

Thank you for participating!

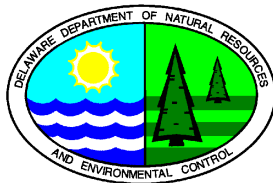
If you are interested in joining the Appoquinimink Tributary Action Team please contact one of us.

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Preserving our river: Finding Local Solutions to Local problems



A Public Forum
brought to you by your friends
and neighbors on the
**Appoquinimink
Tributary Action Team**



The Problem

In 1997, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set pollution limits for the Appoquinimink River. The River and its ponds suffer from excess nutrients and are considered “impaired.” The visible signs of this impairment include excessive algae growth and fish kills.

Now, the community must gather together and recommend ***pollution control strategies*** to the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC). The process of developing pollution control strategies is a response to a federal court case that required the EPA and DNREC to set pollution limits for the Appoquinimink River. These limits are called “Total Maximum Daily Loads” or **TMDLs**.

DNREC is working with the **Tributary Action Team**, a group of Watershed residents with various interests in the Watershed, to develop strategies for achieving these pollution limits. The water quality of the River is linked to activities on the land so everyone affects water quality. This means that everyone could be affected by pollution control strategies.

What are the trade-offs?

Making decisions regarding current and future uses of the Appoquinimink River and the surrounding land area will be a difficult process. It will require people to share their values and beliefs in order to come to a common understanding of the issues and the most acceptable solutions.

No solution is free of costs, whether economic, environmental, or human. Consider the trade-offs we may have to debate:

- ◆ Should we spend time conducting demonstration projects in the watershed EVEN IF individuals may choose to not take the environmentally sensitive actions?
- ◆ Should we encourage increased regulation through a coordinated government system EVEN IF the costs of doing business may hurt the economy?
- ◆ Should we promote incentive-based actions EVEN IF people may continue to act as they have in the past?

There is no “right” answer. Deliberation is not easy—you will have to struggle with issues, challenge the information presented, and weigh the pros and cons of the approaches. Hopefully, your discussion will produce common values and ideas that the Tributary Action Teams can use as the “common ground” on which to produce Pollution Control Strategies.

Approach Three Use Environmentally Protective Economic Tools

In the past, the design of permitting processes, laws and the tax structure led to environmental degradation within the Appoquinimink Watershed. These regulations and taxes may be linked, directly or indirectly, to environmentally destructive behaviors. These actions may be corrected by creating incentive and disincentive programs that promote environmentally sensitive practices on land.

What can be done?

- ◆ Supply incentives for using alternative fertilizers
- ◆ Create a land-use preservation fund
- ◆ Charge a higher septic system impact fee
- ◆ Compensate farmers for practices that take land out of production
- ◆ Increase taxes to pay for incentives

In support

- ◆ Incentives allow people to do the right thing within their own financial constraints
- ◆ Regulations are inefficient and can be ineffective

In opposition

- ◆ Incentives only work if people use them
- ◆ No consequences for "bad" behavior

The Process

The "Public Talk—Real Choices" approach to developing water pollution control strategies for the Appoquinimink River involves, you, the public, in a discussion about how water quality goals should be met. It is designed to provoke discussion, not to just lay out pat answers to complex questions. You may find some ideas that you like, and some that trouble you. ***Keep in mind that we are not trying to solve water pollution problems at the forum—we are trying to explore what's important to you and your fellow citizens.*** A facilitator will guide you through the process.

During this process...

Engage each other in the discussion.
Everyone participate!
Everyone be heard!
Focus on the approaches.
Listening is as important as talking.



Approach One Individual Rights, Individual Responsibilities

The Appoquinimink Watershed is home for people who have rights related to their health, property and environment. Past practices and situations have led to the degradation of the watershed, however, individuals have the authority and the desire to prevent further degradation and restore water quality. Government should allow citizens to act without threat of intervention.

What can be done?

- ◆ Programs that show homeowners and developers how to implement nutrient reductions practices for:
 - septic systems
 - stormwater, etc.
- ◆ Use media to communicate about solutions
- ◆ Encourage farmers to restore low-yielding, wet cropland to its natural wetland state

In support

- ◆ Raise community awareness about preferred practices that reduce nutrients
- ◆ Individuals will act when properly informed

In opposition

- ◆ No money for practices
- ◆ Time consuming

Approach Two Coordinate Government Responsibilities

The deterioration of the water quality in the Appoquinimink River is due to a lack of or ineffective action by all levels of government. Implementation of laws and regulations need to be coordinated so that they protect the Watershed. Government needs to enforce the laws that exist.

What can be done?

- ◆ Require environmentally sensitive development
- ◆ Require large developments to install nutrient-reducing community septic systems when sewer is not available
- ◆ Mandate limited home fertilizer use
- ◆ Require the State, the County and the Towns to coordinate land-use planning and development policy
- ◆ Nutrient Management Commission should require Nutrient Management Plans that meet the TMDLs

In support

- ◆ Government has the needed expertise to take action
- ◆ Governments must act together protect our resources

In opposition

- ◆ Regulations cost the regulated in time and money
- ◆ Restrictive policies hurt the economy and may conflict with property rights