



Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership Kickoff Meeting

*Executive Conference Room
State Capitol
March 4, 2025*

Agenda

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Welcome | Commissioner Salyers |
| Introductions | All Members |
| Remarks | Gov. Bill Lee |
| Executive Order 108 | Commissioner Salyers |
| Watershed Level-set/Current Status | April Grippo |
| Plans & Information Resources | April Grippo |
| Partnership Working Groups | Commissioner Salyers |
| Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future Meetings: Dates/Location | Commissioner Salyers |
| Questions & Discussion | All Members |
| Adjourn | Commissioner Salyers |

Significant

Something that is...

- Important, worthy of attention
- Indicator of something likely to have influence or impact
- Leading to a different result or to an important change
- Amount or effect large enough to be important or affect a situation to a noticeable degree

Can be a...

- Place
- Resource
- Challenge
- Opportunity
- Partnership or Group

Determined by quality of results and relationships

Executive Order 108

Three (3) Major Elements:

- 1. Establishes the Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership (DRWPP) and provides directives for the DRWPP**
- 2. Establishes directives for TDEC, other agencies, and partners acting in the Duck River Watershed**
- 3. Application to statewide water management and other watersheds in Tennessee, with priority on Regionalization**

[Link to EO 108](#)

Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership

Partnership Members (19) represent

- **TN Department of Environment & Conservation**, serve as Chair
- **TN Department of Agriculture**
- **TN Economic & Community Development**
- **TN Wildlife Resource Agency**
- **TN State House of Representatives Member**
- **TN State Senate Member**
- **TVA**
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District**
- **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**
- **Duck River Development Agency**
- **Academic Institution** w/ expertise in water management
- **Local Utilities** in the watershed (2)
- **Local Government** in the watershed (2)
- **Non-Governmental Organizations** active in the region (4)

Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership

Responsibilities

- Developing comprehensive watershed management recommendations that balance the needs of water users and economic growth against the need to protect the environmental integrity of the Duck River;
- Provide recommendations to the Governor, the DRA, TDEC, TWRA, and the Speakers of the Senate and House of Representatives on policies and actions to promote the sustainable use and conservation of water resources in the Duck River Watershed;
- Identifying opportunities for water system regionalization, drought resilience, habitat conservation, and water loss reduction; and
- Engaging with local communities, utilities, industries, and conservation organizations to ensure broad participation in watershed planning efforts.

The Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership is established to support the Duck River Development Agency (DRA) in furtherance of DRA's statutory mission by facilitating collaboration among stakeholders and developing strategies for the sustainable management of the Duck River Watershed.

Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership

Deliverables

- **Comprehensive Watershed Management Recommendations**
- **Annual (Intermediate) Report – November 2025**
- **Final Report & Recommendations – December 2026**

Expires on December 31, 2026

TDEC Support Staff for the DRWPP

- **Dillon Blankenship**, Data Manager, Natural Areas, Dillon.Blankenship@tn.gov
- **Elaine Boyd**, Senior Advisor, Bureau of Environment, Elaine.Boyd@tn.gov
- **Stephanie Durman**, Deputy General Counsel, Stephanie.Durman@tn.gov
- **April Grippo**, Director, Division of Water Resources, April.Grippo@tn.gov
- **Peter Murrey**, Director, Policy & Planning Office, J.Peter.Murrey@tn.gov
- **David Owenby**, Senior Advisor, Commissioner's Office, David.Owenby@tn.gov
- **Shaun Rainone**, Park Manager, Henry Horton State Park, Shaun.Rainone@tn.gov
- **Pete Roth**, Advisor, Bureau of Environment, Peter.Roth@tn.gov
- **Chuck Yoest**, Regional Director for External Affairs-Columbia, Chuck.Yoest@tn.gov

EO 108 #2: TDEC and Partner Agencies

To continually preserve the Duck River Watershed and promote Duck River Watershed Planning & Management:

Water Loss Reduction – Seek goal of a rate of no more than 20% water loss

Regionalization - Prioritize regionalization and interconnection of water systems within the Duck River Watershed

Habitat Conservation Plan – Develop a Habitat Conservation Plan for the Duck River Watershed

Duck River Development Agency – Collaborate with DRA to achieve objectives

Watershed Protection Education - Expand public education efforts

EO 108 #2: TDEC and Partner Agencies

To continually preserve the Duck River Watershed and promote Duck River Watershed Planning & Management:

Recreational Use – Partner with TWRA and stakeholders to improve responsible and sustainable recreational access and use of the Duck River

Drought Planning - Collaborate with the DRA and other stakeholders to develop a Comprehensive Regional Drought Management Plan for the Duck River Watershed

Normandy Reservoir Planning - Collaborate with the TVA, TWRA, and stakeholders to update and revise the Normandy Reservoir Management Plan

Large Scale Engineering Projects - Evaluate large scale engineering projects for near-term drought mitigation and long-term sustainability of the Duck

EO 108 #3: Statewide Water Management

To continually manage and preserve other watersheds and prioritize regionalization throughout Tennessee:

Other Priority Watersheds - Identify other watersheds w/in TN for replication

Regionalization - Prioritize regionalization and interconnection of water systems as part of TDEC's statewide water withdrawal permitting activities

Tennessee Statewide Water Supply Planning – Continue statewide water supply planning; update *TN H2O* report

Nutrient Reduction Grant Program - Use Nutrient Grant Reduction Program to support municipalities in optimizing their wastewater treatment operations

Riparian Restoration Program – Collaborate with TDA, UT, TWRA and TVA to implement a Tennessee Riparian Incentive Program

Nature-Based Initiative for Stormwater Management and Agricultural Practices - Provide technical and financial assistance to urban stormwater

Proposed Investments in Duck River Watershed

As the Duck River Watershed Planning Partnership was established to further the state's commitment to balancing economic growth, water resource management, and environmental and habitat conservation to ensure the long-term sustainability of Tennessee's watersheds, the Governor's FY2025-26 budget proposes:

- **\$100M** toward realizing an effective regional water supply strategy for the Duck River Watershed
- **\$24.5M** for TDEC to support regional watershed planning. This needed funding will help preserve and protect the most ecologically diverse freshwater river in North America.



Department of
**Environment &
Conservation**

Duck River Watershed Level-set/Current Status

Overview

- **Comprehensive Water Withdrawal Permitting Pilot Project**
- **Developing Updated Water Needs Projections**
- **Habitat Conservation Plan**
- **Watershed Protection Education**

Need for Comprehensive Regional Permitting

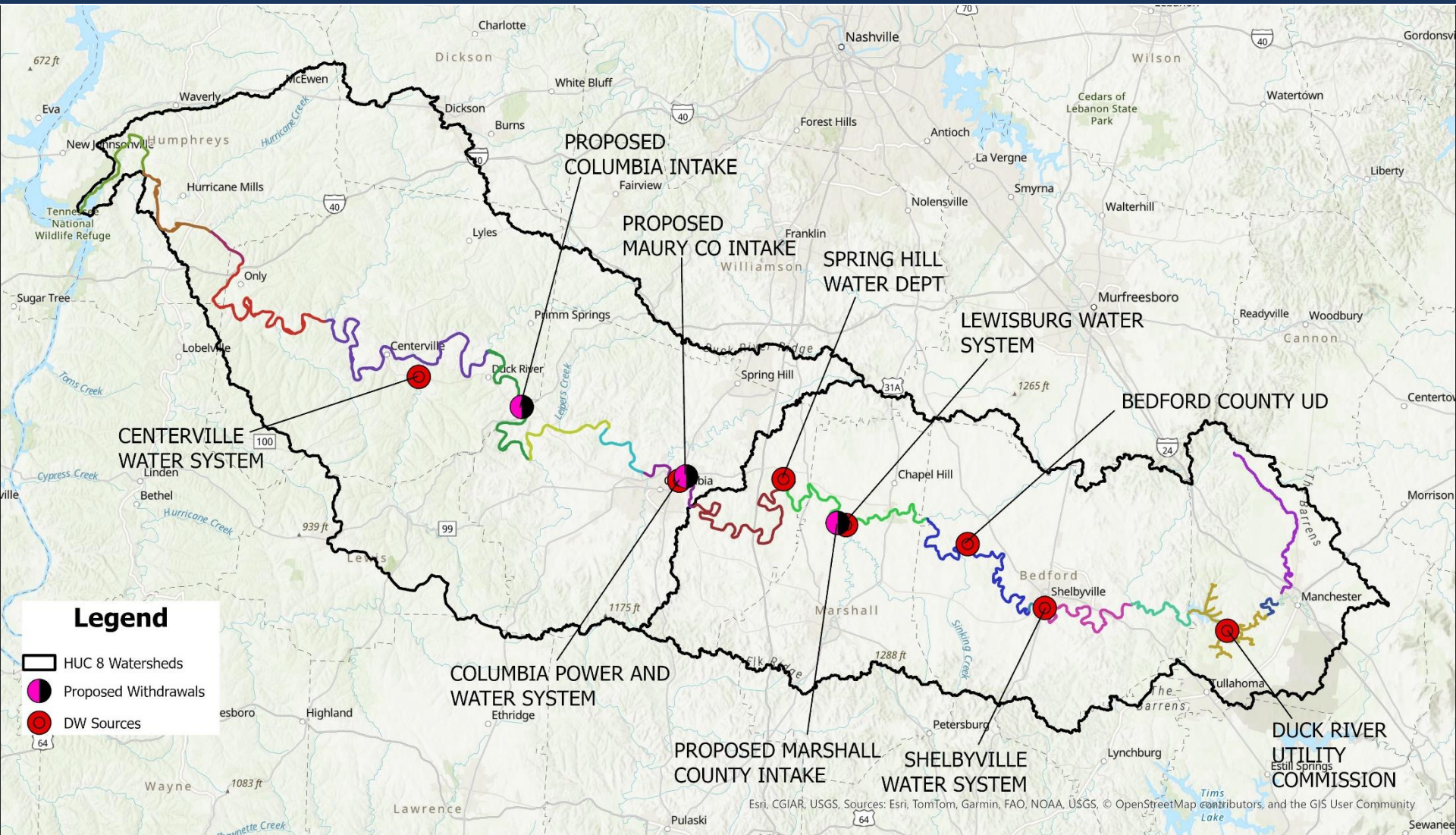
TDEC met with eight water systems in 2019-2020 about new or expanded intakes

- Most did not have ARAP water withdrawal permits
- Concerns about accommodating rapid growth in the area
- DWR believes we can authorize current withdrawals, allowing us to accommodate additional short-term (less than 5 year) needs
- Long-term needs (greater than 5 years) will require further analysis and cooperation to ensure an equitable water withdrawal permitting strategy
- TDEC goal to accommodate ALL designated uses
- TDEC held 9 stakeholder meetings since June 2020, drought meeting in Sept 2024, Executive Order announcement in Nov 2024

Stakeholders

- **Water systems**
- **DRA**
- **Agencies – TDEC, TWRA, TVA, USACE, USFWS, EPA**
- **Conservation Groups – TNC, SELC, HRC, TWF, Sierra Club, Duck River Conservancy**
- **Citizens**
- **Agriculture interests**
- **ECD**

Duck River Watershed



Legend

- HUC 8 Watersheds
- Proposed Withdrawals
- DW Sources

Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Duck River Challenges and Opportunities

- **Number of public water system withdrawals**
- **Public interest in the river, known as the most biologically diverse river in North America with 50 documented species of freshwater mussels and 151 species of fish. T&E species include globally significant populations and some species found nowhere else in the world**
- **Exceptional Tennessee Water (ETW) designation**
- **There is an existing regional planning organization – the DRA as an established cooperative framework for water systems is an asset for this pilot project.**
- **Drought concerns**

Holistic Approach to Water Withdrawal Permitting

1. Issue permitted withdrawals at baseline with currently available data
2. Consider new intakes and expansions and identify:
 - *areas for regional growth planning/regional water need*
 - regional interconnection and infrastructure opportunities and projects
 - endangered species analysis and mitigation (will involve other agencies)
 - how to better understand other designated uses such as recreation, agriculture
 - how to utilize ARP, BIL, or other funds to develop and implement collaborative plans
3. Based on this info, TDEC will be able to consider and apply such information *as the basis for renewal of the ARAP withdrawal permits.*

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NOV 20 2024
Secretary of State
Tina Hargrett



STATE OF TENNESSEE
EXECUTIVE ORDER
BY THE GOVERNOR

No. 108

AN ORDER TO CONSERVE THE DUCK RIVER WATERSHED

WHEREAS, this Administration recognizes the importance of balancing economic growth, water resource management, and environmental and habitat conservation to ensure the long-term sustainability of our waters; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is home to some of the most ecologically diverse river systems in North America that serve as critical sources of drinking water, habitat, agricultural water supply, and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Duck River is not only a scenic treasure winding 269 miles through Tennessee, but also it is North America's most biologically diverse freshwater river and is globally significant for its wildlife diversity; the Duck River is a critical part of Tennessee's outdoor recreation economy; and the Duck River is the sole water source for approximately 250,000 Tennesseans in an area of this State that is experiencing rapid growth and development; and

WHEREAS, this Administration is committed to enhancing water management and water conservation practices while supporting economic growth, and the ongoing partnership between the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation ("TDEC") and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency ("TWRA") promotes these priorities in the following ways:

- Ongoing planning and management of the Duck River Watershed through holistic solutions to reduce water loss, prioritize regionalization, conserve endangered species' habitats, provide watershed protection education, promote responsible and sustainable recreation use;
- Identifying opportunities to implement holistic planning and management for all Tennessee watersheds; and
- Prioritizing regionalization and interconnection of water systems as part of TDEC's

Current Status of ARAPs

Duck River Utility Commission

- Permit issued on March 15, 2024
- Appealed by third parties
- Settlement in January 2025
- Revised permit to go on public notice in March 2025

Bedford County Utility Commission

- Permit issued on March 15, 2024
- Appealed by third parties
- Settlement in January 2025
- Revised permit to go on public notice in March 2025

Marshall County Board of Public Utilities

- Permit issued on August 6, 2021
- Appealed by MCBPU and DRA; cases consolidated
- TWF and TNC granted intervention
- Settlement reached in February 2022
- Revised permit issued May 3, 2022

Current Status of ARAPs

Shelbyville Power, Water, & Sewerage Systems

- Draft permit fall 2023
- Public hearing October 30, 2023
- Requested increased volume
- Draft permit on public notice Dec. 17, 2024
- Public hearing scheduled for March 18, 2025 at HHSP

Lewisburg Water System

- Draft permit fall 2023
- Public hearing October 30, 2023
- Requested increased volume
- Draft permit on public notice Dec. 17, 2024
- Public hearing scheduled for March 18, 2025 at HHSP

Current Status of ARAPs

Spring Hill Water System

- Draft permit fall 2023
- Public hearing October 30, 2023

Maury County Water System

- Draft permit fall 2023
- Public hearing October 30, 2023

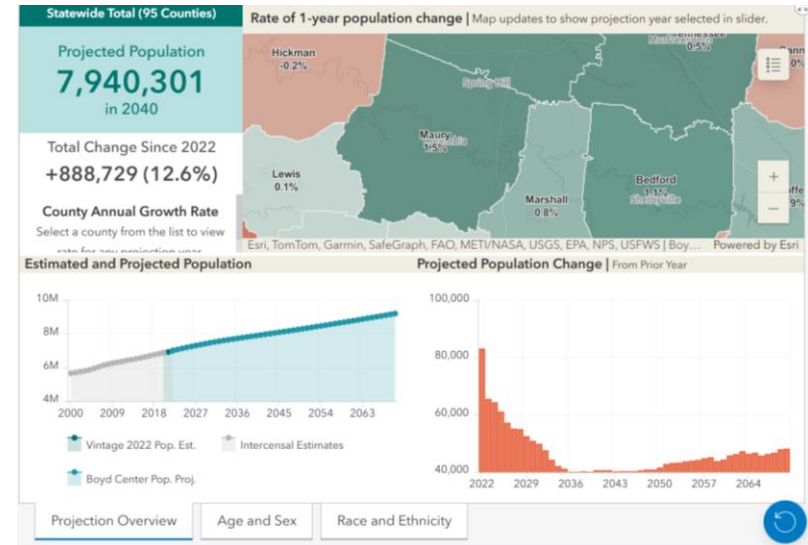
Current Status of ARAPs

Columbia Power and Water Systems

- Permit issued on June 24, 2019 for existing intake
- Permit including additional intake with floating rate/volume limit of 32 MGD issued on March 15, 2024
- Appealed by multiple third parties
- CPWS intervened
- Settlement reached January 24, 2025
- Revised permit to go on public notice in March 2025

Developing Updated Water Needs Projections

- DWR developed baseline permit rate/volume to accommodate water needs in next 5 years by using population projections combined with the peak water withdrawal volume for each water system.
- Population projection source:
Boyd Center for Business & Economic Research at UT
- Peak water withdrawal source:
Water system Monthly Operating Reports (MORs)



Habitat Conservation Plan



- EO 108 directs TDEC to lead development of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)
- HCP described in Section 10 of Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973
- TDEC directed to partner with TWRA
- HCP is part of application for USFWS Incidental Take Permit to ensure water withdrawal ARAPs comply with ESA by authorizing limited and unintentional take of listed species
- HCP describes effects on listed species, how impacts will be minimized and mitigated, and funding for conservation measures
- Public outreach and stakeholder coordination

Watershed Protection Education

- EO 108 directs TDEC to continue and expand public education efforts
- Duck River Day at HHSP
- Duck River Education Day – a field trip for 5th graders
- DWR considering adult education opportunities through our Fleming Training Center and a Speaker's Bureau



Duck River Information - What Do You Have?

- **What is available?**
- **What information do you have?**
- **What do we need for this partnership effort?**
- **Who do you want to hear from?**

DRWPP Working Groups

DRWPP will have three (3) Working Groups that meet between full Partnership meetings to focus on these particular areas from EO108 and responsive to the Partnership direction with aim to bring information, stakeholder outreach and preliminary options back to the full Partnership for discussion and deliberation...

DRWPP will be responsible for identifying opportunities for:

- **water system regionalization;**
- **drought resilience;**
- **habitat conservation;**
- **water loss reduction; and**
- **engaging with local communities, utilities, industries, and conservation organizations to ensure broad participation in watershed planning efforts.**

DRWPP Working Groups

Regionalization

- **Randal Braker**
- **Sheila Butt**
- **Jonathan Hardin**
- **George Nolan**
- **Jimmy West**
- **Chris White**

TDEC Support

- Elaine Boyd
- April Grippio
- Stephanie Durman

DRWPP Working Groups

Drought Management

- Andy Holt
- Valerie McCormack
- Pat Marsh
- Mark Thurman
- Horace Tipton
- Amanda Turk

TDEC Support

- Elaine Boyd
- Stephanie Durman
- April Grippo

DRWPP Working Groups

Conservation/ Water Loss/ Public Education/ Community Engagement

- Josh Campbell
- Dan Elbert
- Joey Hensley
- Justin Murdoch
- Doug Murphy
- **Grace Stranch**

TDEC Support

- Dillon Blankenship
- Elaine Boyd
- Peter Murrey
- Shaun Rainone
- Pete Roth
- Chuck Yoest

Next Steps... Looking Ahead

Working Groups will determine their meeting cadence... how often... in-person and/or by videoconference.

Full Partnership Meetings

- May (Week of May 5) *Henry Horton State Park/PM Shaun Rainone*
- August (Week of August 18)
- October (Week of October 13)

November 20, 2025 – Deadline for DRWPP Annual (Intermediate) Report

Discussion/Questions/Your Thoughts



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