



May 14, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Rivanna River Basin Commission (RRBC)
Announces New Phase**

Charlottesville, VA – The Rivanna River Basin Commission (RRBC) announces that it will be reducing its activities, staff, and operations pending full commission approval at its June 10, 2013, meeting. The RRBC’s Executive Committee met on May 13, 2013, to review current programs and staffing and has determined that the current funding model is not sustainable in the present fiscal climate.

Marvin Moss, chairman of the RRBC said, “We have always known how difficult it is for local governments to make decisions on a watershed-basis. The RRBC was created as an advisory group to help our local governments with natural resource decisions in the context of the whole watershed, to go beyond jurisdictional boundaries.”

The commission is comprised of elected officials from the governing bodies of Greene, Fluvanna, and Albemarle counties and the City of Charlottesville, as well as board members from the Thomas Jefferson and Culpepper Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and citizen members appointed from each watershed locality. The RRBC meets 4 to 6 times a year, providing a forum for local elected officials and key staff to discuss water resources and land use impacts from a watershed perspective.

Created in 2004 by an act of the Virginia General Assembly and with full-time professional staff since 2009, RRBC has coordinated numerous projects in the Rivanna watershed including a comprehensive, EPA-funded stormwater management grant that provided funding for each RRBC locality for stormwater management projects and technical studies.

Moss, who has served on the RRBC as an elected official from 2007 to 2010 and as the appointed citizen from Fluvanna County since mid-2011, said, “Even though regional, and specifically watershed-based, planning should result in more cost-effective strategies for all the jurisdictions, it becomes particularly challenging during times of economic stress.”

For the remainder of 2013, the commission will continue to meet as it undertakes a review of its accomplishments and effectiveness in a region that has multiple regional agencies and two other Rivanna-focused groups.

“Many people wonder why there are three different Rivanna groups,” says Leslie Middleton, executive director of the RRBC since 2009. “There is a lot of passion for the Rivanna in our community, and we need a range of actions at many scales and by all kinds of people to reverse the degradation in our streams.”

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Albemarle County	City of Charlottesville	Fluvanna County	Greene County	Culpeper SWCD	Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Duane Snow	Dave Norris	Joe Chesser	Eddie Dean		
Rodney Thomas	Dede Smith	Robert Ullenbruch	Jim Frydl, Vice Chair	Robert Brame, Treasurer	Lonnie Murray
Richard Randolph	Keith Lancaster	Marvin Moss, Chair	Carl Schmitt		



Rivanna River Basin Commission

A CONFLUENCE OF INTERESTS

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Middleton explained, "RRBC has often been confused with the other Rivanna groups, but our unique role is that we are a public commission that works through and with our local government members. But we couldn't be effective if we did not base our work on good water quality data, which is what StreamWatch provides. The Rivanna Conservation Society works to educate students and citizens to help them become effective stewards and vocal about the importance of clean water."

Rick Randolph, recently appointed to the RRBC as a citizen member from Albemarle County, said that he's lived in communities where watershed organizations have succeeded when they included all aspects of watershed management under an umbrella organization. "It's hard to predict, but perhaps this downsizing of the RRBC will create an opening for something new to emerge."

Jim Frydl, Greene County Supervisor, and Vice-Chair of the RRBC, has served on the RRBC since 2010. "RRBC has proven itself a key player in helping our local governments understand their obligations under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Our county has benefited from being a part of the RRBC and the work of its staff. We now have studies that will help us prioritize stormwater management projects, and our boards and staff are better equipped to make resource management decisions."

RRBC recently issued the *2012 Rivanna Watershed Snapshot*, a description of existing conditions in the watershed that will serve as a foundation for future watershed and river corridor planning.

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§ 62.1-69.46. The Rivanna River Basin Commission; establishment; purpose.
www.rivannariverbasin.org.

The Rivanna River Basin Commission (RRBC), a public entity of local government, provides guidance for the stewardship and enhancement of the water and natural resources of the Rivanna River Basin and to be a forum in which local governments and citizens can discuss issues affecting the Basin's water quality and quantity and other natural resources.

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