

Through our journey with this horrific disease, Steve continued to work for as long as he could with the accommodations he used to speak and type. He absolutely loved his work, his colleagues, and protecting the environment of our beautiful State of North Carolina. June 30, 2024, was his last official day working as the Sole Proprietor of Tedderfarm Consulting.

Steve served the State of North Carolina for over 50 years. Names of departments and divisions have changed so many times over the years. But, for many of his 37 years as an employee of the State, he held the title of Chief of the Water Quality Section.

Steve was a pioneer and visionary in his field. I often heard stories of him starting the programs he developed with a hose literally running out of a trailer that would become one of the many programs he helped start for the division and State. The below information is from the About The Owner page of his website for his sole proprietorship he started the day after his retirement from the State of North Carolina. The section is long, but when you were as accomplished in your field as Steve was, I am sure it was difficult for the author to consolidate his work into fewer words.

Steve W. Tedder worked with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for 37 years. He has a B.S. in Biology from Western Carolina University. He has recently retired from state government to begin work in the private sector.

During his years with the Division of Water Quality, Steve held several positions including; Water Quality Section Chief, Environmental Laboratory Director, liaison between the eight southeastern states in Region IV and EPA. For his last seven years he served as the Water Quality Regional Supervisor in the Winston Salem Regional Office that encompassed the 15 northwestern counties in North Carolina.

Beginning in the mid-seventies, Steve was very involved with the building of the State's Water Quality Programs. During that time he was instrumental in the development of the State's Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Program, the Aquatic Toxicology Program, the Biological Monitoring and Evaluation Program, as well as oversight and development of the Divisions Planning, Permitting and Compliance programs and activities. He was also Chair of the Training and Certification Commission for ten years and worked closely with the certification of hundreds of ORCs now operating and maintaining all of the wastewater treatment facilities in North Carolina. During his tenure, he led the development of a nationally recognized basinwide management program, oversaw implementation of water supply watershed protection rules, and initiated development of the State's intensive livestock regulations. Steve spearheaded the state efforts to develop new stream classifications and management strategies for nutrient sensitive waters, high quality waters, and outstanding resources waters across North Carolina.

Steve was involved in many milestone developments within the Water Quality program. He also worked closely with the Environmental Management Commission, the NC State Legislature, many state and federal Agencies, and numerous local governments across North Carolina.

Being involved with so many aspects of the Water Quality Program, for so many years, has offered Steve a unique perspective and knowledge of the operations and functions of several state agencies. Tedderfarm Consulting was created to continue involvement in the planning and policy developments that directly affect the regulated community in North Carolina.

Steve has been awarded several recognitions to include:

- Governor's Outstanding Service Award
- Southeastern Water Pollution Biologist Association Charter Member
- Governor's Award for Excellence
- Order of the Long Leaf Pine
- Environmental Protection Agency Award of Excellence
- Special Recognition of Service from the Environmental Management Commission
- Special Recognition of Service from the Division of Water
- Special Recognition of Service from the Water Pollution Control Certification Commission
- Division of Water Quality Vanguard Award

The following is taken directly from an anonymous member of the Division of Water Quality when recommending Steve for an award. This description hopefully provides some insight into Steve as a person, a supervisor, and one that has worked hard to protect the state's natural resources, yet done so with a balanced, common sense approach to his efforts.

*"Steve Tedder has likely meant more to this Division's stated mission than any other single employee since its inception. In many instances his accomplishments have likely been better recognized on a regional or national level than within his own state. His two greatest qualities are a commitment to improve water quality in North Carolina and a lack of fear in realizing that to accomplish that goal, innovation and change might be necessary for accomplishment.*

*Change is hard for many to accept, yet hiring Steve initiated change within the Division. He was the first biologist in a world of regulatory engineers. With his employment came recognition that the surface waters of the state contained complex ecosystems that could be affected in measurable ways prior to catastrophic events such as fish kills. Standards and permit discharge limits needed to be adjusted to protect for all aquatic life rather than just what was obvious to us all. Recognizing the complexity in aquatic systems the Division began to hire biologists specializing in different trophic levels, and Steve recognized for this effort to be meaningful, the science derived had to be useful in supporting defensible management strategies. Other states were struggling with convincing management and legislators that waters are alive and the mix of aquatic organisms were important at maintaining a healthy and viable resource. To share knowledge on measuring biological integrity and incorporating those measurements into water quality programs, Steve and several others formed the*

*Southeastern Water Pollution Biologist Association in 1976 and that organization continues to this day.*

*Steve took the concept of supplemental classifications to a new level, protecting waters with specific problems with specific management strategies such as Nutrient Sensitive Waters, or protecting waters with demonstrated quality higher than minimum standards with classifications of High Quality Waters (HQW) and Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW). These classifications afford significant protection and his biological programs were very instrumental in identifying and supporting their protection. Steve's development of the Water Supply Watershed Protection process is unparalleled in providing a higher level of protection where it is needed and allowing input from those most affected by controls and the drinking water users. Development of and acquiring Funding for a Wetland Protection Program was Steve's vision followed with hard work to make it a reality.*

*Steve's organizational and leadership skills are defined by the structure he created within the Water Quality Section when he was Chief. While many states flounder with poor communication or lack of common missions with their wasteload allocation programs, planning programs, enforcement programs permitting programs and assessment programs, Steve created an umbrella to look at water quality and its protection holistically.*

*Probably the largest and originally problematic change Steve offered to water quality protection was the basinwide planning process. There was a common agreement that events taking place throughout a watershed were important to understanding response downstream, but many questions as to how assessment, planning, permitting and enforcement activities could all be orchestrated within a combined process. Steve's vision and direction not only made the process a reality for the Division but set the stage for its continued evolution and involvement of many agencies, affected industries, municipalities and the general public in each of our 17 river basins. The concept has now been accepted nationally and North Carolina continues to be viewed as a leader in this arena.*

*Steve has routinely met controversial challenges head-on and looked to build bridges where the chasm of dollars and environmental protection exist. His leadership is directly responsible for staffs who have worked hours far beyond what might be expected or required. His respect by the legislative community has been called on routinely to provide the large picture where pieces of the puzzle were being argued. He has always been dedicated to providing quality information to the Environmental Management Commission for major decisions. He has always encouraged staff to work closely with other agencies and with one another to achieve the stated mission of the program."*

Prior to his passing, Steve was recognized by Mr. Bill Krutzberger, with the following at the monthly meeting of the Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin Association meeting -



One of the most cherished messages I have received after his passing is from the former Director of the Division of Water Quality, Mr. Preston Howard.

“Steve and I entered the Department in the 70's at about the same time, he in Technical Services and I in the Greenville Regional Office. Steve's water quality knowledge and hard work were quickly noticed by our superiors, and in an agency that at the time was dominated by engineers, it was a bit of a surprise to see him (a biologist) rise to become the Water Quality Section Chief, the first non-engineer to hold the position. Steve played as hard as he worked, whether it was on the golf course, ball diamond or volleyball court (a few weeks following knee surgery no less). I enjoyed many rounds of golf with Steve, both with friends and just as the 2 of us. Later in our careers with the Department, I became Steve's boss for several years. Steve never hesitated to fly into my office, half slamming the door, and tell me how bad I had screwed up on some issue. He never held anything back. If it was on his mind, he said it. Occasionally, he'd change my mind. If not, after he was done giving me hell, he'd march out and set things in motion to accomplish whatever the task was that he disagreed with me on. He was the kind of colleague and honest advisor that every manager should be fortunate enough to have working with and for them. I've said this many times: in many, many years of working for the Department or with the Department as a representative of manufacturers, Steve was the best manager I've ever worked with in state government. He knew more about how to navigate, to the benefit of his program and staff, the NC personnel laws and rules than most people that work in personnel departments. He was a great motivator and loyal supporter of his staff, and a visionary leader in water quality management (for example: brainchild of NC's Basinwide Management Planning effort that was lauded by EPA and copied by many, many other states; and he led the development of NC's biological services program that is nationally recognized). Our state will benefit from Steve's leadership for decades to come. My heart goes out to Katie and Julie and the entire Tedder family. God speed, my friend!”

I have received numerous messages from friends and colleagues regarding Steve's work and leadership, but Preston was one that knew him best. I am so proud of my husband's accomplishments. He was a force in his chosen field and in life.