

Watershed Plan (WP) Fact Sheet

Fairview Beach (Potomac River) in the County of King George

What is the problem with water quality at Fairview Beach? The goal of the Clean Water Act is that all streams should be suitable for recreational uses, including swimming and fishing. *E. coli* and *Enterococci*, found in the digestive systems of warm-blooded animals, are used to indicate the presence of fecal coliforms which are potentially harmful bacteria. When human waste enters rivers, streams, lakes and estuaries it can carry with it human viruses in addition to the bacterial protozoan pathogens potentially found in all fecal matter. Virginia's water quality standards identify safe levels of the concentrations of indicator bacteria necessary to protect swimming and other recreation uses, as well as shellfish harvesting. The Virginia Department of Health monitors *Enterococci* at Fairview Beach and issues swimming advisories if the concentration is greater than the standard for recreational use. Between 2004 and 2012, advisories were issued an average of four times a year. Based on VDH monitoring data, the Department of Environmental Quality has placed Fairview Beach on the list of impaired waters. Additional monitoring performed at Fairview Beach has indicated (1) some of the bacteria found at the beach come from human sources like malfunctioning septic systems or faulty sewer connections; (2) storm water bacteria concentrations are very high; and (3) bacteria concentrations tend to be higher when the Potomac River is rough or choppy.

What areas will be considered in the evaluation of bacteria source contributions? The drainage area of the Fairview Beach (Potomac River) watershed is approximately 1.72 square miles. This includes original settlement area adjacent to the beach and the neighboring area of Potomac Landing. The drainage area stretches south to Caledon Road (Route 218).

What is involved in developing a clean up, or watershed plan? A Watershed Plan helps address water quality problems, in particular complex and diffuse nonpoint source pollution, in a holistic manner by fully assessing the potential contributing causes and sources of pollution and then prioritizing restoration and protection strategies to address those problems. Estimates are made on the amount of technical and financial assistance needed and those who might be able to carry out those tasks are identified in the plan. The ultimate goal is to restore the stream(s) to meet water quality standards and provide for safe recreational uses.

How will the watershed plan be implemented?? Nonpoint source pollution solutions are implemented through **best management practices** (BMPs) that will reduce the amount of the pollutant loadings identified in the Fairview Beach study. Implementation will occur in stages and local, state, and federal agencies and other organizations will assist landowners and other citizens in facilitating the actual implementation of BMPs. Progress will be monitored during the implementation phase through the tracking of practices installed and water quality monitoring.

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How will the public participate in the development of the WP? Two formal public meetings are planned as part of the TMDL IP development process. The **first public meeting** will be held **February 20, 2014** to inform the public about the impairments, watershed plan development process, and to obtain public comment. It will be followed by a **community working group session** the same evening to better understand the concerns of various stakeholder groups. Other working group sessions are planned while developing the WP. The second public meeting will be held in summer 2014 to present a draft WP.

What are the expected benefits of the Watershed Plan? Implementation of the plan will work towards restoring the beneficial uses of these creeks so they support recreational uses, like fishing and swimming. Implementation of the plan will work towards restoring the beneficial use of these waterways, making it possible for individuals to commercially harvest shellfish. In addition to improved beach swimming areas, the installation of certain BMPs may result in improved riparian habitat and property values.

What funding will be available to help support the stakeholders' efforts in implementing the Watershed Plan? The EPA 319 program and the Water Quality Improvement Fund may be a possible funding source for best management practices that address bacteria. Other sources of funding, such as the Virginia Revolving Loan Funds and various federal grant programs that can be utilized to fund corrective actions, will be identified in the WP. The Virginia TMDL IP Guidance Manual includes additional information on funding sources. Information on DEQ and DCR programs, including information on TMDLs, may be found at www.deq.virginia.gov and www.dcr.virginia.gov

Whom may I contact to participate in, comment on or learn more about the Fairview Beach (Potomac River) Watershed Plan?

May Louise Sligh, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, may.sligh@deq.virginia.gov, 804-450-3802. The first set of **public meetings** is scheduled for **Thursday, February 20, 2014 from 6:00-8:00, at the Fairview Beach Firehouse, 6060 Riverview Drive, King George, VA 22485**. The Residential Working Group will also meet during that time. These meetings will help to ensure that the information used in the WP is accurate and that the final WP reflects the concerns/issues of the watershed stakeholders. The 30-day public comment period on the information presented at these meetings will end on **March 20, 2014**. All public meetings will be advertised in local newspapers, through direct mailings (e-mail), and in the Virginia Register.