

Down by the River

UTRR completes stream restoration work

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable recently completed stream restoration and stream bank stabilization projects in Tazewell and Chilhowie. Project sites had eroding banks resulting in excessive sedimentation. The Roundtable utilized funds received from Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for the Tazewell projects. The three photos are from Dunford Park in Tazewell where the stream meanders all through the site. The bottom photos are from the most recent project at the park.

Another bank stabilization project was completed at the wastewater treatment plant. An additional stream project on a farm fenced out cattle. Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District completed that project. (Photos P. 2)

The Roundtable received funds from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for the Chilhowie Town Park project with before and after photos shown to the right.

The Roundtable partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners Program on these projects.



Fall Roundtable meeting set for Sept. 19 in Tazewell

Dominion Energy will be the keynote speaker at the fall member meeting of Upper Tennessee River Roundtable. The topic will be the new hydroelectric project.

The dinner meeting will be Thursday, Sept. 19, at 6 p.m. at the American Legion Hall in Tazewell with a meal by Fisher & Co. Meals are \$15 each and reservations must be made with the Roundtable office by Sept. 17 at noon. Call 276-628-1600 or email uppertnriver@yahoo.com. A board meeting will follow the Roundtable dinner.



Making rain barrels

The Roundtable's summer intern from Emory & Henry College, MacKenzie Bellimam, assisted with rain barrel workshops to help homeowners with water conservation.

The Roundtable held workshops in Dickensonville and Norton with funds from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Roundtable support grant.

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UTRR partners with Tazewell SWCD to collect 6.12 tons of hazardous waste and 1,200 tires

Cars and trucks lined up and patiently waited at the county fairgrounds before the Tazewell County Household Hazardous Waste Collection event opened in May. The turnout surpassed previous years with 87 vehicles bringing 6.12 tons of hazardous waste and 1,200 tires.

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable developed a grant application and received \$5,000 in funding from the Tennessee Valley Authority to conduct a household hazardous waste collection event in Tazewell County. The Roundtable partnered with the Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District, whose Elizabeth Bennett secured an additional \$3,000 from the county. The cost of the household hazardous waste event was \$7,329, with 6.12 tons of materials collected, such as paint, batteries, electronics, and others.



People brought 1,200 tires to the event, filling a 53-foot box trailer. The Sheriff's department collected medical waste, which they valued at \$7,620. The event will be held again if funding can be secured.



Tazewell farm project fences out cattle on 337 acres, installs water troughs

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable received grant funds for the Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District to fence cattle out of streams on 337 acres. Mike Horne of the District oversaw the project that also installed solar panels to pump water to troughs for the cattle. Funding for this project came from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. More complete results will be shared in the next newsletter.





Roundtable completes 9th Annual Conservation Camp for Washington County

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable coordinated the 9th Annual Conservation Camp for Washington County and Bristol with 619 third and fourth graders last week at Sugar Hollow Park. Presenters taught a variety of lessons from litter prevention to recycling, erosion to stream restoration, food webs, pollution prevention in watersheds, food webs, and forestry.

In the top photo is Lily Kingsolver, educator at Hungry Mother State Park in Marion. Bottom left is Hunter Kittrell, a contractor with the Roundtable. To the bottom right is April Grace, a volunteer educator for the Roundtable from the Raymon Grace Foundation.

Eleven schools participated in the event which was co-hosted by Keep Bristol Beautiful with the Bristol Chamber of Commerce.



SWEET coordinates workshop

Southwest Virginia Environmental Education Team (SWEET), which is led by the Roundtable, coordinated a Project WET workshop for 16 teachers this summer at Hungry Mother State Park. Mandy Fletcher and Tanya Hall led the workshop with assistance from Courtney Keheley and Carol Doss.



Outreach

Roundtable interns assisted with outreach this year, such as MacKenzie Bellimam showing people how to transform old T-shirts into shopping bags at the farmer's market and Sarah Leonard demonstrating a planting reuse technique.





Youth Summit sparks project ideas

The Clinch River Youth Summit, which was organized by Upper Tennessee River Roundtable and the Clinch River Valley Initiative (CRVI), sparked ideas from high school students for projects at their schools. The students heard presentations from subject matter experts on forestry, watersheds, pollution prevention, AmeriCorps VISTA program, and edible wild plants. Each school met individually to brainstorm ideas for grants. After the Summit, the students applied for grants.

The Roundtable awarded three \$750 grants with funds from the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF). Projects included a “Kids in the Creek” day at Twin Springs High School in Nickelsville, shown up top. High school students assisted teachers and Roundtable educators in teaching younger children about stream monitoring. During the event, one very excited group caught a Yellowfin Madtom which has been re-introduced in that area in recent years.

Gate City Middle School received a grant to make improvements to their outdoor classroom including the addition of a barrier to keep litter from blowing into the classroom from the parking lot above. Castlewood High School created a pollinator garden with their mini grant. Students from these schools presented their projects at the Clinch River Environmental Education Symposium, which was coordinated by CRVI’s Education Action Team, also funded by DOF.

Taysha DeVaughan, holding the T-shirt, coordinated the Youth Summit before the end of her AmeriCorps term. She is shown with VISTA Austin Counts with Appalachian Voices, who assisted with the event.



4-H Camp

Roundtable director Carol Doss, intern MacKenzie Bellimam, and volunteer educator April Grace, taught three classes at the Washington County 4-H Camp. Campers learned about pollution prevention, trash treasures, and more.