

**Rush River, Hughes River, and Hazel River
TMDL Implementation Plan Development**

Residential Working Group Meeting Summary

September 16, 2008

In attendance were:

Evan Blumenstein
Culpeper SWCD
351 Lakeside Dr. Culpeper 22701
blumenstein.cswcd.va@gmail.com

Ted Bullard
Virginia Department of Health
320 Hospital Drive, Warrenton, VA
540.347.6363 x107
Parker.Bullard@vdh.virginia.gov

Deirdre Clark
Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission
420 Southridge Parkway, Suite 106
Culpeper, VA 22701
540.829.7450
dbclark@rrregion.org

Gretchen Gorecki
Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission
420 Southridge Parkway, Suite 106
Culpeper, VA 22701
540.829.7450
ggore4ev@umw.edu

Hal Hunter
130 Mossie Lane
Amissville, VA
hal@Rappahannock.com

May Louise Sligh
VADCR
804.443.1494
May.Sligh@dcr.virginia.gov

BJ Valentine
2 Pine Lane
Washington, VA
540.675.3949
bvalentine@vt.edu

The meeting began with a review of the watershed maps and a discussion of recent efforts by the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) to remediate impacts to surface water from straight pipes and failing septic systems. CSWCD's role in implementing the Septic System Cost Share Program of Rappahannock County's Clean Streams Initiative was described. Details concerning outreach efforts and the program's success were provided. It was noted that newspaper ads and direct mailings to those whose properties lie within 300' of stream banks generated a substantial number of inquiries, many of which resulted in inspections and remedial actions. Stream walks, visual observations of suspect properties and conversations with land owners were some of the methods used to identify possible problems. The importance of educating the public about the impacts of failing septic systems was emphasized. It was noted that although most families were interested in cost-sharing the improvement expenses, some actively declined any assistance of any kind. Improvement and assistance options offered by the program include pump-outs, inspections, repairs and new systems. Evan offered to provide statistics on the types of improvements completed to date. He and Ted mentioned that although this particular program is limited to Rappahannock County, there are funds available statewide to assist low income families with septic system problems. Concerns for budget impacts to agency staffing were

discussed. Noting the significant achievements of the CSWC /Rappahannock partnership, the question regarding funding to continue these efforts was raised. Possible support from local non-profit groups was discussed. All agreed that funding for any activities beyond the key concerns of most groups is unlikely, but efforts will be made to inform them of the opportunity to support such programs. Local groups mentioned include rappFLOW, Rappahannock County Conservation Alliance and RLEP.

Problems with failing drainfields in the Town of Washington, the proposed sewage treatment plant construction and challenges associated with providing service to town residents were discussed. It was noted that local soil types, water table characteristics and topography often challenge the efficiency and function of traditional septic systems. Alternative systems or traditional systems with pumps are sometimes needed. These exceed the \$6,000 - \$8,000 costs typically associated with the installation of traditional systems.

Various approaches to educating the public were discussed. Mention was made of the importance of educating pet owners and owners/managers of facilities where large numbers of dogs are kenneled. The relative values and effectiveness of brochures, radio ads and websites were mentioned. It was agreed that popular local web sites (i.e. rappvoice and rappnet) provide good opportunities for posting public information, as does rappFLOW's home page. Because of likely funding limitations, it was agreed that those properties closest to surface water should be targeted for priority attention.

The meeting of the Residential Work Group adjourned at 9:10 P.M.