

## **Lower Clinch Implementation Plan**

### **Community Engagement Meeting #2**

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 3:00 PM – 4:50 PM

**Location:** Russell County Public Library, 248 W. Main Street Lebanon, VA 24266

Attendance: See sign in sheet- on last page

#### **1. Introduction**

Meeting Started at 3pm. Autumn Matney welcomed the group and provided brief introductions.

*See sign-in sheet for attendance*

#### **2. Presentation**

Autum covered the following topics:

##### **2.1 Goals for the Meeting**

- Review project area map
- Discuss proposed Best Management Practices (BMPs), including associated costs, quantities, and potential timelines
- Discuss priority areas within the Implementation watershed
- Gather feedback to make further adjustments to the data
- Lay out next steps

##### **2.2 Overview of Project**

- Discussed Virginia's Water Quality Process, including an overview of all the components of the Continuous Planning Process
- Outlined the impaired stream segments and their associated VAHUC6 watershed names, as well as their associated TMDLs and related impairments
- Displayed a map of the project area with watershed boundaries, impaired stream segments, and VDEQ monitoring stations
- Discussed the sediment impairment in the Lick Creek (TC17) watershed and the need for more data on abandoned mine land in the area as that is indicated as a major source of the load

##### **2.3 Priority Areas**

- Discussed factors affecting prioritization of watersheds: need, opportunity, likelihood of implementation/participation

##### **2.4 Timeline/Next Steps**

- The next and final public meeting will be held in July 2026 with a 30-day public comment period to follow

- EPA acceptance is expected in winter of 2026 or Spring of 2027 with DEQ 319 funding eligible in 2027

### 3. Discussion Summary

#### 3.1 Feasibility of Proposed BMPs

- Residential Septic
  - Representative from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) in Wise County pointed out that Honey Branch (within TC17 watershed) is not hooked up to the St. Paul system
  - Representative from VDH also indicated our data was missing numbers for discharge permits in Sinking Creek (TC22)
  - Representative from Clinch Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (CVSWCD) suggested number of houses with failing septic systems may be higher than data indicates considering it comes from 2014
  - Representative from VDH indicated that use of the word “replacement” in BMP coding may be confusing because they use the term “repair”
  - Representative from VDH suggested swapping our estimates for conventional and alternative systems so that our estimations indicate 60% need for alternative systems and 40% need for conventional systems — they do more alternative systems, and mostly onsite, no-discharge systems (most sites have at least 12 inches of soil and are therefore suitable for onsite systems)
  - Timeline:
    - CVSWCD pointed out that it may be difficult to complete 283 Septic Tank Pump-outs (RB-1) during each stage because there is a limited number of licensed contractors
    - Participants agreed a four-stage plan (3 years/stage) may be more feasible
    - A mixed-stage plan was also suggested
- Residential Wastewater/Pet Waste
  - Representative from CVSWCD said BMP cost estimates generally looked accurate, but that cost may depend on repair/equipment
    - Septic Tank Pump-out (RB-1) may cost closer to \$500+
  - Discussed adding more pet waste BMPs, particularly Pet Waste Disposal Stations (PW-1)
    - Possible locations include Cleveland Riverbend Campground, Cleveland Town Park, in addition to those mentioned in the previous meeting (Oxbow Lake Park and Bluebell Island Trailhead in St Paul, campground in Dante)
- Agriculture
  - Representative from CVSWCD suggested it would be helpful to see cost of BMPs divided out by HUC
  - Discussed tree planting opportunity through the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF)
  - Discussed whether it would be appropriate to add nutrient banks to Implementation Plan
  - Representative from CVSWCD indicated numbers for fencing installed to date are probably accurate because there has likely not been any voluntary fencing
  - Lick Creek (TC17) may be more difficult to reach BMP goals because they don’t have as much agriculture (including pasture) and fewer willing participants; Bull Run has more agriculture
  - Representative from the CVSWCD stated that estimates for percentage of wide buffer (35-50 ft) is likely accurate — this is the more popular option because there’s more cost-share opportunity

- Representative from Lonesome Pine Soil and Water Conservation District (LPSWCD) agreed and said they saw ¾ being wide buffers in their district
  - Representative from CVSWCD said it would be unlikely that anyone would implement any water control structure (WP-1) because they don't have the crop acres that would be necessary
    - Retention ponds were mentioned as a possible structure
    - Most applicable in Bull Run (TC18)
  - There was discussion about the possibility of flipping quantities of FR-1 and SL-11 because of popularity and cost but decided against it due to implications of then needing to complete more due to higher projected reductions of FR-1
  - Two nutrient banks installed in the last 5 years in the TC22 watershed may affect reductions necessary
  - CVSWCD mentioned that he has seen public interest in nutrient banking
  - CVSWCD mentioned that cover crop/cropland BMPs should be included because they help get the foot in the door with farmers
  - Representative from CVSWCD mentioned reconning the area (especially TC17) because there's a lot of unknown factors in the area, especially abandoned mine land
  - Timeline:
    - Participants agreed that a three-stage plan is doable
    - Put WP-1s toward the end because they aren't as popular
- Urban
  - St. Paul has a pervious pavement project and is interested in more
  - CVSWCD said that people with streams in their backyard often call for streambank stabilization projects
  - CVSWCD mentioned their most popular projects include raingardens, pervious pavement, streamside buffer, and streamside stabilization

### **3.2 Need for Technical Assistance**

- CVSWCD has two technical staff, and need at least one full-time employee for Ag BMPs
  - Typically use about 1.5 for Ag and 1 for residential septic
- LPSWCD requested one full-time employee for both Ag BMPs and Residential Septic/Pet Waste BMPs
  - CVSWCD said this would be fair

### **3.3 Education and Outreach**

- CVSWCD suggested looking into seeing if VDH and Southeast Rural Community Assistance Program (SERCAP) would be interested in being partners

### **3.4 Identifying Additional Funding Sources**


- CVSWCD said the Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund was used in their district to purchase no-till drills which have been very helpful, especially with the loan forgiveness they offer
- Stormwater Local Assistance Fund was suggested

## **4. Action Items**

- Talk to Department of Energy and The Nature Conservancy to get more information on Lick Creek (TC17) watershed
- Follow up with VDH and SERCAP to see if they would be interested in being partners willing to participate in education and outreach
- Schedule next meeting in July

Meeting Adjourned at 4:50pm

**Attendance:**



**Lower Clinch Clean-Up Plan/Implementation Plan Development**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Community Engagement Meeting**  
**Russell County Library**  
**April 22, 2026**  
**3 pm**

Name	Representing	Email
Kevin Phillips	Lonesome Pine SWCD	kevin.phillips@vaswcd.org
Karen Kline	DEQ	Karen.Kline@deq.virginia.gov
Brad Stallard	Lennox Health Dept	bradstallard@lennox.virginia.gov
Siobhan Niskola	Clinch Valley SWCD	Siobhan.niskola@clinchvalley swcd.org
Brandon Blewett	Clinch Valley SWCD	brandon.blewett@clinchvalley swcd.org