

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) seeks written and oral comments from interested persons on the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan for the Hardware River watershed (North Fork Hardware and Hardware Rivers) in Albemarle and Fluvanna Counties. The North Fork Hardware River and the Hardware River were first listed as impaired on the Virginia's 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report due to violations of the State's water quality standard for bacteria in 2006. The creeks have remained on the 303(d) list for these impairments since then.

The impaired segment of the North Fork Hardware River extends 10.42 miles from the headwaters downstream to its confluence with the South Fork Hardware River. The impaired segment of Hardware River extends 23.03 miles from its confluence with the North Fork downstream to its confluence with the James River.

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and §62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia require DEQ to develop TMDLs for pollutants responsible for each impaired water contained in Virginia's 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report. In addition, Section 62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia requires expeditious implementation of total maximum daily loads when appropriate. The IP should provide measurable goals and the date of expected achievement of water quality objectives. The IP should also include the corrective actions needed and their associated costs, benefits, and environmental impacts. DEQ completed bacteria TMDLs for the Hardware River and the North Fork in July 2007. The TMDLs were approved by the Environmental Protection Agency on April 10, 2008. The TMDL report is available on the DEQ website at:

<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/WaterQualityInformationTMDLs/TMDL/TMDLDevelopment/ApprovedTMDLReports.aspx>

Two public meetings were held in March and April of 2015 to kick off the development of this plan, followed by a series of working group meetings. During these meetings, participants discussed strategies to address agricultural and residential pollutant source sectors in the watershed. This input was used to develop a draft water quality improvement plan for the Hardware River watershed. A public meeting will be held with members of the steering committee to review this plan on **November 3, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Scottsville Library (330 Bird St, Scottsville, VA 24590).**

The public comment period for the meeting will end on December 3, 2015. Written comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the comments and should be sent to Nesha McRae, Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 3000, Harrisonburg, VA, 22801, telephone (540) 574-7850 or e-mailed to nesha.mcrae@deq.virginia.gov.