

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC MEETING: Wednesday, July 27, 2016, 6 PM at the Abingdon Elementary School in the library (Room B103) located at 7087 Powhatan Drive in Hayes, VA 23072.

PURPOSE OF NOTICE: The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) is announcing its intent to apply to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for two federal No Discharge Zones (NDZs) and is seeking public comment on the draft application.

MEETING DESCRIPTION: To provide a summary of a draft application for designation of selected waterbodies within Gloucester County (Sarah Creek and Perrin River) as federal No Discharge Zones (NDZs). The NDZ designation would prohibit the overboard discharge of treated sewage effluent from Marine Sanitation Devices (MSDs) in these waterways.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY: The code of Virginia (§ 62.1-44.33) resolves that all tidal creeks in Virginia be designated federal No Discharge Zones premised on the improvement of impaired tidal creeks and directs the VDEQ to pursue this designation. It is currently illegal to discharge raw sewage in U.S. territorial waters. In a NDZ, this ban is expanded to include sewage treated by on-board marine sanitation devices. A NDZ is determined by EPA upon application from the state, and is contingent on the state demonstrating: 1) the need for enhanced protection of water quality, 2) the availability of sufficient local alternatives to overboard discharge (i.e. pump-outs), and 3) local stakeholder support. VDEQ is seeking this designation as one component of a "pollution diet" for small tidal Chesapeake Bay tributaries, which are frequently impaired for shellfish harvest due to elevated levels of fecal bacteria. The Go Green Committee of Gloucester County has partnered with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to conduct an analysis of boat usage and pump-out availability for Sarah Creek and Perrin River in Gloucester County, and VDEQ has concluded that existing pump-out facilities are adequate to service estimated peak-demand. A draft application to EPA for NDZ designation has been prepared and will be available for public review and comment on the DEQ website <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/WaterQualityInformationTMDLs/TMDL/NoDischargeZoneDesignations.aspx> the day after the public meeting. Presentations provided at the meeting will also be available on the website.

HOW TO COMMENT: DEQ will accept written comments beginning Thursday July 28, 2016, by e-mail or postal mail. Comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ during the comment period, which will expire on Friday, August 26, 2016.

CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RECIPIENT OF COMMENTS:

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