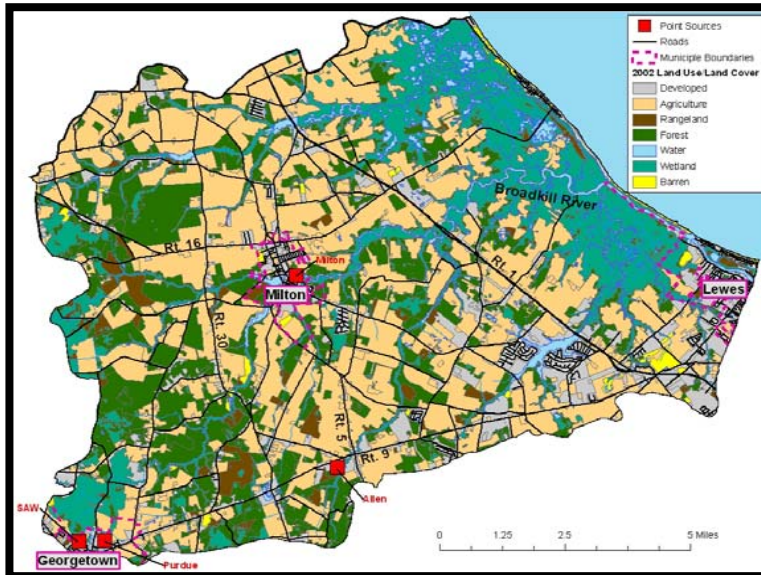




Your Challenge, Your Choice!
 Broadkill River Watershed
 Tributary Action Team Steering Committee
 C/O Watershed Assessment Section
 820 Silver Lake Boulevard, Suite 220
 Dover, DE 19904
 40-0807-03

The Broadkill River and Watershed Public Forums to Discuss: Your Challenge, Your Choice!



Wednesday, December 6, 2006
6:30pm – 9:00pm
UofD College of Marine & Earth Studies
Cannon Lab, Room 104
Lewes, DE

Saturday, December 9, 2006
10:00am – 12:30pm
Mariner Middle School
Cafeteria
Milton, DE

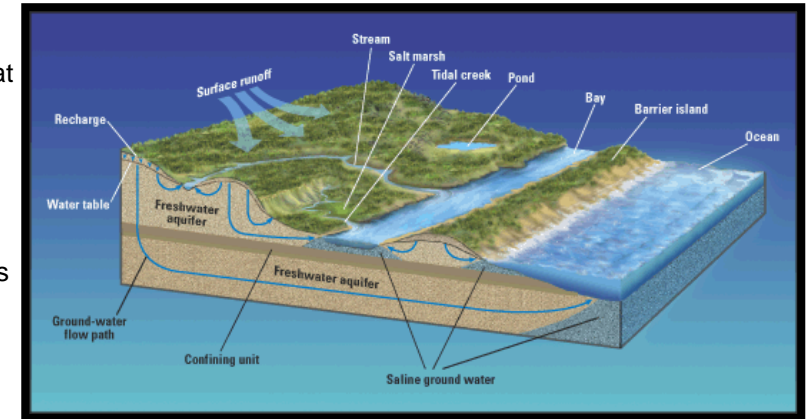


The Broadkill River and several of its tributaries and ponds are impaired by high levels of bacteria (75% reduction required) and elevated levels of the nutrients nitrogen (40% reduction required) and phosphorous (40% reduction required). Because of this, Delaware will develop pollution control strategies for the Broadkill River Watershed. A 1997 federal court case required Delaware to set pollution limits for our waterways because existing pollution control activities were not sufficient to meet Delaware state standards for water usage and recreation. These forums will help decide what strategies to reduce these pollutants are necessary and how they will impact those who live, work, and recreate in the Broadkill Watershed.

The Watershed

Enhancements in waste treatment, agricultural practices, and erosion and sediment controls have contributed to the Broadkill's health. However, levels of nutrients and bacteria in the waterways remain high. There has been a significant decrease in wetlands and forests over time as these natural filters have been converted for agriculture and other purposes. The land use continues to change from what was recently a watershed dominated by cropland to a more urban/suburban watershed. The impact of these land use changes is uncertain.

As residents of the Broadkill Watershed, we need to make decisions about its future. The multitude of activities that take place on land (69,000 acres in the drainage area), such as farming, lawn fertilizing, and septic system use, even miles from the river, produce nutrients that enter the river through surface water runoff and groundwater recharge. This type of pollution is called nonpoint source pollution and, because of its diffuse nature, has proven difficult to tackle. Point source pollution, which is discharged from a specific site like a pipe, also occurs in the Broadkill and is regulated through permits.



The Process

Because the problem is complex, the University of Delaware Sea Grant Program and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) asked a group of stakeholders to develop this document and hold forums for those who live, work, and recreate in the watershed. The Broadkill Steering Committee consists of citizens with diverse interests from the watershed. Once the results of the forums are compiled, a Tributary Action Team will develop pollution control strategies. The strategies are necessary to meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of pollutants for the watershed. TMDLs are the maximum amount of pollution that a water body can receive without violating water quality standards and are the sum of point and nonpoint source loads. The level of pollution reduction necessary in the Broadkill is based on current levels determined with data collected by DNREC and comprehensive watershed models. The Broadkill TMDLs require specific reductions in nonpoint sources of bacteria, nitrogen, and phosphorus, as well as reductions from the four point source dischargers.

Your Role

This process invites YOU, the citizen, to participate by sharing your views on these topics as it tries to tie all of these efforts together. This is also an opportunity to learn how your friends and neighbors feel about the health of the watershed. In order to develop strategies that will have public support, the Steering Committee members welcome their fellow citizens to discuss a variety of approaches to the water pollution problem. The approaches, though different, are not mutually exclusive. You will probably find some elements of each approach that you like, and some that bother you — that's part of the process of discovering the many difficult choices we will have to make when developing water-pollution controls. Although each approach is presented theoretically, the strategies they include are based on real ideas that have been under discussion, in some cases, for years. Those approaches are listed below and outlined in the following pages:

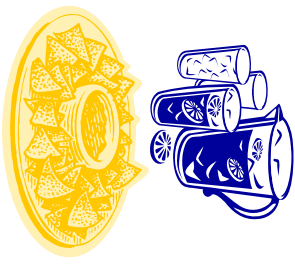
1. The Broadkill River Watershed depends on you and me.
2. The Broadkill River Watershed belongs to all of us.
3. Science and rules will protect the Broadkill River Watershed.

Additionally, please be part of the continued discussion and join us in forming the Broadkill Tributary Action Team.

DOOR PRIZES!



REFRESHMENTS!



Approach 1

The Broadkill River Watershed depends on you and me.

The quality of the Broadkill River and the groundwater that supplies it are impacted by our activity on the land. Those of us who live, work, and recreate in the watershed need to roll up our sleeves and get to work. We make choices everyday. We can help the Broadkill by using our own common sense and good judgment. This approach suggests that if people know the issues and solutions they will do what is best for the river.

What can be done?

- Develop water quality education programs that include both youth and adults, such as:
 - Education program for developers and homeowners on stormwater maintenance,
 - Education programs and incentives for maintenance of home waste treatment (septic) systems.
- Create incentives for those that conduct activities that affect ground and surface water in order to improve the quality of the Broadkill, such as:
 - Award density bonus or fast track status for developments that limit impervious surfaces to less than 15%,
 - Award density bonus or fast track status for developments that provide 100' buffers on critical waterways.
- Continue to fund the numerous cost-share and incentive programs available for agricultural practices (e.g. nutrient management, cover crop, wildlife habitat, and more).
- Review regulations to ensure that they offer opportunities to “do the right thing” versus impede proactive practices.
- Continue to assess and review the science used to develop best management practices.

In Opposition

- To think that everyone will “do the right thing” if given the information is unrealistic.
- Folks are too busy with their lives to educate themselves about a river.
- Incentives don't work, you'll need a hammer.
- How do you measure the impacts of an individual on water quality?

Approach 2

The Broadkill River Watershed belongs to all of us.

We now have the opportunity to ensure the quality of the river for future generations. Stewardship is about responsibility and leaving a resource better than one found it. Granted, times change and impacts happen, but that does not absolve us from the legacy we leave our children and their children. This approach suggests that if we collectively act as stewards of the river, we will ensure its quality.

What can be done?

- Advocate for more conservation and resource protection, such as:
 - Support, develop, and join conservation and research programs that will aggressively bring focus and solutions to help the Broadkill watershed,
 - Continue to support the purchase of critical habitat and recharge areas.
- Develop a land-use plan that accounts for “green infrastructure” and “water quality.”
- Create “streamwatch” and other citizen groups to monitor water quality and land activity on a regular basis in the watershed.
- Increase funding for agricultural best management practices.
- Begin the process of developing a regional stormwater utility, which is a special assessment district set up to generate a reliable source of funding for stormwater management within a region, usually through user fees.
- Closely monitor the decisions of elected officials. Do they reflect the notion of stewardship?
- Bring all voices to the table to develop solutions.

In Opposition

- None of these approaches will drastically change water quality in the short term. Can we afford the luxury of just talking?
- Stewardship means different things to different people.

Approach 3

Science and rules will protect the Broadkill River Watershed.

This approach says we need to make the waters of the Broadkill and its tributaries fishable and swimmable and we need to start now. As citizens, we expect our rivers and streams to be clean. Although there has been progress, we continue to lose our natural buffers, wetlands, and marshes. Constant vigilance, monitoring, and corrective actions are necessary. This approach suggests there is a need to “mind the store.”

What can be done?

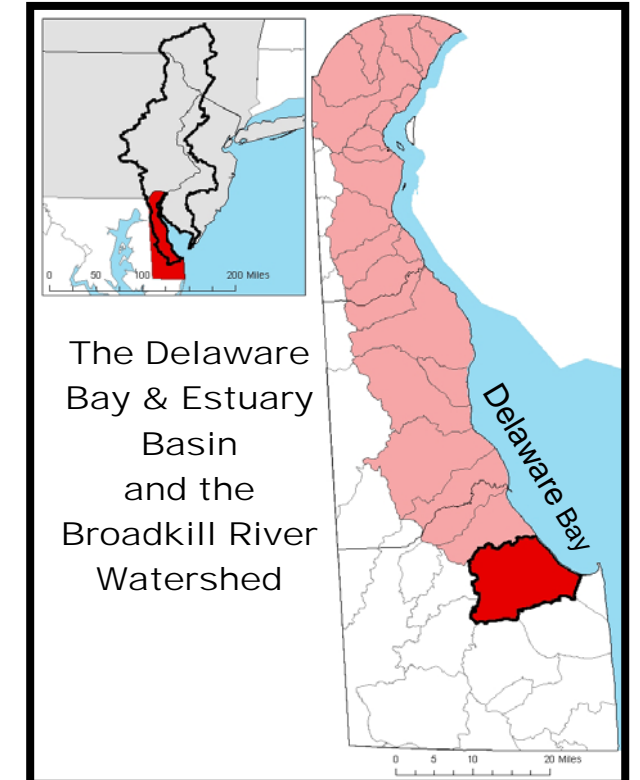
- Review all water and wastewater regulations for how effectively they ensure the health and safety of our citizens. Change them accordingly.
- Review all existing stormwater facilities for opportunities to retrofit based on identified criteria.
- Develop regional wastewater facilities that eliminate areas of failing septic systems, as was done in the Red Mill Pond area.
- Develop and require stormwater best management practices that meet the TMDLs.
- Continue to monitor the agricultural community's progress in meeting the standards of the Nutrient Management Commission.
- Develop a cost/benefit analysis for each segment of land use activity in the watershed. Use human health and safety as the key indicator.
- Develop education programs that help every citizen in the watershed understand how their actions affect water quality that ultimately affects the community.

In Opposition

- Many believe that strong regulatory programs rarely get anywhere in Delaware politics.
- Stringent requirements will certainly cause financial and other burdens for some.
- Who has the people or resources to get this done?
- Science does not have all the answers.

Your Challenge, Your Choice!

Please participate and engage each other in discussion. Consider the economic and environmental aspects of each approach. There is no “right” answer. Our goal is to find common ground among attendants so the Broadkill Team can produce recommendations for DNREC that represent the views and opinions of the people who live, work, and recreate within the borders of the Broadkill River Watershed.



For more information, contact:
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Steering Committee
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<http://broadkill.ocean.udel.edu>

All stakeholders interested in helping to create the pollution control strategy for this watershed are welcome to attend the first meeting of the Broadkill River Watershed Tributary Action Team on January 22, 2007 at 7:00pm at the UofD College of Marine & Earth Studies, Cannon Lab, Room 104.