



Tennessee Nutrient Reduction Task Force

Improving Stream Water Quality

Quarterly Newsletter - December 2024



Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge, near Brownsville. □: Kayla Key

Welcome to the Tennessee Nutrient Taskforce's Quarterly Newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to share to the entire Taskforce valuable information on nutrient-related topics and provide quality updates on the progress of the workgroups.

Events

Upcoming - Professional

Next In-Person Nutrient Reduction Task Force meeting - April 2024. Save the Dates will be sent out soon!

Upcoming - Open to Public

None

Past

Dr. Justin Murdock was a guest speaker on EPA's Nonpoint Source Pollution Technical Exchange Webinar's [Wetlands - Assessment, Prioritization, and Research](#) (November 6, 2024). Check it out!

Cynthia Allen gave a presentation to the Flower Growers garden club on 11/19/24 regarding stormwater and nutrient pollution. Some of the discussion and materials included the nutrient focus among stakeholders in Tennessee and the Gulf coast to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus overloads, and how gardeners can be a part of the solution through practical habits at home that help reduce pollution overall and these key nutrients. Some key solutions included soil testing, calibrating equipment to reduce over application, selecting native plants that require less fertilization, composting yard and food wastes, lawn care practices that replenishing nutrient naturally, and proper storage and disposal of yard chemicals. There was much discussion and interest among the 17 women present who were eager to understand the pollution issue, how to prevent pollution and protect our waterways and wildlife. Flower Growers is small, but with an effective reach in the community as one of the longest running garden clubs in Rutherford County TN.

The **Rutherford County Soil and Water Conservation District** held the 39th Annual Awards Dinner on Nov 21, 2024 and awarded the Conservation Farmer of the Year Award for 2024 to Smith Brother's Farms for their role in stewarding conservation practices such as no till practices and using cover crops on their farm.

Subcommittee Updates

Goals and Metrics: Members are re-evaluating the current goals and metrics to assess which are appropriate for the Task Force at this time. A goal is to standardize data so that it's easy to collect and display on a dashboard and fill in missing gaps.

- Next meeting: February 14 at 9:30 am CST

Data and Monitoring: TTU staff are continuing to work with TDEC to connect the TN Nutrient Database with TDEC servers. Hope to include a link in the next newsletter and more data into the database in the near future. Subcommittee is still determining the best locations for the 2 newly funded by TVA monitoring stations.

- Next meeting: February 12 at 9 am CST

Communications and Outreach: In addition to getting annual report and quarterly newsletters out, subcommittee plans to focus on revising the Nutrient Task Force website. Subcommittee received a request to develop a wetlands brochure to share with NGO partners. The wetlands brochure workgroup met on December 17 to discuss first steps and schedule subsequent meetings. If you want to help with this project, please contact [Cynthia Allen](#) for the meeting invite.

- Next meeting: January 3 (tentative) and February 7 at 10 am CST

Best Management Practices:

- **Agricultural:** Working to set 2025 goals to include researching and determining priority practices based on a literature review of reduction efficiencies and figuring out how to model initiatives.
 - Next meeting: February 28 at 9:30 am CST
- **Municipal Wastewater:** Plans to expand the TN Wastewater Universe to include WWTP reuse and lagoons. The workgroup also plans to assess the feasibility of obtaining informative, but not required to be submitted, monitoring data such as influent data. TN Plant Optimization Program is continuing with another contract with Grant Weaver.
 - Next meeting: February 21 at 9:30 am CST
- **Urban:** Major goals thus far have been accomplished. Next goal is to determine the contribution of nutrients in stormwater from municipalities permitted as MS4s.
 - Next meeting: February 18 at 12 pm CST
- **Nature-Based Solutions:** Continuing to work on a Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) Dashboard to track use of NBS that reduce nutrient impacts across the state. Developing a wishlist of pilot projects so that basis information is available when funding opportunities arise.
 - Next meeting: January 13 at 10 am CST

Attention □

Open PhD Position at the University of Tennessee. Looking for a PhD Student with a background in Environmental Engineering, Biosystems Engineering, or a similar discipline. The PhD research will leverage AI and data science for modeling water resources. For more information, please email Dr. Fidan at efidan@utk.edu.

Publications and Reports □

[KY Nutrient Newsletter - 4th Quarter 2024](#)

Hot off the press: Environmental Law Institute's [Navigating Newly Non-WOTUS Wetlands: A Study of Six States' Wetlands Programs after *Sackett v. EPA*](#) (Stored on Sharepoint)

Another interesting read; this one from 2017: Glibert, P.M., and M.A. Burford. 2017. [Globally changing nutrient loads and harmful algal blooms: Recent advances, new paradigms, and continuing challenges](#). Oceanography 30(1):58–69, <https://doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2017.110> (Stored on Sharepoint)

AP News Article: [The Mississippi River is running low again. It's a problem for farmers moving beans and grain](#). September 11, 2024

Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) has published its study of the operations and financing of Tennessee’s wastewater utilities that was prepared in response to a request from County Executive and TACIR commission member Jeff Huffman. Based on requests from other TACIR commissioners, the scope of the study was expanded to include looking at the governance structures of wastewater utilities, whether the members of their governing bodies are compensated, whether the compensation includes benefits, and staffing issues at wastewater utilities. ***The Condition of and Best Practices for Tennessee Wastewater Systems*** is available on TACIR’s website at <https://www.tn.gov/tacir/tacir-publications/publications-by-date.html>.

TDEC's Multi-Sector Stormwater Permit (TMSP) expires and will be renewed in 2025.
TDEC's Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges (CGP) expires and will be renewed in 2026.

NTF Resources

[Nutrient Reduction Task Force website](#)

[Sharepoint - Nutrient Reduction Task Force](#)

[Nutrient Reduction Taskforce Newsletter Intake Form](#) - next newsletter will go out in mid-March

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