

VAPDC Environmental Committee Meeting
VAPDC Annual Meeting: Virginia Beach, Virginia
7/17/08

Committee Members in Attendance:

Toby Boian, MRPDC	tboian@mrpdc.org
Kevin Byrnes, GWRC	byrnes@gwregion.org
John Carlock, HRPDC	jcarlock@hrpdcva.org
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Dave Rundgren, NRVPCDC	dave.nrvpdc@nrvpdc.org
Eric Walberg, HRPDC	ewalberg@hrpdcva.org

Presenters and Other Attendees:

Arthur Butt, DEQ	ajbutt@deq.virginia.gov
Charles Lunsford, DCR	charles.lunsford@dcr.virginia.gov
Reese Peck, DHCD	Reese.Peck@dhcd.virginia.gov
CJ Mitchem	cemitchem@stearnsweeler.com

Presentations:

Arthur Butt, DEQ, provided an overview of the TMDL study process, progress, priorities, and future challenges and opportunities. This was followed by Charles Lunsford, DCR, who provided information on the TMDL implementation process, success, and future constraints and opportunities. These presentations were instrumental in framing the statewide TMDL process as well as the impending Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Due to time constraints, Charlie was not able to present a second powerpoint entitled: Piloting a Local Tributary Strategy Implementation Program in the Rappahannock Watershed in Richmond County, Va. However, this and all of the presentations will be available on the RRRC website.

Discussion:

There are significant numbers of new impairments in the 2008 303(d) list due to new bacterial standards and to a greater number of monitoring stations in the Commonwealth. With E Coli bacteria as the standard, as compared to fecal coliform in past years, the number of impairments will continue to increase.

Impairments by Year

Waterbody Type	1998	2002	2004	2006	2008
Rivers 51,021 (miles)	2,611	4,838	6,931	9,002	10,604

Lakes 114,884 (acres)	0	115,5581	89,834	109,201	94,039
Estuaries 2,308 (sq. miles)	437	1,689	1,907	2,212	2,185

Impairments by waterbody type:

- E Coli bacteria is the greatest impairment in streams and rivers
- Dissolved Oxygen and PCBs are the greatest impairments in lakes
- PCBs and Dissolved Oxygen are the greatest impairments in estuaries

Chesapeake Bay:

It has been recognized that meeting the water quality standard goals in the Chesapeake Bay will not occur by 2010. As a result, the Bay will be listed as a TMDL in 2011. A TMDL shall be developed that links allocations to newly established state WQS regulations and accelerates implementation through local load allocations (county level allocations and MS4s for regulated storm water). In accordance with the decision process the basinwide nutrient and sediment cap loads and allocations are to be achievable and shall sustain living resources of the Bay and tidal waters.

There will be a formal process for developing the Chesapeake Bay TMDL to include a stakeholder involvement component. According to Mr. Butt, the process will begin in the fall of 2008 and will be similar to past Tributary Strategy team efforts. Key decisions are being made at the Chesapeake Bay Program's Water Quality Regulatory Committee (previously the Water Quality Steering Committee) and the Chesapeake Bay Program's Technical Group.

Implementation Planning:

Implementation Planning progress to date is:

- Total impairments with completed IPs: 88
- Additional impairments scheduled for IP development: 29
- Impairments with TMDLs completed that need IPs: 237

Charlie described a number of ways that PDCs have and could be involved in the TMDL implementation process. These consist of the following:

- Local contact with public and elected officials
- Maintain web page
- Assist with facilitation of public participation process
- GIS support
- Work with stakeholders in soliciting grant funds to address actions identified in the plan
- Assist in planning tools to maintain management measures and water quality improvements (Value added – making BMPs last beyond DCR cost share agreement)
- Promote the incorporation of implementation actions into local comprehensive plans
- Assistance in addressing regional source issues (e.g., on-site sewage disposal systems)
- Assist in the integration of WLAs, MS4 permits, and implementation plans
- Partner with VA NEMO Program

While WQIA funding is currently being used for TMDL implementation, in accordance with General Assembly actions, all of this money is dedicated to agricultural practices. Environmental Committee members raised the concern that septic system pumping and upgrades are a significant portion of the TMDL implementation plans, however, no money is available for this activity. Efforts should be made to develop a dedicated funding source for septic system pumping and upgrades.

Environmental Committee Roundtable Discussion

The remainder of the committee meeting was dedicated to the mission and development of the Environmental Committee. Some of the primary issues that arose during this discussion were:

- What is the driving mission of the committee?
 - To provide input to the VAPDC
 - To provide cohesive input and feedback to state agencies (DEQ & DCR)
- Use the Environmental Committee as a vehicle for communication among the PDCs and with a greater understanding and cohesion of the PDCs, then the Environmental Committee can serve as a voice to develop legislative items.
 - Need to use VAPDC to lobby/submit legislation to expand WQIA: It was agreed that the state needs to move away from “pounds reduced” and toward “program development”
- Develop network among PDCs – summarize regulations that are can be used by localities (e.g. Clearinghouse of local environmental codes)
- The Environmental Committee can act to promote environmental issues in western and southern Virginia

The attendees identified several specific issues that should be addressed by the Environmental Committee in the future:

- Farm Bill funding – a speaker from NRCS
- Stormwater management regulations – how will PDCs be engaged in the new regulations?
- Healthy Waters Initiative – This is a priority by EPA Region 3
- DCR Chesapeake Bay Data review – was a good opportunity for collaboration among PDCs
 - The Committee needs to explore additional collaboration efforts (e.g. dam safety data and mapping)
 - The Committee needs feedback on the use of the submitted data and future CB data inputs
- Need to discuss and develop framework on the interaction of the Transportation Plans, UDAs, Stormwater regulations, and Nutrient Caps.

Future Committee Meetings:

- Need to meet longer than 2 hours. It was recommended that the Environmental Committee hold day long meetings at the Spring and Fall VAPDC meetings.
- For the next meeting, it was recommended that a portion of the meeting be devoted to a roundtable of all environmental PDC initiatives, concerns, and opportunities.
- Recommended that all PDCs submit 3 or 4 priority issues to drive future meeting speakers and topics.