



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Kelly Brockman
(615) 253-1916

TDEC, City of Franklin and HRWA Partner on New ARAP Permit

NASHVILLE –The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), city of Franklin and Harpeth River Watershed Association (HWRA) announced today the issuance of a new Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit (ARAP) authorizing water withdrawal from the Harpeth River for Franklin’s water treatment plant, as well as future construction of a new intake structure.

TDEC coordinated with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to use the best available science in drafting this permit. It builds on the 2007 permit with additional conditions regarding flow and withdrawal measurement and reporting. The permit also incorporates a new withdrawal restriction based on minimum dissolved oxygen levels.

“We committed to reviewing this permit from scratch and making decisions that are protective of the Harpeth River based on the best available science and data,” said Tisha Calabrese Benton, Director of TDEC’s Division of Water Resources. “We appreciate the USGS analysis and support, as well as the cooperation, dialogue and input from both the city of Franklin and HRWA throughout this process, and look forward to continuing to work together to study and protect the Harpeth.”

Under the new permit, water withdrawals cannot exceed 20 percent of the river’s flow; cannot reduce flow below ten cubic feet per second; and now withdrawals would also stop if dissolved oxygen levels reach 5.0 parts per million or below. The permit also adds biological monitoring above and below the intake and a deadline for installing a new flow gage.

“Water quality, reliability, and efficiency have always been the City’s priorities under its 30-year Integrated Water Resource Plan. This new permit is based on data and science. We believe the permit enhancements that the City has suggested and worked with TDEC to develop will build on our community’s commitment to stewardship of our natural resources while meeting the needs of our growing community,” stated Franklin City Administrator Eric Stuckey. “We appreciate the time and effort to delve into the facts of this issue by the TDEC team. We consider this an important, positive step forward for all, especially the citizens and ratepayers of Franklin.”

In addition to the permit, the HRWA, SELC, city of Franklin, and TDEC met with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and USGS to begin planning for a new study of the Harpeth River, particularly now that conditions have changed with the removal of the low-head dam. The study, called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that load among the various sources of that pollutant. TDEC will lead the new

TMDL, with support from EPA and including significant stakeholder input, to look at the entire Harpeth River Watershed.

“This permit achieves key changes HRWA has long recommended, including new withdrawal limits tied to water quality conditions and installation of a more accurate measuring system of the river’s flow prior to the city’s withdrawals that we hope will be in place before this summer’s low flow season,” stated Dorene Bolze, Executive Director of the Harpeth River Watershed Association. “HRWA is pleased that TDEC is funding continued scientific work in establishing river low flow thresholds and that the permit will be re-evaluated based on this new information as soon as it is available. In addition HRWA is looking forward to participating in this new broad collaboration to increase data collection, study, and establish pollution reduction strategies to improve the health of the state Scenic Harpeth River.”

“We have tremendous opportunity to work together to advance our knowledge of this fantastic resource so we can continue to make science-based decisions to protect it,” Benton said. “We are appreciative of the efforts on the Harpeth to date, and excited about working with partners throughout the watershed to continue our ability to make data-driven decisions for its protection.”

For more information about TDEC’s ARAP program and process, please visit <http://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-aquatic-resource-alteration-permit>.

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