



2008 Annual Activities Report

RECREATION

RIVER ACCESS

- Completed agreement for public access at Snow Creek on Dan River in Stokes County.
- Participated with City of Eden on access points in Spray (Smith River) and Draper Route 700 crossing of the Dan River.
- Contracted for seasonal inspection and maintenance of Dan River access points at Settle Bridge and Anglin Mill in N.C.
- Opened South Martinsville River Access on the Smith River, Martinsville, VA.
- Initiated planning for Smith River access at Mitchell Bridge Road, Ridgeway, VA.
- Researched and compiled list of additional possible access points on Smith and Mayo Rivers.

PARKS

- Worked with state of Virginia toward a Virginia Mayo River state park; hosted tours for VA state park and General Assembly leaders.
- Richard P. Gravely, Jr. Nature Preserve opened, Ridgeway, VA.
- Facilitated "History of the Burgess Plantation" at Gravely Nature Preserve, 65 participants.
- Began working with landowner group for Beaver Creek Environmental Education Center, Martinsville, VA.

TRAILS

- Rhododendron Trail opened at Gravely Nature Preserve in honor of National Trail Day.
- Began "Tuesday Morning Strolls" Program in Henry County, 6 walks held.
- Led educational hikes for 100 underserved youth in the M-HC "After 3 Program."
- Supported completion of preliminary work to acquire land for a 4.5 mile rail trail in Henry County.
- Acquired permission to develop land for Lauren Mountain Preserve, Bassett, VA.

- Initiated Trail Monitor Program in Henry County.
- Eden Greenway, a project initiated by DRBA founders, opened to public.

REGULARLY-SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

- First Saturday Outings (open to the public) Monthly outings on rivers and trails were held throughout the year.
- Third Saturday Outings (for members and guests) were held in spring and fall.

STEWARDSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL/WATER QUALITY

- Conducted bacteria and sediment study for eight months at 17 sites on Dan River and tributaries in Stokes and Rockingham counties in NC.
- Recruited and trained 20 teachers in Pittsylvania County to become citizen water monitors. Continuing to support this effort by organizing regular monitoring sessions.
- Met with local leaders in Halifax County to start citizen water monitoring in that county.
- Initiated water quality partnership with US Army Corps of Engineers and Friends of Philpott Lake, Henry and Franklin counties.
- Held tree planting day at Gravelly Nature Preserve for area Girl Scouts, Ridgeway, VA.

PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES and COMMUNITIES

- Preserved history of the Burgess Plantation through interpretive signage and brochures at Gravelly Nature Preserve, Ridgeway, VA.
- Preserved and documented historic family cemetery of former slaves, Uncle John and Jane Burgess.
- Attended Preservation Alliance committee meetings for Henry County.
- Toured historic Sandy Level Area with director of Fayette Area Historical Society.

WATERSHED LITTER CLEANUP

- Participated in North Carolina Big Sweep.
- Participated in Smith River Winter and Fall Clean-up with Gateway Streetscapes.

URANIUM MINING

- Sponsored two lectures by Dr. Douglas M. Brugge, associate professor, Department of Public Health and Family Medicine at Tufts University School of

Medicine, on the health effects uranium mining, more than 100 people attended, including lawmakers.

- Formed DRBA Mining Task Force to study the issues surrounding proposed uranium mining in VA, understand the science and ensure transparency in the process.
- Conducted research and presented information at public forums related to issues associated with uranium mining and milling and long-term waste storage in Banister River watershed.

EDUCATION

ACTIVITIES

- Coordinated Water Quality Educators workshop at Fairy Stone State Park.
- Smith River Paddle Tour given to officials from Girl Scouts Skyline Council to encourage paddling as a safe and fun scout activity.
- Coordinated educational paddle trips on the Smith River for 100 underserved youth in the M-HC "After 3" Program.
- Partnered with Virginia Museum of Natural History to present Geocaching workshop at Gravely Nature Preserve, 35 Participants.

TROUT IN CLASSROOM

- Completed third year of Trout in Classrooms (TIC). 22 tank locations in four counties.
- More than 2,000 students and adults exposed to environmental education through TIC.
- Engaged state and local government officials in trout release days at Bassett, including former Governor Mark Warner and Congressman Virgil Goode.
- New TIC season begun in December 2008 with egg delivery to 25 tanks in four counties.
- Participated in TIC teacher training for college course held at Mary Baldwin College.
- New teacher orientation held in August for 2008/2009 TIC season.
- Produced instructional DVDs for TIC teachers.
- Presented Trout in the Classroom overview at 2008 National River Rally, Huron, OH.

FESTIVALS, REENACTMENT, AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Participated Virginia Citizens for Water Quality Summit, Charlottesville.
- Engaged more than 100 Girl Scouts in World Water Monitoring Day™. Secured donation of the monitoring kits for the project.
- Coordinated First Annual Smith River Fest, Bassett, VA.

Booths and activities:

- Eden River Fest, including casting clinics and puppet shows.
- Environmental Education Expo, Philpott Lake.
- Booth and outings for Environmental Educators' Conference, Martinsville, VA.
- Virginia Conservation Network Annual Meeting, Richmond, VA.
- Caswell Brightleaf Hoedown, Yanceyville, NC.
- Stokes Stomp, Danbury, NC.
- Fieldale Heritage Festival, Fieldale, VA.
- Virginia Museum of Natural History Family Fun Fest, Martinsville, VA.
- Fayette Area Historic Initiative's 4th Annual Heritage Fest, Martinsville, VA.
- United Way's Women's Leadership Initiative, Martinsville, VA.
- Uptown Farmer's Market Kids' Fun Fest, Martinsville, VA.
- Kibler Valley River Run, Red Bank Ruritans, Patrick County, VA.
- Fast Track Trade Show, Martinsville, VA.
- YMCA Health Fair, Martinsville, VA.

STREAMSIDE FOREST BUFFERS

- Streamside Buffer educational brochures mailed to all landowners along the Smith River in Henry County, VA and along the Dan River in Stokes and Rockingham counties in NC.
- Developed basin-wide web resource for streamside forest buffer information.
- Eagle Scout Riparian Buffer Planting Project completed at Fieldale Trail.
- Carlisle Seniors Riparian Buffer Planting Project on Jordan Creek.
- Educational Streamside Buffer signs installed at Moratock Park, Danbury, NC; Wildlife Boat Landing, Eden, NC; Fieldale Park and Fieldale Trail, Fieldale, VA.
- New sites developed for riparian 2009 riparian buffer planting season.
- Consulted Army Corps of Engineers at Philpott on riparian buffer project.

DISPLAYS

- Martinsville-Henry County Visitor's Center; Henry County Administration Building Lobby; and Spray Mercantile Building, Eden, NC.

PRESENTATIONS

- Facilitated a screening of the documentary, *Kilowatt Ours*, for The Garden Club of Virginia, Danville.
- Presentation and provided input on water quality issues, Roanoke River Basin Association, Gretna, VA.
- Presentations to Eden Rotary; NC Soil and Water Conservation districts; Rockingham Realtors; and others.
- Hosted "Community Accents" WLOE/WMYN on DRBA programs.
- Presented "An Introduction to Gravely Nature Preserve" to:
DRBA's Martinsville-Henry County Rivers & Trails Group
BTW 21's "Table Talk", Collinsville, VA

BTW 21's "Cover to Cover", Collinsville, VA
Residents of Eggleston Falls, Ridgeway, VA
Collinsville Rotary Club

- Presentations on DRBA's programs to:
 - March 20th Public Forum, Henry County, VA
 - WLOE Radio, Mayodan, NC
 - Master Naturalists Group, Martinsville, VA
 - Martinsville Kiwanis Club
 - Sunshine Rotary Club (Martinsville); Martinsville Rotary Club; Riverside Rotary Club (Danville); and Eden Rotary Club
 - SCORE Club, Martinsville, VA
 - BTW 21's "BTW Live" and "Table Talk", Collinsville, VA
 - Garden Study Club, Martinsville, VA
 - Martinsville-Henry County Master Gardeners
 - Martinsville-Henry County Retired Teacher's Association
- Presented "Tub-O-Bugs" and "Stream: The Movie" at the Collinsville Library Story Time.
- Co-presented with Activate M-HC on the "Fitness Benefits of Trails" at the United Way Women's Leadership Initiative event, Martinsville, VA.
- Presented a windshield tour of Martinsville-Henry County projects to officials from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and representatives from the State Finance Committee.
- Gave a guided tour of the Gravely Nature Preserve to participants of the Virginia Environmental Education Conference, Ridgeway, VA.
- Guided tour of Smith River for Garden Club of Virginia Conservation workshop.
- Presented Trout in the Classroom at Virginia Environmental Educators' Conference.
- Presented "Henry the Heron" to more than 100 participants at Eden River Fest.
- Co-presented with Activate M-HC a poster session on Martinsville-Henry County recreational opportunities at Governor's Conference on Greenways, Blueways and Trails, Richmond, VA.
- Led guided hike for participants of The Virginia Garden Club Conference at Gravely Nature Preserve, Ridgeway, VA.
- Presented Tub-O-Bugs to Drewery Mason Students at Fairy Stone State Park.
- Facilitated Project Learning Tree Workshop (PLT) to area teachers and museum staff.

PUBLICATIONS

- Martinsville-Henry County Rivers & Trails Recreational Use Plan.
- Gravely Nature Preserve: A Self-Guided Tour (brochure).
- Smith River Trail System: Gravely Nature Preserve (brochure).
- Paddling the Smith River (brochure).
- Rivers & Trail Journal, www.rivers-trails.blogspot.com.

- Catch and Release Trout fishing educational brochure.
- Conservation Easement informational mailings and handouts for landowners.
- “Like Money in the Bank,” streamside forest educational brochure.

TOURISM AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Compiled mapping and text information for nature and heritage tourism guides to the Dan River in NC, and in Danville, VA.
- Served on Eden Tourism Board and River Development Committee.
- Authored “Natural Piedmont” article for Piedmont Magazine.
- Partnered with other agencies in Martinsville-Henry County Area to cross-promote programs and facilities.
- Hosted 1st Annual Smith River Fest, Bassett, VA.
- Began new trail marketing initiative with Hampton Inn in Henry County.
- Developed series of brochures to promote Smith River Trail System.

REGIONAL COMMUNICATION

- Active participant in Dan River Coalition initiative.
- Participated in roundtable meeting on the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail, South Hill, VA.
- Participated in joint NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, NC State Parks, and VA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources state parks meeting on potential for a bi-state Mayo River State Park.

CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNDRAISING

- Began preliminary work to initiate a board-driven individual fundraising strategy.
- Received major gift to investigate potential impacts of uranium mining.
- Hosted Volunteer Appreciation Dinner for the individuals who contributed over \$50,000 of in-kind labor to Martinsville and Henry County Projects in 2008.
- Two year grant from Danville Regional Foundation for Caswell Heritage Trails.
- One year grant from Z. Smith Reynolds for operational support.
- Two year grant from Virginia Environmental Endowment for Southern Virginia Rivers Initiative.
- Mini grant from Virginia Department Environmental Quality for citizen water monitoring.
- Acquired in-kind donations for the development of Gravelly Nature Preserve, matching an existing Harvest Foundation Grant by 137%.

- Grant from Norcross Wildlife Foundation for hardware and software.

SALES AND SPONSORSHIPS

- Produced new tee shirts and DRBA note cards for sale.
- Donation of tee shirts from Duke Athletic.

OFFICE AND STAFF

- Rivers & Trails Project Manager hired for Henry County.
- Education, Outreach and Conservation Coordinator hired for Henry County.
- Program Manager hired for Southern Virginia Rivers Initiative.
- Part-time Administrative Assistant hired for Henry County.
- High School volunteer intern assigned to Henry County Office.
- DRBA staff attended National River Rally, Huron, OH, and NC Conservation Network Annual Conference.