



JANUARY 2008

# New River Watershed Roundtable

## NEWSLETTER

### Special points of interest:

- *Water Quality News*
- *Forestry in the New River*
- *Erosion and Sediment Control*
- *Grants Available for Stream Tree Plantings*
- *Resource Concern Mapping*
- *Roundtable Financial Report*

### Important Roundtable

#### Dates:

<i>Executive Committee Meeting</i>	Feb. 15, 2008
<i>Board Meeting</i>	April 4, 2008, at 11:30 a.m. Location TBD

## Water Quality News

One of the most important questions to ask when designing a Citizen's Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring program is what is the goal of the program? Some common goals are:

- Educating the local community about water quality issues to encourage protection of water quality.
- Establishing baseline data where no data exists.
- Documenting water quality changes over time (trends in water quality).
- Identifying potential water quality problems.
- Providing a scientific basis for making decisions on watershed management.

- Providing information to evaluate the effectiveness of best management practices.

- Determining the impact of land-use activity (urban, industrial, agricultural, etc.).

- Supplementing water quality data collected by governmental agencies.

Originally, the roundtable chose education as the main purpose of the Water Quality Monitoring program. Due to more funds becoming available, we will now be able to increase the level of quality in our data collection and be able to accomplish not just one of the before-mentioned goals, but all of them.

On Thursday, Jan. 10,

the executive committee approved the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that National Committee for the New River's advocacy coordinator devised. This QAPP will establish for the Dept. of Environmental Quality and the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation that roundtable water quality monitoring volunteers will be reporting the parameters of temperature and dissolved oxygen at the highest level possible (level III); both E.coli and pH will be reported at level II; and turbidity (water clarity) at level I.

Now that protocol has been determined, committed volunteers are needed. A training session will be held with the assistance of DEQ in April 2008.

## Forestry in the New River



Forestry Committee members learn about a riparian forestry project in Radford.

New River Watershed Roundtable Forestry Committee partners with the City of Radford's Commission on Beautification and Municipal Forests. In October of 2007, the City of Radford's Beautification Commission hosted Forestry Committee members on a tour of Radford's Wildwood Park. This

urban forest boasts a diverse array of flora and fauna, and is used as an outdoor classroom for the nearby Radford High School. The forest vegetation in Wildwood Park, a popular recreation spot in downtown Radford, stabilizes steep hillsides that border Connelly's Run, and helps maintain the water

quality in this tributary of the New River. In the coming year, there may be opportunities for the Forestry Committee to partner with the City of Radford's Beautification Commission to maintain and improve the function of Radford's riparian forests.

## Erosion and Sediment Control

The New River Watershed Roundtable executive committee is focusing a lot of energy on erosion and sediment issues throughout the watershed with the goal of protecting and improving the New River.

As part of the roundtable's effort, they invited a Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) representative to discuss the state's erosion and sediment standards and the roles of state government. As discussed, under Virginia's Erosion and Sediment Con-

trol Law, those engaged in land disturbing activities (construction, road building, etc.) are subject to requirements for control of erosion and prevention of sedimentation. Sediment from construction is responsible for degradation of many streams throughout the Commonwealth. DCR is responsible for seeing that local governments meet state minimum standards for Erosion and Sediment control. DCR reviews local erosion and sediment control programs for compliance. When needed, DCR helps localities understand state requirements and communicates

needed actions to improve programs in order to meet state standards.

The roundtable executive committee is considering an educational process that may require a special watershed meeting to appeal for a serious commitment by municipalities to enforce standards. The committee will dedicate time and energy in developing the appropriate agenda for this endeavor and make reports to the board when possible.

### Roundtable Financial Report

The current NRWR retained fund amount is \$10,516.90. There are no outstanding payables. Nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) are restricted to program activity in Montgomery and Pulaski Counties. Approximately \$1,000 are from grants given for water quality improvement projects. The Skyline Soil and Water Conservation District administers a NRWR dedicated general program use grant of approximately \$7,000 of which approximately \$3,000 has been obligated to planned water quality programs.

### Grants Available for Stream Tree Plantings

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) is looking to fund riparian forestry projects. Through funds from the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Water Quality Improvement Act, VDOF has developed a Regional Grants program which is designed to restore and/or improve riparian health through the use of tree plantings or other vegetative techniques and may include riparian buffer plantings, stream restoration and stabilization,

rain gardens and non-CREP stream tree planting. For more information, contact David Richert with the VDOF at 276-228-2879 or david.richert@dof.virginia.gov.

So far, at least three projects in the New River watershed are being partially funded by this program, including a rain garden at the Rural Retreat Elementary School, a shoreline stabilization

project at Claytor Lake, and a stream bank stabilization project in Bluefield, VA.



A riparian buffer will be established here in 2008.

## Resource Concern Mapping

The National Committee for the New River has worked with the Department of Environmental Quality to create maps of:

- Surface Water Intakes
- Solid Waste Sites
- Impaired Surface Waters
- Impaired Surface Waters due to Fecal Coliform and E.coli
- Permitted Discharges of both "minor" and "major" facilities
- Impaired Surface Waters due to Toxins in Fish Tissue
- Impaired Surface Waters due to Macroinvertebrate Bioassessment

Now that DEQ information has been mapped, the roundtable will recruit volunteers to be trained to use GPS data collection equipment, and data collection protocols. Cynthia Hancock of the roundtable and Skyline Soil and Water Conservation District, is purchasing both GPS units and cameras. Trained volunteers will soon be out in the field.