

Appendix V

Little Tennessee River Basin Summary of Public Comment

Public Comment Summary	DWQ Comments	Location in Plan
New rule requiring development of management strategies for waters containing federally threatened and endangered species is not addressed.	Text related to the new rule has been added to the plan. DWQ does not currently have the resources or expertise needed in order to adequately implement the rule alone. DWQ recognizes the need to provide protection for these species and will continue working with other agencies toward this end.	Section A, Part 2.6.2
Water quality impacts in light of increasing population growth.	Projected population growth is a concern, especially for Macon and Jackson Counties. Planning for new development is an important component of water quality protection.	Section B, Part 1.6.1 Section B, Part 2.6.1 Section A, Part 4.3
Development, especially in terms of quantity of stormwater and the physical impacts on stream channels.	No local governments are currently required to obtain a permit for stormwater in the basin (none are US Census-designated Urban Areas), however Macon County and the Town of Highlands could potentially be required to obtain Phase II permits under state-designation criteria. The plan provides general recommendations for reducing water quality impacts of stormwater and local planning for development is encouraged.	Section A, Part 2.7.2 Section A, Part 4.3 Section A, Part 4.2
Lack of general education about water quality issues.	DWQ workshops are intended to provide some level of general education about water quality issues. In addition, a document called <i>A Citizen's Guide to Water Quality Management in North Carolina</i> is available from DWQ. The Planning Branch is also developing a guide targeted towards homeowners aimed at reducing quantity and improving the quality of stormwater. Unfortunately, DWQ does not currently have resources to do more face-to-face education that what is currently being done through the Basinwide Planning Program.	Section A, Chapter 2
Excess sediment in streams from streambank erosion and runoff from construction sites.	The plan provides details about erosion/sedimentation laws, research and enforcement. The plan also includes management strategies and recommendations, as well as contact information for agencies and local programs.	Section A, Part 4.2 Appendix VI
Impacts of dams	Text has been added discussing the impacts of dams on both water quality and aquatic life in streams. DWQ is heavily involved with re-licensing of hydroelectric projects in the basin.	Section A, Part 4.5 Section A, Part 2.9.4

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Thermal modifications (heating) of coldwater fisheries due to a lack of riparian vegetation.	Loss of riparian vegetation can have a significant impact on temperature and fish in mountain streams are sensitive to this parameter. Small ponds and lakes in streams also contribute to heating of waters. DWQ encourages protection and restoration of woody vegetation along streams and lakes.	Section A, Part 4.2
Concerns about NCDOT practices, especially regarding sedimentation and stormwater control.	NCDOT was required to obtain a Phase I NPDES stormwater permit in 1999. All new road projects that encompass more than one acre are subject to more stringent sediment and erosion control BMPs and post-construction stormwater control. DWQ also made recommendations to NCDOT as part of this plan.	Section A, Part 2.7.2 Section A, Part 4.3 Section A, Part 4.2
Lack of equal or appropriate enforcement of current regulations as they relate to sediment control (i.e. level of enforcement is often based on the number of complaints)	Comments with regard to state or local sediment/erosion control programs have been passed on to the appropriate governing program. DWQ is working to provide these programs with better information about how turbidity standards can be met.	Section A, Part 4.2
Gravel roads and eroding road grades are a threat to water quality.	Recommendations are made for the NCDOT as well as developers, local governments and timber harvesting operations regarding construction and maintenance of mountain roads. Gravel roads, in particular, need BMPs to ensure minimal impact to nearby streams.	Section A, Part 4.2
Water withdrawals and interbasin transfers.	Information about current water withdrawal and interbasin transfer requirements, as well as lists of those registered, is included within the plan.	Section A, Part 2.9
Inadequate monitoring and lack of availability of water quality data.	DWQ uses limited monitoring resources to sample in targeted areas within each basin. As part of this process DWQ solicits data and information about water quality from all available sources and uses them to determine monitoring locations during each 5-year cycle. DWQ realizes there is generally not “easy access” to DWQ data, particularly water chemistry data, and will continue to work to provide better access in the future.	Section A, Part 3.4 Appendix III