

## Woods Creek TMDL Implementation Plan: Steering Committee Meeting

Natural Bridge Soil & Water Conservation District Office

March 26, 2019

### Participants

Lee Cummings (NBSWCD)  
Charles Simmons (NRCS)  
Sandra Stuart (NBSWCD)  
Katie Schott (DEQ)  
Sara Bottenfield (DEQ)

Robert Hickman (NBSWCD)  
Robert Wilkinson (NRCS)  
Morris Trimmer (NBSWCD, W&L)  
Karen Kline (VT-BSE)

Chuck Smith (Lexington)  
Tom Stanley (VCE)  
Barbara Walsh (RACC)  
Tara Wyrick (DEQ)

### Meeting Summary

Sara Bottenfield (DEQ) opened the meeting and asked the attendees to introduce themselves. The Committee began reviewing the draft Implementation Plan (IP). Much of the first two sections is general information and not specific to the Woods Creek watershed. There was a suggestion to note in Section 3 that, as determined during TMDL development, the reduction scenario outlined in the IP only works with the continued inflow of water from the Moores Creek/Lexington reservoir that enters the Upper Woods Creek subwatershed. The group recalled that the Rockbridge Area Conservation Council (RACC) measured the flow from the reservoir a number of years ago. *(Follow up note: the TMDL lists the measured flow from the Moores Creek/Lexington Reservoir pipe as 0.777 cfs.)*

In Section 4, review of the Working Group activities prompted discussion of new development and associated sewer connections planned in the watershed. Participants were aware that Rockbridge County PSA intends to increase their capacity to meet additional demand. Since these sewer connections will be for new construction, they should not have any effect on the bacteria load. Another participant noted that City Council will be considering an ordinance change to allow backyard chickens in Lexington and wondered if non-commercial poultry should be addressed in the IP. The TMDL did not include any estimates for backyard chickens, and the City may decide not to allow them, so the group agreed it would be sufficient to address the issue broadly in the IP. The suggestion was also made that education for homeowners on proper use of manure in gardens would be beneficial. NBSWCD staff mentioned that they expect significant changes to the Virginia Agricultural Cost Share (VACS) program over the next couple of years, including new BMPs, so Karen offered to add some language to the draft IP in anticipation of those changes.

Reviewing Section 5, a participant asked whether the public sewer section should be better quantified. Karen noted that it is incorporated into the modeling used to develop the TMDL and reduction scenarios. There was some discussion of what I&I includes, and another participant noted that reducing I&I will save money for the City of Lexington. It was requested that a sentence be added to the public sewer section to state that the needed reductions for the watershed cannot be met without sewer system improvements. Participants also requested clarification that "Sewer Overflows" referenced in Section 3 and elsewhere includes all sewer system related bacteria sources (I&I and exfiltration, as well as overflows). The IP notes that the City of Lexington has sewer system improvements planned through 2023 and the Committee requested that a reference to the planning document be added. There was a

question about the possibility of relocating sewer pipes away from stream channels, particularly where the pipes are exposed and could be damaged by debris in the stream. The EPA's Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) is listed in Section 9 and identified as a possible source of funding for that type of project, but participants were concerned that the CWSRF may only be for drinking water projects. *(Follow up note: EPA has two funding programs, the CWSRF and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). The CWSRF funds wastewater treatment, nonpoint source pollution management, stormwater management and other projects. The DWSRF funds projects related to drinking water.)*

Several Committee members are involved in volunteer water quality monitoring in the watershed and have identified several locations as "hot spots" for bacteria, including the Woods Creek tributary known as BBQ Creek. Participants observed that the Fairwinds area in the BBQ Creek subwatershed has experienced some challenges with compaction and settling affecting wastewater lines. Sara asked if one or more members of the monitoring group would be willing to speak briefly about their efforts at the final public meeting and they indicated that should be possible.

In the review of Section 6, there was some discussion about the need to replace BMP fencing as mentioned in 6.1. Participants were glad to see the need for replacement recognized, and asked about fence lifespan and longer-term replacement and maintenance. Under the VACS program, funding may be available to repair or replace damaged BMP fencing, but the long-term maintenance and eventual replacement is the responsibility of the landowner. The Committee requested that Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) codes be added to the residential BMPs listed in Table 6-2, and that riparian buffer planting be added to the list. One participant stated that the City of Lexington recently approved funding for a pervious land area study and is considering a stormwater fee. There was some discussion about stormwater BMPs and why they are not specified in the IP the same way agricultural and residential BMPs are. There are several factors, one of which is that the framework of BMP cost share programs for agricultural and residential BMPs does not exist for stormwater BMPs, so implementation and funding usually occurs in a more ad hoc manner by individual localities or other organizations. In addition, agricultural BMPs are a higher priority for implementation due to greater bacteria loads from agricultural land in the Woods Creek watershed and the fact that agricultural BMPs are typically more cost effective. Participants requested that this be clarified in the IP. The Committee briefly discussed the benthic impairment for Woods Creek and how it might be incorporated into the IP. While the IP is being developed to address bacteria, many of the bacteria-reduction BMPs will also reduce sediment and other pollutants. Participants requested that this be added to the analysis of costs and benefits in Section 6, and that some discussion of the benthic impairment be added to other relevant sections. DEQ staff confirmed that biological monitoring will continue in the watershed.

The Committee felt that the two universities in the watershed (Washington & Lee University and Virginia Military Institute) should be listed as partners in Section 8. In addition to the changes discussed above, participants suggested a number of wording and formatting edits throughout the document.

In the last few minutes of the meeting, Sara asked the Committee for their input on a final public meeting to be held in early or mid-May. The Board of Supervisors meeting room in the County building was suggested as a possible venue. Tom Stanley (VCE) writes a newspaper column and will include the meeting information once it is finalized. Committee members suggested 50 Ways Rockbridge and other community calendars to publicize the meeting.

Sara thanked the Committee for their input and the meeting was adjourned.