

**MINUTES**  
**North Fork Rivanna River IP**  
**1st Public Meeting**

**WHEN:** September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023; 6:00-8:00 pm  
**WHERE:** PVCC Eugene Giuseppe Center

**ATTENDEES:**

- Wetland Studies and Solutions
  - Katie Shoemaker
  - Jacob Bellinger
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
  - Madison Whitehurst – NPS Data Coordinator – Central Office/PRO, VRO
  - Kaitlin King – NPS Coordinator – Central Office/NRO
  - Ashley Wendt
- Greg Wilchens, Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District
- Robert Runkle, Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District
- Andrea Bowles, Rivanna Water & Sewer
- Mike Yager, Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District
- Laurel Williamson, Albermarle County
- Sharah Sharpe, Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Kate Mallek
- Steven Norris
- Lisa, Rivanna Conservation Alliance

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**Meeting purpose:** To kick start the development of a cleanup plan for the North Fork Rivanna River Watershed in Albemarle and Greene County; Share information; Engage the public in this process with their participation.

**Meeting goal:** Answer questions and identify stakeholders to help develop the Implementation Plan (IP) (also known as a Water Quality Improvement Plan or Clean Up Plan).

Madison Whitehurst (DEQ) gave a brief introduction of the meeting purpose, gave an overview of Virginia's water quality process, both the benthic NF Rivanna River TMDL (approved in 2020) and the bacteria NF Rivanna River TMDL (approved in 2009), what a Clean Up Plan is/is not and next steps/timeline to complete the plan.

A 30-day public comment period starts September 20, 2023, and goes until October 20, 2023, to comment on the development of the IP.

There will be at least one (maybe two) Working Group meetings, starting in November 2023 or January 2024 to go into more detail about the local needs/interests, types of practices, potential partners, and funding sources so that a draft plan can be developed by April/May 2024. The final public meeting (with the draft plan) is scheduled for April/May 2024. It is anticipated that the plan will be approved by the EPA in Summer 2024.

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## **Meeting Notes:**

### Slide 9:

Create a map with more identifying features like roads and other water bodies. Citizen was looking for relation to other waterbodies and how our impaired segments connect to other lakes and ponds in the area.

CSWCD wants to know if VDOT has a role in ditch maintenance and if this could contribute to the sediment impairment in the North Branch. Curious to see contributions to benthic impairments made by VDOTs maintenance. We will look into this with the development of the IP. However, DEQ explained their statewide permit that determines what VDOT can and can't do regarding messing nearby roadways and streams.

### Slides 12-14:

Was brought up by a participant to clarify how the scenarios help the reasoning behind which practices become prioritized. The scenarios help to determine the course of action and the practices it takes to get there. Ashley Wendt, DEQ, explained scenario 3 was chosen in the TMDL.

Does the mainstem of the North Fork have a sediment impairment because they didn't see it on the map? Yes, Katie Shoemaker, WSSI, explained the modeling showed that near the end of TMDL development that segment started to recover so it didn't qualify to be on that list at that time.

Are there implications with applying to funding for bacteria or benthic if that impaired segment is only benthic and not bacteria or vice versa? Madison Whitehurst, DEQ, answered that anyone can apply as long as it's in an eligible IP area, but it can change how it's prioritized. Anything upstream in the IP area is eligible given how it drains into the impaired waters. Many practices address both benthic and bacteria impairments.

A person asked if the 100% means they all must be addressed. Ashley Wendt, DEQ, explained it's just so we're covering all our bases since we don't know where all these are, and by state regulation, we have to say we're covering 100% of the sources.

CSWCD asked about the quantification of sources that have been done in the TMDL. Ashley explained yes, our goal in IP is to determine practices and priority and make sure that aligns with what the quantification in the TMDL is. This will mainly come into play during our working group meetings.

A major concern from the community is that the mainstem North Fork has a lot of erosion and stream stabilization issues.

### Slide 15:

How is funding per grant decided? Madison Whitehurst explained the RFA process and that the recent one closed. TJSWCD is interested in applying for next years.

Emphasis on that this is not just a 319 plan. This is for anyone wanting to address nonpoint source pollution in the NF Rivanna River Watershed.

Fish and wildlife are really interested in the North Fork Rivanna River Watershed.

Slides 16 – 18:

Many of the agricultural BMPs, such as stream exclusion and pasture management, address both sediment (benthic) and bacteria impairments. That is why they are suggested.

SWCDs work with their local Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to find/investigate failing septic systems.

Slide 19:

For working group meetings, having larger maps for the working group meeting to write on and look at when determining BMPs would be best. Working groups are used to figure out the agricultural/septic BMPs needed.