



RUSHERN L. BAKER, III
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Public Meeting on Watershed Restoration in Prince George's County



July 23, 2014 • Laurel, MD

Question-and-Answer Summary

An informational public meeting was held Wednesday, July 23, 2014 from 6:00pm – 8:00pm at the Partnership Activity Hall (attached to the Laurel Police Department on 811 5th Street in Laurel, Maryland, to inform the public about the County's plans for developing local TMDL restoration plans for impaired waters in the County.

List of Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Cary Coppock	Citizen
Brian Davila	Citizen
Melissa DeSantis	Tetra Tech Inc.
Ben Fischler	Citizen
Brittani Garner	Clean Water
Bruce Gilmore	Anacostia Watershed Society
Liz Hiett	Tetra Tech Inc.
Jerry Maldonado	Prince George's County Department of the Environment
Sudhanshu Mishra	Prince George's County Department of the Environment
Christine Nagle	Citizen
Jennie Nevin	Prince George's County
Adam Ortiz	Prince George's County Department of the Environment
Kweli Powell	Citizen
Kurt Schneckenburger	Olson Research
Mark Sievers	Tetra Tech Inc.
Dan Smith	Anacostia Watershed Society
Sam Stribling	Tetra Tech Inc.
Lilantha Tennekoon	Prince George's County Department of the Environment
Debbie Weller	Prince George's County Department of the Environment

Questions and Answers

Q: Bruce Gilmore: My question is specific to the timetable on the brochure. For the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) restoration plan timetable, it looks that by the end of this month, four tasks will be accomplished: 1) review TMDLs, 2) develop watershed existing conditions reports, 3) identify credit opportunities, and 4) calculate load reduction gaps. Are there any other data, analyses, studies, or reports that the average community person can see at this juncture? One of the things we are going to be particularly interested in seeing is the data that has been collected and compare it to what they have



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or understand. Then we need to ask if we want to generate a more combined report that that will maximize citizen input?

A: Mark Sievers: We have the TMDL factsheets and they should be posted online next week. There are also other reports currently under review. There are existing credit opportunities for communities to take part in. We are still in the process of the load reduction gap.

A: Jerry Maldonado: The amount of data we are generating at this point is quite large. Establishing the gap is tremendous. We are looking at all the possible reports. A lot has been done. We are trying to put the data together. We have about six months to go. We are going to engage the public at a certain point. One good point we can establish for engagement is when we determine the gaps from the TMDLs. At that point we will have enough information that will give us an indicator of what we have to do over the next few years. We are following the simplistic steps that other jurisdictions are developing. We will probably have the water treatment model done, then identify gaps and impairments and move on from there with getting others engaged.

C: Sam Stribling: If anyone is interested in the biological reports referenced, please contact Jerry Maldonado and he can send them to you.

Q: Unidentified Citizen: What does it mean to retrofit an acre? How does a rain garden or rain barrel impact that?

A: Adam Ortiz: The traditional system is when a raindrop hits the pavement it picks up something (debris) along the way and travels down to the storm drain where it is piped directly to the stream. Retrofitting is a natural way in which we interrupt that pollution pipeline. The flow is interrupted and we introduce filtration. For example, if there is a rain garden, the flow is directed into this natural filter. The water is treated before it gets into the waterbody. To retrofit an acre, you would determine how many devices are necessary to filter one acre. A rain barrel is another example.

Q: Dan Smith: I appreciate the attention to the details and comprehensiveness you all are giving to this program. I also appreciate how well this has been setup. It is amazing to have financial support available. We have to make it work and succeed or we will have a huge disappointment. I also appreciate the attention to the breadth of the plans and intention to do it. Can you tell me a little more about PCBs? What is the extent of the problem and how are we going to clean it up? (I'm referring to Anacostia work being done at the moment). I think that will really show support and leadership if we can do this in Prince George's County.

A: Sam Stribling: I'm involved with the Anacostia River work you are talking about. What we are trying to do is a remedial investigation into the extent of PCBs in the sediment from the mainstem to Bladensburg. We are also performing a companion study to look at the load of PCBs and other contaminants (loadings coming in from the northeast and northwest branches). We are trying to not only look at the status of the contaminants in the mainstem, but also the pollutants coming in.



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Q: Dan Smith: How do we go to next step of fixing things after we have identified the problems?

A: The panel: There are a number of different technologies and techniques out there. Once we identify sources we can determine the actions to be taken. There will be source-specific solutions.

Q: Cary Coppock: My understanding was that there would be heavy reliance on models. I'm hearing that monitoring is going to continue to be a part of the plan and I'm encouraged by that. This is about milestones and I know the current regime doesn't require milestones. Do you have a program or plan out there that we can review (for biological monitoring)? We all want to be supportive. If it becomes less of a priority, we hope our voices will help to nudge it along. How much of the reporting can we have access to and therefore lend our help?

A: Jerry Maldonado: The TMDL Restoration Plan information will be placed on the project website. Partnerships are very important. We are dealing with so many river miles. We need associations and other groups to become part of the solution. Outreach is a big part of this program. The Chesapeake Bay Trust is a County partner to make grants available to local non-profit organizations looking to install water quality pollution reduction measures. We are going to develop a tracking list for all the impairments we are going to be addressing. We need to develop a plan first.

C: Mark Sievers: Regarding milestones, the Chesapeake Bay watershed plan has milestones and is an information source on existing milestones. The County's milestone information is on the Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE's) website.

Q: Brittani Garner: First, I want to applaud your efforts. How exactly do you envision the public being involved in the technical aspect and supplying comments?

A: Jerry Maldonado: At this time we are still researching this effort. The best place to start is to discuss things with MDE. For example, shopping center owners go to the County to see where they can get help to retrofit their area. Any ideas the public can provide to MDE is appreciated. We need to figure out ways to speed up the permitting process. We also need to find opportunities for restoration. We will definitely need people in the field to be our eyes and ears.

Q: Dan Smith: This is the basis of the plan that will drive the action and implementation. Do you have a characterization of the short-term/long-term actions and how much will be citizen action and how much the new P3? How much will be traditional versus conventional approaches?

A: Jerry Maldonado: It all depends on the scale of the problem. With twelve TMDLs, it depends on the load reductions needed. From the regulatory perspective, we are looking at nitrogen as one of the priorities. It is a matter of spending the dollars wisely. We are in the initial stages of this enterprise. We need to determine what to prioritize and once that is determined, we need to come up with an implementation plan that will help us look at the bigger picture.



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Q: Cary Coppock: I am very impressed with the church program that you have set up. That is a great program. My understanding is that the Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) wants to expand that program. It would be nice to learn of a program that tracks those congregations and how much they do. How would that play out as far as percentage from them? I don't like the rebate so much.

A: Adam Ortiz: The alternative plan is just for churches and nonprofits. The plan would not apply to for-profits, etc. We do intend on tracking. We are partnering with Chesapeake Bay Trust. We expect to track every water-focused sermon, rain barrel, etc. We have also partnered with some faith-specific partners to track other items related to ministries. We plan on tracking everything. It is Important for us to track.

Q: Christine Nagle: I'm glad to see an emphasis on trees and bringing them in. I'm interested in those items we already have in place (i.e., trees already standing). Is there something in place to protect trees already standing?

A: Adam Ortiz: That is a great point. Governments have done a good job planting trees on public property. Now we want to improve the canopy on private property. One of the new programs is the Tree Releaf program. We are kicking around a few things. The government does not spend money for private entities and that is something we need to change. We need to have some government spending to assist those in need. As far as preservation, the county does have an interest in preservation. There is a bit of a zoning issue.

C: Dan Smith: The Council of Governments for the Anacostia government did a tree program for the watershed. They performed a geographic information system (GIS) analysis and made several recommendations, however the report has been shelved and nothing was ever put into place. There are some great recommendations in there that probably would be worth looking at.

Q: Bruce Gilmore: My reaction to this meeting is that for some of us this raises a lot of questions as to where you get leads, etc. Is there some other way to have sessions in which some of the questions I raise could be answered? Related to trees—we will develop watershed existing conditions and by the end of this month we should know, for each of the watersheds, more than what are on these sheets and be able to determine what is causing these impairments. As far as existing credit opportunities goes, certainly a tree program of some sort could be included. We could also look at how many trees have been planted since 2008 (under another program). Do we have a period of time where these existing conditions could be more developed and then new credits developed and from there subtract one from the other and calculate the load reductions? If Tetra Tech does all the work, how does this information get back to us? Will there be some opportunities to do that kind of thing, such as meeting again, if you feel it is valuable?

A: Jerry Maldonado: I think there is an opportunity to pass that information on to the public. We will generate a draft report and then the public will be given the chance to review the report. We will grab all the information/data we can to paint the picture. There are a lot of reports that could be useful. The



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benefit of these public meetings is to gather knowledge from the group and incorporate that information.

C: Bruce Gilmore: I can't speak for the others here, but I would be willing to represent a group. All of us here have worked on, read through, and dealt with the TMDLs. Those are thorough documents. If we have data that says something about the watershed, then we would like to share that information.

Q: Brittani Garner: Can you expand on the green infrastructure program?

A: Adam Ortiz: There is a lot of opportunity. We have partnered with the P3 where we have to build the infrastructure on the ground. It takes a lot to do this because it is very involved. The unique thing about green infrastructure is it is a living unit. We need people trained in maintenance to make it all work. Partnerships are very important. We have about \$1 million to with which to work. The difficult part is to keep the jobs within the County because we don't have the workforce. We need more jobs in the County. Our program is perfect for supplying jobs. We have a wide range of work, more sustainable work. Our challenge is to make sure the businesses are located in Prince George's County. One of the items to build into our program is to have someone outside the government hire people to get it done. We have all this money and paying jobs. We are not outsourcing. It's a partnership to develop local businesses. We have a 30% local target that will increase to 51% local in the future. We are required to mentor businesses. We are focusing on a feeder work source pipeline. This will be key. It is very important to keep the money and jobs in the County to take care of our own. We see this all fitting together.

Written Comments Submitted

No written comments were submitted.