

NC STEP Leadership Team's Business-Entrepreneurship Committee Meeting
Press Release-August 24, 2010

PAMLICO COUNTY-The Business-Entrepreneurship committee of the Bayboro STEP Leadership Team held a breakfast meeting on Tuesday, August 24, at the Delamar Center of Pamlico Community College. Mark Sutherland, Executive Director of North Carolina's Eastern Region Military Growth Task Force (MGTF), briefed committee members and their guests on findings and activities of the MGTF. The Task Force was established in response to the anticipated increase in military personnel and their families to North Carolina's eastern region.

Mr. Sutherland explained that planning is the essential element for the seven county region that comprises the MGTF as it prepares for the influx of thousands of new residents. Preserving and sustaining the farming and forestry industries is critical to keeping a military presence in our region. "If you lose the farms, you lose the military," reported Mr. Sutherland.

To prevent the loss of farming capacity, the MGTF is proposing "Feed the Force," and "Fuel the Force" programs to aid area farmers in adding value to their crop production. The goal is to increase output of farms without competing with existing crop production. "Feed the Force," involves localizing the production of foodstuffs consumed on military installations. "Fuel the Force," is a response to the mandate for the military to convert to biofuels by maximizing the growing, production and distribution of biofuels in eastern NC.

Among the two dozen attendees were NC State Representative Alice Underhill; County Commissioner, Ann Holton; County Manager, Tim Buck; and County Economic Planner, Jayne Robb. Colleen Maloney Roberts, Director of Communications for the MGTF; Norman Sanderson, NC House of Representative candidate; Bill Sage, Town of Oriental Mayor; and Candy Bohmert, Town of Oriental Commissioner were also present.

The Business-Entrepreneurship Committee of the Bayboro STEP Leadership Team thanks Bojangle's, Hardee's and Piggly Wiggly for contributions of food, Norman Sanderson for providing coffee, and Pamlico Community College for hosting the meeting.

To learn more about the MGTF, visit their website: www.nceastmgtf.org. The Bayboro STEP Leadership Team meets monthly and welcomes anyone who is interested in the economic development of Pamlico County to join. Contact Barbara Baker at Bayboro Town Hall for meeting dates and times.