, and Jacksonville City Manager Ron Massey.

The students decided on their respective areas of focus for the project and quickly started studying regional growth impacts. They eagerly attended the February *PlanIt EAST* workshop. The MGTF staff is looking forward to working with UNCW and seeing the Capstone class' project culminations.

MGTF Featured in NCCOAST Annual Edition

NC COAST magazine asked the Military Growth Task Force to be part of its annual edition highlighting eastern North Carolina's rural makeup and unique regional attributes. The February through April edition of the NCCOAST Business Journal details the economic picture in the region from tourism and small business to military, transportation and infrastructure.

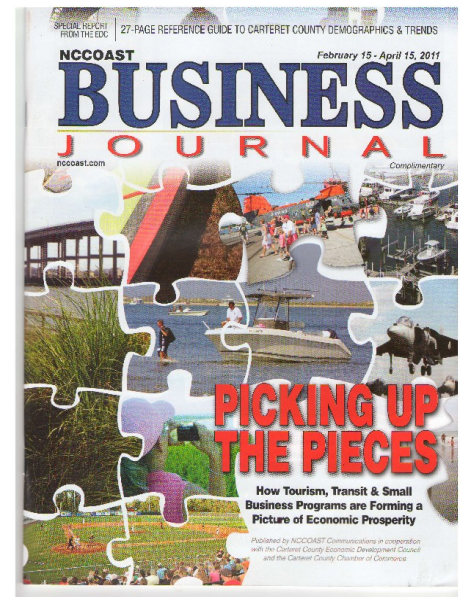
The article submitted by the MGTF (pg. 24) is part of a segment in the magazine called "Here We Grow." The article explains the burst in military population in the region and documents the continued work by the MGTF and our counties to mitigate the growing pains.

With an estimated 83,000+ people moving to the eight county area, regional collabora-

tions to recruit additional medical staff, implement additional housing and infrastructure options, allocate resources for workforce development, and address transportation and safety needs while preserving the rural makeup of the region are essential.

The MGTF continues to assist our counties in building partnerships, seeking grant opportunities, and encouraging regional collaboration in order to accommodate growth. The regional planning forum *PlanIt EAST* brings together leaders from our eight counties to foster a regional perspective on growth issues and to achieve consensus solutions to the associated community challenges.

Go to our website, www.nceastmgtf.org and look under "Latest News" to read more from this article.



The Military Growth Task Force and the North Carolina Military Business Center hosted a defense contractor's workshop in Pamlico County in March. More than 70 people, from small business owners to local leaders to educators gathered at the Ned

Defense Contractor's Workshop

Everett Delamar Center at Pamlico Community College in Grantsboro, to learn how they could maximize their potential to win government and military contracts in the region. County Commissioner Kenny Heath, who suggested the workshop to the MGTF, welcomed everyone to the event and kicked things off by introducing some of the presenters. Don Spry, Senior Area Manager for the Small Business Administration, talked about business growth through lending and expansion. Cindy Baldwin, with the Small Business Technology and Development Center, talked about business mentoring programs, how to stand out from the crowd when applying for defense or government contracts, and subcontractor markets.

Bert Linkonis, Military Business Coordinator with the NC Military Business Center, highlighted current opportunities and reminded the attendees about MatchForce.org, a website that matches North Carolina businesses with government contracts, purchasers, and North Carolina suppliers. Finally, Jo Rozier, Marine Corps Installations EAST, dispelled the myths of working with the military and government and stressed that business owners register with the U.S. Federal Contractor Registration. The workshop culminated with networking opportunities and a hands-on computer tutorial to teach small business owners and subcontractors how to apply for federal contracts. Thanks to all who attended!

Veterans Initiative Project Regional Workshop

The Veterans Initiative Project (VIP) has been a huge success across the region. And now there is even more opportunity to continue that success.

This grant-funded program awarded to the Military Growth Task Force, Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board (ECWDB), and several partners, helps veterans, exiting military and active duty spouses get money for education and training. As the grant comes to an end in June, VIP contractors and administrators are now focused on helping the participants find jobs.

“The goal of VIP is to put participants to work,” says Wendy Walker-Fox, VIP Project Coordinator for the Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, the administrator of this grant. “That is the outcome we’re looking for...individuals moving into sustainable employment in eastern North Carolina.”

Hundreds of people have participated in the VIP program, and nearly a third of them have already completed their training. They’re equipped with certifications or degrees in fields such as commercial transportation, emergency medical support, banking, and medical coding and billing.

The MGTf and ECWDB are organizing a regional workshop to prepare participants for employment. “The Career Fair Success Strategies Workshop will cover how a job candidate should introduce themselves to a prospective employer...a quick snapshot of themselves as a job candidate. I want to equip the VIP participants with questions they need to ask during a career fair and how they need to prepare,” says Wendy Walker-Fox. The workshop will include mock interviews, lessons on resume building, and discussions with area employers on desirable qualifications.

Good News!

VIP Participants Enrolled:	326
Completed Training:	99
Currently Employed:	99
Employment Is Related to Training:	75

Program totals provided courtesy of the Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board.

Walker-Fox anticipates scheduling more than one workshop in the coming weeks in order to suit the VIP participants’ schedules. If you’re interested in attending this workshop, call Wendy Walker-Fox at (252)636-6901.

VIP is made possible through a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It is open to veterans, active duty spouses, and exiting military in Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender and Wayne counties.

Governor’s Military Affairs Advisor Visits MGTf



Governor Beverly Perdue has hired a new military affairs advisor, who visited the Military Growth Task Force office in Swansboro as one of his first stops on the job.

Col. John Nicholson (USMC Ret.) will lead Governor Perdue’s efforts to coordinate and

grow jobs through North Carolina’s military and defense economy. He will also work as a liaison to leaders at military installations statewide, as well as military and veteran groups, defense businesses and economic development organizations.

Col. Nicholson visited the MGTf office in January to make a friendly introduction, meet our staff, and learn more about our mission and initiatives. MGTf Executive Director Mark Sutherland briefed Col. Nicholson on the substantial increase in military growth within the

region and the growing pains it presents for our counties. Col. Nicholson recognized the regional impacts and the lost capacity this growth has created, and left with a commitment to engage in the MGTf’s implementation plan and work at the state level to help our counties assimilate growth.

Col. Nicholson retired from the Marine Corps in late 2010 with 28 years of service. His most recent assignment was as a branch head at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, in Quantico, Va.

MGTf at State of the Region

North Carolina’s Eastern Region held its 4th Annual State of the Region event earlier this year, with a focus on the Region’s economic position and growth within the military, aerospace, defense and tourism sectors. Guest speakers included U.S. Senator Kay Hagan from North Carolina, the Honorable Linda Carlisle, Secretary of Cultural Resources, and Janet Cowell, Department of the State Treasury.

More than 400 people packed the Greenville Hilton ballroom in January for a series of regional updates and MGTf Executive Director Mark Sutherland was one of the presenters. The MGTf exists as a military committee under the NC Eastern Region and Mr. Sutherland is also Vice President of NCER. Sutherland spoke of the importance of protecting the military, which has a multi-billion dollar economic impact in our state. “If you have an industry that has an impact on

your region, you first want to protect it, then you want to promote it so it has an environment conducive to its growth,” said Sutherland. “There are threats and limitations to this industry even outside of our host counties.” Sutherland pointed to slides showing increasing housing density and how that density is restricting military airspace and training capacity overhead. “Unchecked, that will eventually cause the military to leave eastern North Carolina.” To get at these and other growth issues, the MGTf assembled *Plant EAST*, a regional planning forum that brings community leadership together to develop consensus solutions to be presented to local councils and commissions for implementation. Sutherland also outlined the MGTf’s initiative to supply our regional military installations with local produce, beef, poultry, and locally produced and manufactured biofuels. He said the Department of Defense is increasingly committed to buying local, so there is already

interest in homegrown food and fuel. “Our initiative, Food and Fuel for the Forces, promises to add a billion dollars of defense contracts to North Carolina’s economy,” Sutherland said.

Agriculture and the military are our state’s two largest industries. “These industries are linked by a highly educated workforce,” said Sen. Kay Hagan. “We have to be a global leader for the future. We can do it.”

NCER, East Carolina University and Pitt Community College sponsored the event.



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~ Grant Central Station ~

We developed "Grant Central Station" as a way to keep our counties and communities informed of grants that can assist in accommodating growth and in planning for the future. We encourage you to take advantage of and apply for these funding opportunities where appropriate.

Coastal Program - The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service welcomes your participating in the Coastal Program. This program explores the possibility of pursuing a cooperative agreement for habitat assessment, protection, and/or restoration; conservation planning and design; species and habitat inventory and monitoring; and outreach and education. First, contact your local Coastal Program coordinator, available at www.fws.gov/coastal/contactUs.html. Go to www.grants.gov and search funding number COASTAL-11. Closing date 30 Sept 2011

Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Grant Programs - There are two components here: energy assessment and energy implementation cost-share through the Farm Energy Efficiency Project (FEET). The cost-share program provides grants to assist in on-farm energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy projects that increase energy efficiency. This work may also be used to leverage USDA-Rural Development Rural Energy for America (REAP) funding. Examples of projects that qualify: converting curtain walls to solid sidewalls in livestock operations, updating grain dryers, etc. Renewable energy project grants will be awarded to farmers who install renewable energy sources such as solar panels or methane production on their farming operation. Projects must be completed by December 2011. To apply, contact Lendy Johnson at Lendy.Johnson@ncfb.org or 919-782-1705 ext 8209.

Our New Website

The Military Growth Task Force has a brand new website. The new site is part of the culmination of our Communications and Outreach Strategy and Website Development tasks. You can still find us at www.nceastmgtf.org, but the website has an entirely new look. It is much more user-friendly and interactive, and presents a Content Management System platform, making it much easier to update.

We can now upload videos and pictures at the click of a mouse. You'll find them in our "Gallery" on the front page. Our "Facts & Statistics" section is completely devoted to MGTG growth charts, maps, and presentations. We have an easy-to-use "Event Calendar," and a "Latest News" section on the front page



Eastern North Carolina is bountiful farmlands, beautiful beaches and first class education. It is also home to one of the military's fastest growing regions in the United States. Each year the Military Growth Task Force's region, which includes the counties of Craven, Carteret, Duplin, Jones, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender and Wayne counties, sees tremendous population growth both military and civilian.

In recent years, this growth has occurred at a much faster pace than ever before, and each of the counties has worked tirelessly to tackle the many challenges that followed: sudden, unexpected loss of capacity in transportation, quality of life, medical and healthcare, public safety and emergency services, infrastructure, education and workforce. Now it's time to start working smarter, assembling our counties regionally, and building partnerships to assimilate rapid population increase and the continued growth that is ahead. That is why we are here.

As the Region looks to the future, the Military Growth Task Force will facilitate the newly formed PLANIT EAST, a first-ever (in eastern NC), regional approach to sustainable growth and conservation planning and implementation. Working together with forty representatives from across the region, we will explore consensus solutions to growth challenges for action by our local boards and member-elected councils and commissions. By mitigating these unique regional issues, we will ensure sustainability of the Region thirty years from now. We'll create a planning partnership that can respond strategically to a changing landscape and the military's ever-changing needs.

where links to articles and press coverage are posted. Our "Command Center Blog" features updates and continued discussion of our implementation plan and our day-to-day tasks. And you can reach us easily with links directly to our email addresses. Go to "About Us," then click on "MGTG Staff."

Our new website also features a talking application that advertises our regional Speaker Series, as well as member logins for our Board of Directors and *PlanIt* EAST advisors.

Come visit our new website at www.nceastmgtf.org!

Welcome New Board Members!

The MGTG would like to welcome nine new members to our Board of Directors.

Wayne County joined the MGTG in November 2010, and the County Commission immediately appointed Jack Best, Chuck Allen, Wilbur Anderson, John Bell, and Jimmie Edmundson to the Board. For Craven County, Danny Walsh has joined the MGTG Board of Directors, as well as Pete Burgess and Keith

Walsh who represent Onslow County. Captain Craig Fulton has been appointed to a Marine Ex-Officio spot on the Board of Directors. All of the new members were formally introduced at the Military Growth Task Force's February board meeting, which was held at the Surf City Welcome Center in Pender County.

Welcome Board Members!

Wayne County:

Jack Best
Chuck Allen
Wilbur Anderson
John Bell
Jimmie Edmundson

Craven County:

Danny Walsh

Military Ex-Officio:

Capt. Craig Fulton

Stay tuned to
www.nceastmgtf.org