

1st agricultural & residential working group meeting

Chestnut Creek Public Meeting on November 18, 2014 6:30-8:30pm attendance: 14

1. Introductions of all in attendance
2. TMDL presentation by Chris Burcher, DEQ
3. Presentation by Karen Kline, VT BSE
4. Questions:
 - a. Is there a high number of straight pipes? 98
 - b. Do they consider failing septic systems the same as straight pipes? Yes
 - c. Are you talking about Chestnut headwaters until it runs into the New River? Yes, but only considering what we can do in VA
 - d. Increase in pasture reductions? It would be difficult to increase anymore
 - e. What is the timeline for the project? Years
 - f. Over time fencing will get old and cattle will eventually get into streams; once the farmers see the benefits of keeping cattle out of the stream, they will want to continue.
 - g. Do you see 80 or 90% improvements in other projects? Karen sees 50% reductions and improvements in the water quality; you might not see improvements immediately but over a couple of years you will start to see the improvements
 - h. When a farmer is on a budget, and the cost share money is not there anymore, will it really be feasible? If the farmer doesn't have the money, it doesn't seem like it would work; if you want it to be long term, but over 25 years, we need a program
 - i. Livestock exclusion is from 2006, is there any credit given for BMP's implemented after 2006? Yes
 - j. Is there a way to include numbers from USDA? There has to be a way
 - k. What types of BMP's for pasture management? Livestock exclusion
 - l. In park there is signage for pet waste that has been installed since 2006
 - m. Does anyone know any other BMP's that might have been installed after 2006? Is the city doing anything? The city handles storm water according to requirements
 - n. Improvements on sewer systems? We are constantly working on that; a lot of it is 60 years old and need to be upgraded and are working on that now
 - o. Why is cropland decreasing? Some of it is turning back into forest and some is being developed into residential areas
 - p. Some examples of educational practices: rain barrel workshop, composter workshop
 - q. 10 foot buffer would be more probable because the fields are so much smaller
 - r. Is the 10 foot buffer at 100% cost share? Yes
 - s. Do we need to add it in there? It pays 85%
 - t. Is it possible to increase cost share on the 10 foot buffer? Probably not but can look into it
 - u. Only reason they are not using SI6 is because of the extremely large 35 foot buffer
 - v. SI7t would fit under grazing land management
 - w. Reforestation of erodible pasture drop to 120

- x. Maybe increase vegetative cover for cropland
- y. A lot of opportunity for stream bank stabilization/restoration practices
- z. Unless it is ag related there is no money for it
- aa. The way Chestnut Creek floods, wouldn't you need a strong stabilization system? Yes but it can be done
- bb. What would that full time position do? Handle the program, educational awareness, etc.
- cc. Stormwater runoff is permitted within the stormwater division; if there is stormwater runoff its background noise, but we are already regulating it
- dd. Will we target certain streams? Need a survey, usually target higher populated areas (get the low hanging fruit)
- ee. Cost of stabilization, versus rain gardens and education program would be more beneficial especially with limited funds
- ff. Could do a residential program to reduce runoff or rain gardens, at least get those ideas out there
- gg. Rain gardens would generally be great idea but when you have huge rains where creeks turn into rivers, stream bank stabilization will be a permanent structure but not help the flooding aspect?
- hh. Find out how much we would need for residential stream bank practices? Look at a map and can tell
- ii. Gardeners be part of the education plan
- jj. How many pump outs should we target? If you did a 100 pump outs that would be pushing it;
- kk. 97 houses with straight pipes seem to be a high estimate
- ll. You cannot move money around to different things once the IP is approved
- mm. Once the money is available you find out there are more straight pipes than you thought
- nn. Does any city property included in the study? If it's a MS4 area then they are regulated, but the City of Galax is not, but we have a storm water management program, looking at the overall plan, stormwater issues are not a priority
- oo. Maybe talk to the health department about repairs/replacements
- pp. Is there a way to add money to grant for a hookup? Yes, could add a couple to the plan
- qq. If they are not connected, they pay separate water sewer bills
- rr. Any other questions or comments?
 - i. Explain the process? What happens next?
 - ii. IP will be done early next year, everything talked about tonight translated into IP and approved by EPA, creek has IP and is eligible for funding this time next year, working out about 1.5 years from now
 - iii. We get 40% of state allotted money for this area so our chances are greater and doing this IP greatly increases our chances of getting funding awarded
 - iv. How much is the grant? 1.5 million for the whole state and we received 40% of that

Next step for this is to have a draft plan in January, have one more meeting before the public meeting