

Powell River and Tributaries IP
Residential Working Group: Pennington Gap
1st Meeting

When: Thurs, May 25, 2017, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Location: Pennington Gap Community Center
41670 West Morgan Ave, Pennington Gap, VA

ATTENDEES:

- Tim Miles- Daniel Boone Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Keith Harless- Town of Pennington Gap Manager
 - Kaitlyn Harless- Pennington Gap citizen
 - Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
 - Martha Chapman – TMDL Coordinator – SW Regional Office
 - Stephanie Kreps – NPS Coordinator – SW Regional Office
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Meeting purpose: To discuss the residential aspects and ways to reduce the sediment and bacteria impairment in the Powell River watershed in Lee County; Engage the public in the development of the Implementation Plan (IP) (also known as a Water Quality Improvement Plan or Clean Up Plan).

Meeting goal: Collect information from residential/town stakeholders to inform the components of the Implementation Plan: landuse changes, best management practices, partnerships, potential funding sources, outreach/education; timeline and future plans that may contribute to IP goals.

Stephanie Kreps (DEQ) gave a brief introduction and set the context of the meeting. Handouts were provided and can be found on the DEQ website:
<http://bit.do/DEQPowell-ImplementationPlanProgress>.

The following was discussed at the meeting:

1. **Landuse:** Pasture has increased and mining decreased in Lee County. Not much change in residential growth. Walmart was the last largest development (built +10 years ago).

Septic/Sewer Issues:

- 1) **Estimates on septic systems, sewer lines, straight pipes:**
 - a. All homes in Pennington Gap are connected to the sewer lines so failing septic and straight pipes not an issue in this area (septic program not applicable). Any septic tanks in the area would be abandoned.
 - b. St. Charles area is now connected to sewer which connects to Pennington Gap. Dryden area still has septic tanks.
 - c. Dryden to Walmart in Ben Hur has sewer access.

- 2) **Regulations:** Connection to sewer line with new construction (need to check with VDH).
- 3) **Best management practices:** Septic program not applicable to Pennington Gap area.

Urban/developed areas:

- 1) **Regulations:** No ordinances on construction along river in town
- 2) **Best management practices:**
 - a. Currently there are 2 main stormwater issues in Pennington Gap
 - i. Behind Lee Theater (sinkhole/creek)
 - ii. Underground stormwater tunnel (5' diameter) under downtown to railroad (constructed in early 1900s). The channel is showing signs of collapsing—already backing up and collapsing on Kentucky St at railroad). There's no ownership of the tunnel; therefore, don't know who should fix it. There is a need to channel water away from the town to reduce load on this channel. Or need to fix the existing channel.
 - b. Front of Leeman Field at the ATV drag race area (next to NF Powell) there are portions of the streambank that need stabilization. ATVs are not getting into the river. Also, a lot of trash from St. Charles area builds up along the banks of Leeman Field.
 - c. Natural islands have built up at the trestle at town entrance—is it possible to remove this extra sediment?
- 3) **Partnerships:** Department of Conservation and Recreation helped fund the new ATV Welcome Center at Leeman Field trailhead. Could partner with Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) for Kids Fishing Day at Leeman Field.
- 4) **Outreach/Education:** Powell Valley News/Kingsport Times best newspapers, Pennington Gap Facebook, new online paper Lee Daily, email, Farmer's Market not as useful for outreach, Trade Day (1st Fri of every month) is a yard sale (proceeds to Fire Department). Have a need for an information kiosk at Leeman Field (park-n-ride) and along Greenway. Could attach Middle School to Greenway with informational kiosk/outdoor classroom. Kids Fishing Day at Leeman Field with DGIF is of interest.
- 5) **Timeline:** 10 years is this realistic.
- 6) **Future plans:** Boxing gym donated to town—will be demolished and will develop "barrier-free park" (for autistic and sensitive children) with a pavilion and access point for fishing.

- 7) **Funding:** Department of Conservation and Recreation at ATV trailhead, DGIF could help with access point.

Pet waste/Wildlife:

- 1) **Best management practices:**
 - a. Pet waste stations exist at Leeman Field in Pennington Gap (only park in town). Town owns all the riverfront at Leeman Field (some streambank stabilization already been done).
- 2) **Future plans:** Pennington Gap still trying to complete study for their Greenway (2 mile trail along NF Powell). Could install pet waste stations along trail.

General:

- 1) No citizen monitoring sites in the area
- 2) Keith Harless, Pennington Gap Town Manager and Tim Miles, Conservation Technician at DBSWCD will represent this group on the Steering Committee.

Sediment Reduction Goals for Implementation Plan

- 100% removal of straight pipes
- 23% reduction in sediment loads from
 - Abandoned Mine Land (AML)
 - Barren Areas
 - Conventional Tillage Crops
 - Disturbed Forest
 - Residential
 - Unimproved Pasture
 - Streambank Erosion

