



# PRESS RELEASE

Harpeth River Watershed Association

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## Harpeth River Watershed Association Analysis of Franklin's Water Withdrawals Confirmed by State

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Nashville, TN (December 22, 2014)—On December 11, the TN Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) issued a revision letter to its mid-November Commissioner's Determination stating that it was in error and that the analysis provided by the Harpeth River Watershed Association (HRWA) was correctly based on the City of Franklin's own data of daily amounts of water withdrawn from the Harpeth River.

HRWA is encouraged that TDEC recognized that HRWA's six-year analysis provided important insight on the need to accurately measure the Harpeth River's flow at the withdrawal point so that the City of Franklin can be confident they are operating in accordance with the permitted water withdraw limits.

HRWA is also encouraged that with this communication TDEC also states that it will schedule a meeting with the City of Franklin, HRWA and the Southern Environmental Law Center to "clearly define the method for determining and reporting compliance with the permit limits."

"This is a very simple but important issue. The City and the State need to know how much water is in the Harpeth at the point and time where the City withdraws ... Period." states Matt Dobson, President of HRWA's Board of Directors.

"The current situation is like relying on a broken speedometer in your car and not fixing it so you can't be accused of *knowing* that you're speeding, when in fact you are," explained Kevin Bonin, HRWA's Environmental Policy Analyst and Regulatory Attorney.

TDEC's revised letter also states that "TDEC found far fewer instances of non-compliance," and that "Franklin was in substantial compliance with its permit limits for the months TDEC evaluated." However, TDEC evaluated only four months of "pumpage data" for their determination while HRWA analyzed six years of the City's data going back to when the permit was issued and found problems each year during low river flows.

The Harpeth River, as it flows through downtown Franklin, has been determined by the state to be impaired for fish and aquatic life. In November, 2007, TDEC further determined that the city of Franklin's water withdrawals for its drinking water plant cause degradation of the Harpeth.

See <http://www.harpethriver.org/programs/waterquality/dwps> for details or contact HRWA for documents.

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**About the Harpeth River Watershed Association:** The Harpeth River Watershed Association (HRWA) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, science-based conservation organization dedicated to protecting the State Scenic Harpeth River and clean water in Tennessee. The Harpeth is one of the unique freshwater river systems of the Southeast which contain one of the greatest variety of aquatic life in the world. For nearly 15 years, HRWA collaborates with landowners, businesses, local, state, and federal decision makers and others to put solutions in place to maintain healthy regions, reduce pollution, and restore streambanks so that the Harpeth River meets water quality standards set for people and wildlife. Current programs include: River Restoration & Wildlife Protection, Water Quality & Sustainability, and Outreach & Recreation. [www.harpethriver.org](http://www.harpethriver.org).

The 125 mile-long Harpeth River begins in Eagleville and flows through both rural and developed landscapes, including through the heart of one of the fastest growing regions of the country, before emptying into the Cumberland River near Ashland City. The Harpeth River Watershed includes the main river and over 1,000 miles of tributaries that drain an area of land approximately 870 square miles across Rutherford, Williamson, Davidson, Hickman, Dickson and Cheatham Counties. The Harpeth is a State Scenic River as it flows through greater Metro Nashville/Davidson County.