

North Fork Rivanna TMDL: Preliminary Technical Advisory Committee

Greene County Library, Standardsville

September 24, 2018

Attendees

Rachel Pence (Rivanna Conservation Alliance)
Robbi Savage (Rivanna Conservation Alliance)
Patrick Montezuma (Twin Lakes HOA)
Katie Shoemaker (3E Consulting)
Robert Brent (James Madison University)
Chris Williamson (James Madison University)
Celeste Horton (James Madison University)
Luke Longanecker (Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District)
Jon Lipinski (Natural Resource Conservation Service)
Greg Wichelns (Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District)
Sarah Sharpe (VA Cooperative Extension)
Lisa Wittenborn (Rivanna Conservation Alliance)
Marilyn Smith (VA Master Naturalist)
Nesha McRae (VA Department of Environmental Quality)
Sara Bottenfield (VA Department of Environmental Quality)

Meeting Summary

The meeting began with a round of introductions, followed by a presentation from Nesha McRae. Nesha shared the objectives of the meeting including a review of water quality data collected by DEQ and RCA in the North Fork Rivanna River watershed, a review of the water quality impairment designations resulting from these data, an overview of the TMDL process, and planning for the first public meeting to kick off the project. Nesha reviewed the designated uses that Virginia's waterways have including the aquatic life use. A participant asked for additional details on the different designated uses that Virginia must maintain for our waterways and why we are required to maintain these uses. The group discussed federal regulations resulting from the Clean Water Act and the role that they play in establishing these uses. Nesha reviewed the impairment listings with the group and shared biological monitoring data collected by both RCA and DEQ at stations throughout the watershed. It was noted that an additional round of biological monitoring will be conducted in fall of 2018. Nesha explained that the VA Stream Condition Index Score (VSCI) on Marsh Run by be low due to the fact that sampling was conducted just a few days after an extremely large rain event. A participant asked how long it typically takes the aquatic community to recover following such an event. Robert Brent responded that it can take 3-4 weeks. Following a review of the TMDL process and the timeline for TMDL development in the North Fork Rivanna watershed, the group moved on to discuss plans for a community meeting.

Tuesday evenings were identified as a good day of the week for an evening meeting, and 6:00 was agreed upon as a good time to catch people on their way home from work. The group discussed the

challenges of finding a meeting space within the watershed that would accommodate a large group without a fee. Potential locations discussed included the library, the American Legion, the Parrish Hall of Greene Grace Christian Church, the technical college, Blue Ridge Café, and UVA Research Park. The group moved on to discuss outreach methods to let the community know about the meeting. The Twin Lakes HOA has a newsletter that they send out to over 500 homeowners, information about the meeting could be included in the newsletter, which will be going out in the next couple of weeks. Greene Mountain Lake has a Facebook page that could be good for advertising the meeting. Rivanna Conservation Alliance could do something similar. WNRN and the Greene County Recorder were identified as good media outlets along with WTJU. The Greene County and Albemarle County websites also house community calendars that are good for posting events on. There is also the Cville Weekly magazine calendar of events. Nesha will work on a meeting flier and press release to share with partners and media outlets once a meeting date and location are selected.

The group discussed potential partners in this effort. Stony Point has a Ruritan Club as does Greene County. The Farm Bureau could also be a valuable partner along with VDOT. It would be nice to invite partners to set up displays around the room with more of an open house format were landowners in the watershed could learn about the different things that everyone can do to improve water quality in the watershed. One participant suggested focusing on the different land use types in the watershed and what BMPs are most effective to address runoff from that land uses. Partners who could be invited to set up displays include:

- Rivanna Conservation Alliance
- VA Master Naturalists
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Kingfishers
- Trout Unlimited
- County Schools

The group agreed that late October would be good for a meeting. Maps of the watershed should be posted at the meeting and should include public places. Each subwatershed should be identified. The group discussed ways to allow residents to share information about these streams and it was suggested that they could find their subwatershed and the area where they lived and post sticky notes on the maps with their own observations about the waterway. The NRCS rainfall video was suggested as a good outreach tool demonstrating how pollutant runoff occurs.

Participants discussed effective communication methods with the public. One participant suggested explaining the nature of the VSCI in terms of what different aquatic insects tell us about stream health. Another participant suggested mentioning impacts downstream including the Chesapeake Bay.

Patrick Montezuma shared some information with the group about plans that the Twin Lakes HOA has in the coming months with respect to operation of the dams that they own on Quarter Creek. Their bottom lake is currently undergoing a massive repair and has been drawn down 5-6 feet for completion of repairs. In the next 30 days, their largest lake (Lake Shenandoah, a 27-acre lake) will be under repair as well.

Nesha thanked participants and the meeting was adjourned.