

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>

The TMDLs were modified in 2015 in order to correct a series of modeling errors. The draft revised TMDL report is available on the DEQ website at:

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

Development of the Hardware River TMDL Implementation Plan began in March 2015.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality will host a public meeting on the development of this TMDL implementation plan on January 12, 2016 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Walton Middle School (4217 Red Hill Road, Charlottesville VA). The meeting will include refreshments from the Crust and Crumb Bakery in Scottsville, sponsored by the Fluvanna County Farm Bureau. The implementation plan will be available on the DEQ website for public comment on January 13, 2016:

<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/WaterQualityInformationTMDLs/TMDL/TMDLImplementation/TMDLImplementationPlans.aspx>

In the event of inclement weather, the meeting will be postponed until Tuesday,

January 19th, but will still be held at the same time and location. If schools are closed on the 12th, then the meeting will be postponed. If inclement weather begins after schools let out for the day, please call Nesha McRae at (540)574-7850 to determine whether or not the meeting will be held as scheduled.

The public comment period for the Implementation Plan will end on February 11, 2016. 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.