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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Moore's Creek Bacteria Pollution Cleanup Plan Receives Boost from State and Federal Funding**

**Charlottesville, VA** – The Rivanna River Basin Commission (RRBC) and local partners have received a grant of \$267,000 to be used over the next two and half years to address the bacterial contamination of Moore's Creek that drains portions of Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. Project partners receiving funding assistance are the Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District (TJSWCD), Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), and StreamWatch.

Bacteria pollution in Moore's Creek, a tributary of the Rivanna, is from fecal coliform, found in the intestines of all warm-blooded animals, including dogs, cats, cattle, humans and some wildlife. The affected or "impaired" stream segment is about six and half miles long, from the intersection of Route 29 and Teel Lane (County Road 1106) to the confluence of Moore's Creek with the Rivanna River. A 2005 study outlined many corrective measures, including sanitary sewer trunk repair and replacement and prevention of illicit discharges. To date, over 40% of these corrective measures have been completed or are planned soon. This project brings resources to the community to further help with pollution reduction from homeowners and citizens.

"This influx of money comes at a welcome time for our localities given newest mandate from the federal government to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay," says Leslie Middleton, Executive Director of the RRBC. "Fortunately, most of the grant funding that will be directed to projects to reduce the bacterial pollution in Moore's Creek will also help with the nutrient and sediment reductions that the Bay clean-up effort is focused on."

The grant is from the Department of Conservation and Recreation and will be used to address the bacterial pollution specifically coming from livestock operations, failing or non-existent septic systems, and pet waste. Over 60% of the funding will be made available as "cost-share" to help homeowners and landowners in the watershed address the sources of pollution on privately-owned lands. The majority of the funding is federal EPA dollars, but a portion is from Virginia state funds.

TJSWCD will reach out to homeowners and farmers in the watershed to encourage "best management practices," or BMPs, such as exclusion fencing for livestock and septic system pump-out and repairs. Funding will also be made available to help homeowners connect to existing public sewer lines. Residential-scale composters, specially designed for pet-waste, will be made available for pet owners in the watershed to encourage pet-waste collection that reduces polluted run-off to area streams due to cats and dogs that spend time outdoors.

RRBC is providing overall project coordination among all the project partners. In addition to RRBC, TJSWCD, TJPDC, and StreamWatch, other partners include the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Albemarle County Service Authority, Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority,

University of Virginia, Rivanna Conservation Society, and the Virginia Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality. This effort will also benefit from the resources of the Rivanna River Stormwater Education Partnership that pools local resources to educate our community on stormwater pollution issues.

Leslie Middleton explains that the Rivanna River Basin Commission's role in the watershed community is to help bring partners together to seek solutions to water quality and other natural resource issues. "The strength of this project is the partnerships. Along with the TJSWCD, we also have StreamWatch, who will recruit citizens to help monitor area streams in the Moores Creek watershed. TJPDC will provide the geospatial analysis and support necessary for the project."

The Moores Creek watershed covers 35 square miles of Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. The creek forms much of the southern boundary of the city, draining the southern part of the city and parts of Albemarle County to the south and west of the Charlottesville.

Other stream segments in the Rivanna watershed also do not meet Virginia's water quality standards for recreational uses, totally approximately 65 miles (including the North Fork Rivanna River, Preddy Creek and tributaries, Meadow Creek, Mechums River, and Beaver Creek). These segments are listed on Virginia's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters (2010) due to violations of the state's water quality standard for fecal coliform bacteria and/or *E. coli*. This standard is used to alert the public that these water bodies are not safe for primary contact recreation (e.g., swimming and boating).

**XXX**

For further information about this project, please contact Ms. Leslie Middleton, Executive Director of the Rivanna River Basin Commission ([middleton@rivannariverbasin.org](mailto:middleton@rivannariverbasin.org) and 434-971-7722).

Further information about the project, including maps, can be found at [www.rivannariverbasin.org/other-initiatives.php](http://www.rivannariverbasin.org/other-initiatives.php)

For information about agricultural cost share and septic maintenance and upgrades, please contact Alyson Sappington, District Director, Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District, ([Alyson.Sappington@vaswcd.org](mailto:Alyson.Sappington@vaswcd.org) and (434) 975-0224).

For information about pet waste pollution prevention, please contact Martin Johnson, Urban Conservation Specialist, Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District ([martin.johnson@tjswcd.org](mailto:martin.johnson@tjswcd.org) and (434) 975-0224).

For further information about the Rivanna River Stormwater Education Partnership, please see: [www.rivanna-stormwater.org/](http://www.rivanna-stormwater.org/)

The Rivanna River Basin Commission, 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. 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. For further information about the Rivanna River Basin Commission, see [www.rivannariverbasin.org](http://www.rivannariverbasin.org).