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5 sites fail this week's Swim Guide test

From Sound Rivers

NEW BERN [July 24, 2026] — Five sites on the lower Neuse failed to meet recreational water quality standards this week: Old Waynesboro State Park in Goldsboro, Bridgeton Park, Brices Creek, River Bend on the Trent River and Pierce Creek in Oriental.

“The heavy rains we’ve had this week are definitely having an impact on water quality, as we’re seeing stormwater runoff carrying lots of bacteria into the waterways,” said Sound Rivers Program Director Clay Barber.

Sites that were not tested this week include: Lake Wilson in Wilson and Slocum Creek in Havelock.

A “Swim Guide fail” means elevated levels of fecal bacteria, which can come with increased risk of gastrointestinal illness and skin infections for pets and humans alike.

Swim Guide is an international water-quality program conducted locally by Sound Rivers, an environmental nonprofit whose mission to keep North Carolina’s waterways fishable, swimmable and drinkable. This summer marks the ninth year of Swim Guide in the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico watersheds. The program runs from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend. The 18 sites tested weekly on the lower Neuse include Lake Wilson in Wilson; Old Waynesborough State Park in Goldsboro; N.C. Highway 11 and Oak Bluff Road boating access sites in Kinston; Maple Cypress boat ramp in Grifton; Cow Pen Landing boat ramp in Vanceboro; Glenburnie, Bridgeton Park, Lawson Creek, Spring Garden boat ramp and Blackbeard Sailing Club in the New Bern area; the River Bend kayak launch; Trent Woods on the Trent River; Brices Creek in James City; Slocum Creek in Havelock; Pollocksville boating access; and Pierce Creek and Midyette Street boat access in Oriental.

Results are released to the public on Friday afternoons throughout the summer at soundrivers.org/swim-guide, through local media and text. To get results delivered weekly via text, text “Rivers” to 50155.

Based in Raleigh, New Bern and Washington, Sound Rivers has worked for more than 40 years to protect the health of the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico rivers and the communities that rely on them. The two watersheds cover nearly a quarter of North Carolina.

Sound Rivers’ Swim Guide program is sponsored by the Water-Quality Fund in memory of Gene Pate, Grady-White Boats, Public Radio East, 99.5 The Wave, Cummins, Eno River Association, UNC Lenoir Health Care, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, UNC Pavel Molchanov Scholars, ECU SECU Public Fellows Internship Foundation, City of Greenville, The Actuality Preservation Fund, Blackbeard Sailing Club, Melinda Vann and David Silberstein. For more information, visit soundrivers.org.