



Commonwealth of Virginia

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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SUBJECT: Waterbar and Utility Access Road Advisory Committee Meeting #4, Meeting Minutes

Date: June 16, 2025

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) held an advisory committee meeting on June 16, 2025, at 1:30 PM in the conference room on the third floor of the Bank of America Building, located at 1111 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219. The purpose of the meeting was to help DEQ continue the process of reviewing and revising specifications for permanent gravel access roads to be included in a future revision to the Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook (VSMH).

The following advisory committee members attended the meeting:

Cory Chalmers, EQT	Josh Henry, Williams
Eric Clay, Dominion Energy	Chris Soldan, Arcadis (DEQ consultant)

The following interested members of the public attended the meeting:

Jay Lemmerman, WSSI	Chris Schrinel, WSSI
Rebecca Rochet, Dominion Energy	

The following DEQ staff attended the meeting:

Kathleen Alexander, Stormwater Program Engineer	April Rhodes, Manager, Office of Stormwater Management
Tony Angueira, Office of Stormwater Management	Zack Robinson, Office of Water Compliance
Nelson Daniel, Policy Analyst	Jeanette Ruiz, Regulatory Analyst

Welcome and Introductions

DEQ staff opened the meeting by welcoming participants and reviewing the requirements for public meetings under the state's Freedom of Information Act.

Following the last advisory committee meeting on December 5, 2024, DEQ staff shared proposed revisions to a draft specification for permanent gravel access roads with the advisory committee members. For this meeting, DEQ staff presented the draft specifications with the comments and feedback that advisory committee members submitted.

The purpose of this advisory committee meeting was to conduct a collaborative, think-tank-style session to address the comments and feedback DEQ received on the proposed revisions to the draft specification.

Waterbars

- **Status Update:** DEQ staff provided the advisory committee an update on the status of the final draft specifications for waterbars. Members of the VSMH Technical Review Committee reviewed the final draft specifications at their May 13, 2025, meeting. Based on their feedback, DEQ will accept plans that use the draft specifications and intends to include the updated specifications in the next revisions to the VSMH.
- **Inspection Frequency:** DEQ staff noted that, for waterbars, the recommended inspection frequencies during construction were revised to be consistent with inspection requirements in the Construction General Permit (*see* 9VAC25-880-70 Part II G).

Permanent Linear Utility Access Roads

The advisory committee engaged in a comprehensive discussion of several thematic areas within the draft specification. Revisions to terminology, applicability of the purpose and planning section of the specification and stormwater management compliance mechanisms such as nutrient credits were discussed.

- **Drainage Ditches and Revegetated Roads:** The advisory committee discussed drainage ditches and revegetated road surfaces, examining factors such as compaction, infiltration capabilities and the potential use of open-graded stone to support effective stormwater management. Committee members had no further feedback on this section.
- **Stone and Aggregate Standards:** VDOT specifications were referenced. DEQ invited feedback on alignment between field practices and proposed specification language regarding a mix of open graded stone to support traffic and maintain the road section long term. Members agreed to provide feedback and aggregate standards prior to the next meeting.
- **Culverts and Cross Drains:** The advisory committee engaged in a focused discussion regarding the inclusion of culverts within the best management practice (BMP). DEQ raised concerns about the appropriateness of prescribing culverts in the specification; some advisory committee members stated that permanent culverts and conveyances for through drainage are typically designed and temporary culverts are generally placed as

part of routine maintenance. In response, DEQ suggested the development of a design matrix to better accommodate the variability encountered across different field conditions. Members agreed to work with DEQ staff to develop a design matrix based on drainage area.

- **Broad-Based Dips:** The advisory committee reported favorable experiences with the use of broad-based dips as an effective drainage feature. DEQ expressed interest in further evaluating the application of these structures. Members of the advisory committee agreed to provide information and example specifications for broad-based dips. DEQ will review the materials and revise the draft specification to include broad-based dips with concurrence from the Director.

Next Steps

DEQ affirmed its commitment to integrating feedback from the advisory committee and will proceed with the distribution of revised draft specifications as updates are completed. DEQ staff acknowledged the need for continued assessment in several key areas, including broad-based dips, and the methodology for ditch and culvert sizing and placement.

Public Forum

No members of the public requested to speak.

Wrap Up

DEQ staff are working on revisions to the VSMH and expect to start the administrative process to adopt a revised version this summer. The adoption process will take approximately three months but could be longer depending on review/approval times. DEQ indicated that the advisory committee will convene again in six to eight weeks to support ongoing review and refinement of the draft specifications.

The meeting adjourned at 3:29 PM.