

PRESS RELEASE

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2008

RIVANNA WATER & SEWER AUTHORITY VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ISSUES RAGGED MOUNTAIN DAM WATER PROTECTION PERMIT

Charlottesville, VA (Wednesday, February 13, 2008) – The Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority (RWSA) received a Water Protection Permit yesterday authorizing the design and construction of the community's 50-Year Water Supply Plan. The Permit was signed by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on February 11, 2008. This Plan includes the expansion of the Ragged Mountain Reservoir and the construction of a new pipeline between the South Fork and Ragged Mountain Reservoirs, as well as a mitigation plan that includes placing 14.2 miles of streams into buffered conservation areas and constructs four acres of new wetlands.

RWSA's Chairman, Mr. Mike Gaffney, was elated by the news. "RWSA began planning for a future water supply in the 1980s, and this planning became more intense after the 2002 drought. It's been a very long journey, aided by significant public input, and complicated at times by massive federal regulations and required environmental studies. After years of effort, we can now say without hesitation that the Commonwealth of Virginia has fully authorized a plan that assures the sustainability of our water supply for another 50 years. I want to thank our citizens who participated in this process, our elected officials, the Authority's staff, our consultants, and the regulatory agencies themselves for helping us complete this journey."

The Water Supply Plan approved by DEQ includes the authorization to construct a new dam at the Ragged Mountain Reservoir, just west of Charlottesville, which will raise the elevation of water by up to 45 feet, increasing the useable water supply storage in this reservoir from 464 million gallons to 2.19 billion gallons. The expansion of this reservoir was included within a long list of possible alternatives made public in early 2004, and this alternative was amended in response to public comment in 2005 to provide for a new refill pipeline from the South Fork Reservoir. This amended plan received highly favorable public comments at community meetings in October 2005 and April 2006 and was approved unanimously by four local boards, including the City Council and Board of Supervisors, in June 2006.

"This is a significant milestone" added Mr. Gary Fern, who serves on the RWSA Board of Directors and is also responsible for providing water service to County residents as Executive Director of the Albemarle County Service Authority. "This decision allows RWSA to move forward with constructing the infrastructure necessary to assure residents of the City and County have an adequate supply of good, clean water to plan our future."

Under federal law, projects that require significant land changes, such as the expansion of water supply, must go through a significant alternative screening process based on data from extensive technical engineering and environmental assessments, leading to a conclusion that the alternative

selected is the “least environmentally damaging, practicable alternative”. By issuing the Water Protection Permit, the Commonwealth of Virginia is confirming that they concur with RWSA’s selection process.

The project also needs a federal permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and the Authority understands that ACOE is expected to issue their permit by this spring.

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