



Dan River Basin Association 2009 Annual Activities Report

RECREATION

RIVER ACCESS

- Launched partnership with NC Wildlife Resources Commission to improve and patrol fishing access areas in Stokes County
- Negotiated agreement to re-open Dan River access at Hemlock Golf Course with NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Installed steps for river access at Bassett Heritage Festival
- Completed new Smith River access site at Smith River Sports Complex
- Completed new Smith River access at Mitchell Road Bridge

TRAILS

- Opened Stream Walk Trail, Phase One (800 ft.), Caswell County Senior Center
- In Caswell County, routed nearly 3 miles of natural surface trails for walking and bicycling; construction to begin in spring 2010
- Initiated Rockingham County Rivers and Trails for master trails plan
- Held grand opening of Fieldale Trail phase 2; added 1.5 miles to trail
- Coordinated Adopt-A-Trail volunteers for all Henry County Trails.
- Extended trail at Gravely Nature Preserve (see parks)
- Continued "Tuesday Morning Strolls" Program in Henry County.
- Completed logo and continued support for 4.5 mile "Dick and Willie" rail trail in Henry County. Coordinated media walk upon acquisition of right of way.
- Held media event, "Regional Connections" at Uptown Spur Trail in conjunction with Congressman Perriello's announcement of funding for the "Dick and Willie"
- Continued plans for trail development in Bassett at 50 acre site on the Smith River
- Environmental assessment of Beaver Creek Reservoir Trails completed by contractor. Partnered with Martinsville Park and Recreation on trail layout.
- Launched new program to improve Martinsville Uptown Spur Trail
- Partnered with I.C.E DeHart Woolwine Park in Woolwine, Virginia for development of trails.

PARKS

- Land for new state park on the Mayo River purchased by state of Virginia to connect to NC Mayo River State Park, both initiatives of DRBA
- Continued improvements at Richard Gravely Nature Preserve including extension of the Rhododendron Trail along the Smith River

- Worked in conjunction with Harvest Foundation on completion and grand opening of the Smith River Sports Complex

ACTIVITIES

- Initiated Stokes County Rivers and Trails group
- “Kids Kayaking” at Stokes Stomp with Tarheel Paddlers Association
- Interpretive heritage float at Stokes Stomp
- Launched “Stokes OUTDOORS” blog
- Established DRBA as a Paddle America Club with the American Canoe Association
- Special member outings, including tour of Eden’s Karastan plan
- Monthly outings for the public on rivers and trails across the basin

STEWARDSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL/WATER QUALITY

- Participated in bi-state Roanoke River Basin Commission and Virginia and N.C. Committees to address basin-wide water quality and supply issues
- Held Watershed Litter Cleanup – NC Big Sweep of the Smith River
- Organized tree planting and educational programs for children for MillerCoors employee volunteers at Eden’s Island Ford Access on Smith River
- Facilitated DEQ fish tissue sampling on the Smith River in Henry County
- Launched Phase 2 of Dan River Bacteria and Sediment Study
- Facilitated roundtable discussion on riparian buffer issues and development along the Smith River with public- and private-sector partners
- Continued partnership with VDGIF and TU on Smith River Trout fishery issues
- Designed and launched Forestry Roundtable initiative to build partnerships with forestry experts and landowners to educate and provide tools for sustainable timbering practices. Secured funding for the project
- Provided financial support to Stokes Soil and Water Conservation District for streamside buffer easements along hatchery-supported trout waters

STREAMSIDE FOREST BUFFERS

- Advised Patrick Springs Pentecostal Holiness Church on buffer restoration of 600 total yards along creek
- Planted streamside buffers at nine sites in Virginia
- Provided technical assistance and funding for buffer at Camilla Williams Park, City of Danville, Virginia
- Completed buffer plantings at two new river access sites on the Smith River
- Installed new streamside buffer educational sign at river access at Smith River Sports complex
- Received funds from State of Virginia to address water quality problems associated with forestry practices and loss of riparian buffers

AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENGAGEMENT, PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES and COMMUNITIES

- Dedicated monument to honor African Americans enslaved at the Burgess Plantation at the Burgess Family Cemetery in Ridgeway
- Preserved truss section of historic Fieldale Iron Bridge through solicitation of donated services and \$13,000 in cash donations from the Fieldale community
- Established partnership with Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI) to create an online registry of natural and cultural features of historic African-American cemeteries
- Hosted community supper with cultural anthropology scholar at St. Paul High Street Baptist Church
- Assisted FAHI in making successful \$10,000 grant application to support their project expenses
- Created online registry for historic, church and family cemeteries

EDUCATION

TROUT IN CLASSROOM

- Completed fifth year of Trout in Classrooms, with 26 tanks in four counties.
- New teacher training for TIC teachers at Bassett High School
- Set up 30 tanks for new TIC season, eggs delivered in December 2009
- Over 2,000 students and adults were educated about the importance of healthy rivers and trout fisheries through DRBA's TIC program
- Held eight fish release events on the Smith River with additional educational activities including Tub-O-Bugs for students and public
- Engaged state and local government officials in trout release days at Bassett,
- Partnered with Danville Parks and Recreation and Danville Science Center to provide for "Catfish in the Classroom" programs in three City of Danville schools as well as the Science center. Total of 4 tanks.

ACTIVITIES

- Partnered with Danville Parks and Recreation to create "Mow or Let Grow" workshop to demonstrate to city park staff cost-effective ways to protect water quality and reduce municipalities' grounds maintenance budgets
- Partnered with Patrick County farmers on first annual agri-tour in Patrick County, Virginia. Created the tour's website, includes educational material on sustainable farming. 18 farms participated in the tour.
- iIMPACT: Speaking Out for Rivers through Art & Action to teach 170 children about the impact of litter on rivers and wildlife
- Helped develop and implement the first annual "Rock the River" in partnership with Virginia Skyline Girl Scouts and Staunton River State Park. 50 scouts and adults attended. Taught canoe safety and a variety of environmental programs.
- Smith River paddle tour for Patrick Henry College Upward Bound Program

- Presented Trout in the Classroom Program to numerous clubs and organizations
- Participated Virginia Garden Club Conservation Forum, Charlottesville
- Participated in Virginia Environmental Educators Conference in Staunton
- Presented Tub-O-Bugs at Va. Museum of Natural History to educate about importance of macro-invertebrates in streams, reached more than 2,500 people
- Facilitated numerous Eagle Scout projects in MHC; canoe racks, trail users rest stop, cemetery markers for Burgess family cemetery

VOLUNTEER WATER MONITORING

- Partnered with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Friends of Philpott Lake, Pittsylvania County schools.
- Engaged 71 people in water monitoring in Franklin, Henry and Pittsylvania
- Formed stream teams for 7 creeks in Franklin County, Patrick County, Pittsylvania County (including on Coles Hill, the proposed uranium mining site.)
- Water Quality Monitoring Programs for Henry County Home Schooling Program

WATERSHED LITTER CLEANUP

- Coordinated Morgan Ford trash removal in conjunction with Gateway Streetscapes Smith River clean-up. Removed 13.5 tons of trash.
- Worked with landowner to gate access to stem illegal dumping at Morgan Ford

FESTIVALS, EVENTS, AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Karastan/Mohawk Industries Health Fair in Rockingham County
- Mayo Boat Day in Person County
- Crossing of the Dan Annual Celebration, Halifax
- Caswell County Health Fair
- Caswell Bright Leaf Hoedown
- Eden Riverfest; presented casting and fly-tying
- Stokes Stomp
- Fieldale Heritage Festival
- Gear swap held at Bassett access ramp in conjunction with Smith River fest
- Over 100 in attendance at the first Annual Smith River Film Fest held in Rives Theater Martinsville
- Tub-O-Bugs at Environmental Education Expo, Philpott Lake
- Tub-O-Bugs for Virginia Regional Foods Growers Coalition
- Virginia Museum of Natural History Family Fun Fest, Martinsville, VA
- Fast Track Trade Show, Martinsville, VA
- Friends of Philpott
- Eden River Development Committee
- Stokes Business Extravaganza
- Virginia Water Monitoring Council
- Virginia Coal and Energy Commission
- Dan River Coalition
- Fayette Area Heritage Initiative Community Supper

- Virginia Conservation Network, meetings, legislative workshops
- North Carolina Conservation Network
- Monthly Martinsville-Henry County Rivers and Trails meetings
- Monthly Caswell Recreation Commission meetings
- Rockingham County Nonprofit Council
- Piedmont Triad Partnership, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments events
- Farmland Protection Planning Committee, Rockingham County, NC
- Bi-state Roanoke River Basin Commission
- Representation at 2009 River Rally national conference
- Representation at American Canoe Association National Conference

PRESENTATIONS

- Halifax Tourism Board, Economic Development
- Upper Roanoke River Roundtable
- Virginia Roanoke River Advisory Commission
- Virginia Chapter of the NAACP
- Danville Running and Fitness Club
- Southern Virginia Mountain Biking Association
- Blue Ridge Trout Unlimited, Winston-Salem, NC
- Garden Club of Virginia, Henry County
- Various book clubs in Henry County
- Virginia Museum of Natural History, EarthForce Committee meetings
- Appeared twice on BTW 21's "Table Talk" Henry County.
- "Community Accents" WLOE/WMYN - Caswell Heritage Trails Master Plan

WORKSHOPS

- Conducted public workshops for Heritage Trails Master Plan

AWARDS

- DRBA received the "Matthew Fontaine Maury Distinguished Service" award, for exemplary service in the development of Virginia Museum of Natural History.
- Staff member Brian Williams recognized by Trout Unlimited as their "Conservation Educator of the Year" award recipient for Virginia.
- Board member David Jones received Virginia Fly Fishermen "Conservator of the Year" award for his sponsorship and implementation of Trout in the Classroom.

PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY

- *An Insider's Guide to the Dan River, An Insider's Guide to the Smith River*
- Dan River, NC Water Quality Study of Bacteria and Sediment
- The Fieldale Trail brochure
- Smith River Trail system map and access locations info sheet
- Over 100 articles associated with DRBA activities in the Martinsville Bulletin, Eden News, Greensboro News and Record and other papers during 2009

DISPLAYS

- Martinsville-Henry County Visitor's Center; Henry County Administration Building lobby; Patrick Henry Mall – Activate M-HC kiosk

REGIONAL COLLABORATION, ECONOMIC AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Compiling photographic inventory of historic, natural, and cultural sites and area of significance for Caswell County to be used for heritage promotion
- Partnered with other agencies in Martinsville-Henry County Area to cross-promote programs and facilities.
- Held annual Smith River Fest in partnership with Henry and Franklin Counties. Secured special water release for 3 day event.
- Facilitated talks with local partners to assist new outfitter located in Henry county at the South Martinsville access ramp, coordinated introductory kayak classes
- Guided tours of the Gravely Nature Preserve for potential contributors.
- Support for promotion of Charlie Poole Festival, Eden, NC

REGIONAL COMMUNICATION

- Working with local municipality and NCDOT to provide a safe crosswalk for seniors and children to expand the reach of the emerging trail system at Caswell Senior Center
- Assistance from SVMBA for mountain bike trail construction and training
- Hosted Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Spencer Penn Historic Center
- Roundtable meetings with local forestry officials in Henry/Patrick County.
- Developed web site to facilitate communication among agencies and other stakeholders of the Dan River Coalition as they work to improve water quality of the Dan River and its tributaries.

SALES AND SPONSORSHIPS

- Tee shirts for the Dick and Willie Rail Trail System
- Note cards for Caswell County

OFFICE AND STAFF

- New NC Program Manager for Caswell Heritage Trails
- New Stokes Program Coordinator
- New DRBA office in Danbury, Stokes County, NC
- DRBA's first Office and Accounting Manager
- Part-time Administrative Assistant, Va. office
- Averett College Intern for Trout in the Classroom and other programs
- Launched Salesforce, new data base for DRBA
- Centralized records, initiated new procedures for accounting and reporting