

DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

2010 ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT

RECREATION

RIVER ACCESS

- New river access at C.P. Films on The Great Road in Stanleytown, Virginia.

TRAILS

- A new rail trail, The Dick and Willie Passage Rail Trail (Dick & Willie Passage) opened in October. DRBA was instrumental in the development of the 4.5 mile paved trail. Plans to extend the trail are a top priority for 2011.
- Developed and produced trailhead and interpretative signage for the Dick & Willie Passage.
- Produced radio interview with Benny Summerlin, Henry County Administrator, and Kenney Kirkman, local historian, promoting the opening of the Dick & Willie Passage. Also produced public service announcement for the trail.
- Hosted public workshops for Heritage Trails at Caswell Senior Center.
- Opened "Flatland Trail," 850 feet of natural surface trail at Caswell County Senior Center.
- Currently accepting bids for construction of "Stream Walk Trail Phase Two," 900 feet of trail at Caswell County Senior Center with the potential to connect 200 seniors and 400 students along a stream valley trail.
- Started construction of mountain bike trails (approximately 3 miles stacked) adjacent to Oakwood Elementary School in Yanceyville.
- Flagged new trail from Yoder's Market to Caswell County Senior Center; working with multiple property owners to allow construction.
- Began exploring trail opportunity with N.C. Wildlife for trail along gameland properties in Caswell County.
- Working with local officials and N.C. Department of Transportation to provide a safe crosswalk for seniors and elementary school children to expand the reach of the emerging trail system at Caswell Senior Center.
- Gaining assistance from Southern Virginia Mountain Bike Association for mountain bike trail construction and training of volunteers in Caswell County.
- Established partnership with Economic Development Commission to build Furniture and Textile Heritage Trails. Each trail would be an addition to existing trails and become part of the Smith River Trail System.
- Developed and completed construction of Phase I of the Martinsville Reservoir Trails located at Patrick Henry Community College.
- Completed Rhododendron Trail at Gravelly Nature Preserve.
- Continued development of the Fieldale Trail with the new construction for Phase III completed through Fieldale Park and the Iron Bridge Memorial Loop.

STEWARDSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL/WATER QUALITY/FISHERIES

- A DRBA volunteer, working with a DRBA board member, continued coliform/sediment sampling at four sites on the Smith River in North Carolina.
- Collaborated with Trout Unlimited on their Virginia Trout Stream Sensitivity Study.
- DRBA and the City of Eden were the MillerCoors partners in the corporation's Water Quality Stewardship Day.
- DRBA Uranium Mining Task Force: key partner with organizations across Virginia and North Carolina to address issues of concern; participated/led meetings; published web article on uranium mining, numerous op-ed and other publications.
- Presentation on uranium mining to the National Academy of Sciences.
- National Environmental Education Foundation collaboration in Stokes County.
- Blackberry Creek Restoration project completed in partnership with Smith River Trout Unlimited, Henry County Public Service Authority and local landowners.
- Provided assistance to Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries with new sign installation along the 34-mile section of the Smith River affected by new 2011 trout regulations.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

- Partnered with Three Rivers Outfitters, N.C. Underwater Archaeology Branch, Eden Tourism Development, Eden Historical Museum, Eden Rescue Squad, and an Eden City Council member in recovering the batteau, *Dan River*, from the bottom of the river near Leaksville Landing.
- "Hidden African-American Stories" presentation and lunch in partnership with Mt. Olive East Church featuring the story of Harlem Renaissance poet and gardener, Annie Spencer, who grew up in Henry County.

STREAMSIDE FOREST BUFFERS

- Partnered with Friends of Philpott and Army Corps of Engineers to complete Bowens Creek riparian area restoration.
- Worked on Marrowbone Creek riparian buffer project to remove invasive plants.
- Partnered with Bassett Industries to permanently protect the riparian border of the Bassett "Loop" area on the Smith River.

EDUCATION

TROUT (and CATFISH) IN THE CLASSROOM

- Trout in the Classroom completed the season with 31 tanks in four counties. Trout were released in the Smith River (Bassett) and the Dan River (Kibler Valley).
- Trout in the Classroom began its sixth season with 31 tanks in four counties throughout Southern Virginia. Currently all schools in Patrick County host at least one TIC tank. State wide the number of TIC programs has grown to 150 tank locations.
- Provided expertise, tanks and other equipment to Catfish in the Classroom for Danville City schools.

FORESTRY

- Produced a total of six radio programs on forest and riparian buffer best management practices featuring state foresters from Patrick and Halifax counties; faculty from Virginia Polytechnic Institute; and experts with Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.
- Designed and installed six full color banner exhibits promoting (1) the preservation of riparian buffers during timbering, and (2) consulting a professional forester prior to selling one's timber in order to assure the protection of water quality.
- Report of Findings on Forestry Practices: compiled and analyzed data collected during series of interviews with landowners, state forestry experts, and independent consulting foresters in order to understand issues facing landowners with regard to riparian buffers.

VOLUNTEER WATER MONITORING

- In partnership and thanks to efforts of volunteers, educators from Woolwine and Patrick Henry Community College, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Friends of Philpott, and Virginia Master Naturalists, macroinvertebrate monitoring was conducted on Smith River, Sycamore Creek, Campbell Creek in DeHart Park, Fells Branch, and streams at Philpott Lake.

WATERSHED LITTER CLEANUP

- Partnered with Gateway Streetscapes on clean-up at Beaver Creek Reservoir and water quality presentation for Martinsville/ Henry County Boys and Girls Club.
- Jointly hosted a Smith River Clean-up with Smith River Trout Unlimited and Gateway Streetscapes.

OUTINGS

- DRBA first Saturday outings included hikes and river trips throughout the basin.

FESTIVALS, EVENTS, AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Educational booths in Caswell and Person counties to promote walking trails during Walk for the Animals, Mayo Bat Day, Caswell County Health Fair, Bright Leaf Hoedown and Mayo Lake Annual Fall Festival.
- Hosted water quality educational booth in Rockingham County during Eden Riverfest.
- Open House for the new DRBA office to serve Caswell County.
- Partnered with Fieldale Heritage Committee on grand opening ceremony for the Iron Bridge Memorial.
- Booth demonstrating the positive economic impact of rivers during the 2010 Martinsville/Henry County Fast Track trade show (DRBA's 3rd appearance).
- Collaborated with Virginia Department of Environmental Quality on steering committee and public meetings for the Smith River TMDL studies.
- DRBA partnered with Smith River Adventure outfitters for second annual gear swap.
- Partnered with Martinsville Parks and Recreation on second annual Smith River Mini-Triathlon.
- Partnered with Henry and Franklin counties, Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation and Martinsville City to host the third annual Smith River Fest. Obtained special water release from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to attract boaters to the event.

PRESENTATIONS AND PROGRAMS

- Created and presented "Trout are Made of Trees" educational program for all Rockingham County Library branches.
- iIMPACT: Speaking Out for Rivers through Art & Action, Gunn Memorial Library.
- Story Line featuring the writings and voice of Dr. Forrest Altman on outdoor experiences, Gunn Memorial Library.
- Heritage Trails Master Plan for Caswell County and benefits of trails.
- Tub O' Bugs programs for Central Elementary School in Eden, Woolwine Elementary School, Patrick Henry Community College Biology Lab classes, Virginia Museum of Natural History Master Naturalist classes, Stokes Stomp, Fieldale Heritage Festival, and Annual Philpott Environmental Expo.
- Guest appearance on "Ask Andy," local cable television show on Channel 18 in MHC. Discussed Smith River water quality, economic development and DRBA's work in the region.
- Presentation to Smith River Trout Unlimited on Smith River and tributary restoration efforts.

WORKSHOPS

- “Rivers and Bugs Summit” held at Moral Hill Baptist Church featuring local environmental initiatives that help protect water quality and celebration of volunteer water monitors. Attended by 35 educators and counselors working with at-risk youth, volunteer water monitors, and more.

AWARDS

- Wayne Kirkpatrick, DRBA President, named Volunteer of the Year at Reynolds Homestead for leading nature hikes for College for Older Adults program.
- DRBA board member, David Jones, named 2010 Conservationist of the Year by Daughters of the American Revolution.
- DRBA staff member, Brian Williams, named Trout Unlimited Educator of the Year for Virginia.

PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY

- Publication of “Heritage Trails *for* Caswell County” brochure.
- Publication of “Farming Transitions: Producing Profits, Good Food, & Clean Water” brochure.
- Publication of “Your Land, Your Forest: Working for You and Your Community” brochure.
- Two promotional spots produced in Henry County with DRBA staff and aired on WSET TV “Living in the Heart of Virginia.”

REGIONAL COLLABORATION, ECONOMIC AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- In partnership with Danville Regional Foundation, organized the Dan River Valley Heritage Initiative.
- Participated in Hanging Rock Corridor Study, Stokes County tourism initiative.
- Presentation to Halifax Board of Tourism, economic benefits of regional trail system.
- Attended Water Supply Planning meetings and Kerr Reservoir Symposium.
- Participated in Roanoke River Basin Bi-State Commission.
- Executive Director served on N.C. Roanoke River Basin Advisory Committee.
- Participated in Lobby Day with the Virginia Conservation Network.
- Presented during Environment Virginia Conference, Lexington, Va.
- Dan and Smith River “Insider’s Guide” sales.
- Presentations on benefits of regional rivers and trails initiatives to Stokes County Board of Commissioners, Altrusa of Martinsville and Henry County, Starmount Rotary Club of Greensboro.
- Partner in Heritage Tobacco Barn Village concept for Caswell County/Yanceyville.
- Key participant in the “Southern Virginia Arts, Culture and Humanities Initiative” led by Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

- Co-hosted Smith River Fest and DRBA Gear Swap which attracted more than 500 visitors to MHC (doubling attendance over 2009).
- Staff met with Congressman Boucher regarding weekend water flow issues on the Smith River.

MEMBERSHIPS, GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIPS

- Thanks to more than 320 DRBA members, DRBA received \$62,000 in unrestricted funds through memberships, donations and sales in 2010.
- Volunteers and partners contributed an estimated 680 hours of time, valued at approximately \$17,000.
- Silverfish for the Rivers Annual Benefit raised \$700 in cash and provided more than \$1,500 in additional in-kind donations and volunteer hours.
- DRBA grant awards in 2010:
 - \$23,000 from the Virginia Environmental Endowment for water quality projects and environmental education;
 - \$5,000 from the National Environmental Education Foundation for water quality projects and improvements to Moore's Spring Campground in Stokes County;
 - \$2,000 from National College to support 2010 summer intern;
 - \$2,000 from the Stanley Family Foundation for TIC;
 - \$2,500 from Trout Unlimited /AEP stream restoration grant;
 - \$9,500 from Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation for forestry project.
- DRBA was named a national finalist in the MillerCoors and River Network Watershed Protection competition; awarded \$15,000 in funding.
- On behalf of Caswell County, DRBA prepared and was awarded \$59,500 in a Recreational Trails Grant for the "Stream Walk Trail Phase Two" from the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.
- Support for DRBA's "Rivers and Bugs Summit" provided by Market America and Charlie's Soap.

BOARD, STAFF AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Staff attended the Harvest Leadership Summit for professional development.
- Staff attended professional development workshops during the 2010 River Rally in Utah.
- Board and staff attended Duke Nonprofit Management Course classes on fundraising as well as webinars on board development.
- Formulated DRBA's Diversity Plan and began development of the "Explorer's Club" to engage minority youth in outdoor experiences.
- Staff engaged in "New Development Director" and other training provided by United Way Nonprofit Leaders Network.