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Havelock, Oriental sites fail recreational water-quality test

From Sound Rivers

NEW BERN [June 5, 2026] — Slocum Creek in Havelock and Pierce Creek in Oriental failed the Swim Guide test this week.

“We’re currently doing some rigorous sampling in Slocum Creek because of its past pollution problems that seemed to have cropped back up again,” said Clay Barber, Sound Rivers’ program director. “This was Slocum Creek’s third failure, out of the three times it’s been tested for Swim Guide so far this summer.”

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 17 sites tested weekly on the lower Neuse include 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; Brice’s Creek in James City; Slocum Creek in Havelock; Pollocksville boating access; and Pierce Creek and Midyette Street boat access in Oriental.

Spring Garden boat ramp in New Bern was not tested this week.

Results are released to the public on Friday afternoons throughout the summer at [soundrivers.org/swim-guide](http://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,

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