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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Rivanna River Basin Commission releases the Final draft of the 2012 Rivanna Watershed Snapshot

Charlottesville, VA – The Rivanna River Basin Commission (RRBC) has released the final draft of the 2012 Rivanna Watershed Snapshot, a 12-page summary of existing conditions in the Rivanna Watershed. The Snapshot covers a range of topics, including water quality and types of pollution, water supply resources, recreation, easements, stormwater management, and protection and conservation activities.

The Rivanna River Basin Commission will be reviewing the draft *2012 Rivanna Watershed Snapshot* at its regular bi-monthly meeting on Monday, December 10, 2012, at the Albemarle County Office Building. The draft document is available for download at

http://www.rivannariverbasin.org/docs/Snapshot/cwp_rrbcsnapshot_12.06.12.3.pdf

The public is invited to join the Rivanna River Basin Commission on Friday, December 7, 2012, from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., at CitySpace on the Charlottesville Downtown Mall in an interactive open house event featuring the *2012 Rivanna Watershed Snapshot*. The RRBC will host additional events around the Rivanna watershed for the public during January 2013.

Leslie Middleton, Executive Director of the Rivanna River Basin Commission, says, “We hope that the Snapshot will help our community realize what’s special and unique about the Rivanna Watershed. We also hope that it will bring attention to the fact that the health of the Rivanna is at a tipping point.”

For example, the Snapshot reports that over half the streams assessed by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality do not meet the water quality standards for sustaining aquatic life or being safe for recreational contact due to excessive bacteria pollution. However, compared to many watersheds in Virginia, the Rivanna is in fairly good shape. Of the 770 square miles of the watershed spread across Albemarle, Greene, and Fluvanna counties and including all of the City of Charlottesville, about 20% is under some kind of protection or conservation easement that benefits water quality to some degree.

Much of the information in the Snapshot has been collected from state agencies and local governments and compiled to show how the watershed as a whole is fairing. “The RRBC was created to bring together our local governments, including the soil and water conservation districts, to focus on the Rivanna as a natural system,” says Marvin Moss, Chair of the RRBC. “Though it is challenging to think beyond one’s political boundaries, we are convinced we have to do so in order to really make a difference in taking care of and restoring the Rivanna to health.”

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The Snapshot provides the foundation for work planned by the RRBC in 2013, which includes developing a roadmap and a toolkit for local governments, agencies, individuals, and watershed partners to work together more effectively toward the goal of a healthy Rivanna River system.

During the Open House on Friday, staff from the Rivanna River Basin Commission and volunteers and staff from partnering organizations will be available to answer questions about the Rivanna's water quality, conservation tools, river recreation, stormwater management, and watershed education.

For further information about this project or the work of the Rivanna River Basin Commission, see www.rivannariverbasin.org or contact Leslie Middleton, Executive Director, at (434) 971-7722 or (434) 293-5770 or middleton@rivannariverbasin.org.

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The mission of the Rivanna River Basin Commission (RRBC) is to provide 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. The RRBC was formed through enabling state legislation in 2004 and consists 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.