



# UTRR Newsletter

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable, Inc.  
Web page: [www.upperTNriver.org](http://www.upperTNriver.org)

### UTRR Officers 2003 - 2004

Chair – Don Gowan Vice Chair – Emily Duncan Secretary -Tom Davenport Treasurer – Diane Johnson

“I recognize the rights and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us.”

- Theodore Roosevelt, 1910

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## Inside This Issue:

### UTRR Hires New Coordinator ~ Guest Speaker: John Ross

#### Focus Story: Fecal Coliform Monitoring

**Fall Meeting Agenda and Registration:** The meeting will be on October 23rd at the Glenrochie Country Club in Abingdon.

Dear Friends of the Roundtable,

The last few months have been both an exhilarating and challenging time for the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable. As you know, we are the proud recipients of a large (\$800,000) grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. Now- that’s exhilarating! Of course, we also take on the responsibility to use those funds appropriately and effectively.

Under the grant, we will work with the Clinch-Powell, Appalachian, and Blue Ridge Resource and Conservation Districts to leverage significant conservation throughout the Upper Tennessee River Basin. Projects will range from measures to prevent hazardous waste spills into our rivers, to experimental Best Management Practices for reducing nutrients and sedimentation into our rivers. Other projects include an Environmental Education Center on the Clinch River, storm water management demonstrations, creation of wetlands, removal of sawdust from a sensitive karst area, use of innovative means to identify microbial sources of pollution, and last but not least a commitment to support the watershed coalitions and citizen groups who care about water quality.

On page five is an introduction of our new UTRR Coordinator Carol Doss. We are excited to have Carol join us during this exhilarating time.

Thank you for your support and confidence in the Roundtable.

Sincerely,

*Don Gowan*

Vision Statement: We envision the citizens within the watersheds of the Clinch, Powell, and Holston rivers practicing conservation and good stewardship thus insuring water quality and quantity so that the waters are fishable, swimmable and sustain a healthy and diverse ecosystem.

## Focus Story: Citizens Begin Water Monitoring On South Fork Headwaters

Thanks to new testing equipment, including a sealer, incubator, and infrared examination box, citizens in the Sugar Grove area in Smyth County are now monitoring both total coliform and e-coli in streams feeding into the South Fork of the Holston.

Unfortunately, the tests are revealing what many have long suspected and feared. Despite the pristine appearance and usual clarity of the South Fork's headwaters, they contain high amounts of total coliform and e-coli. There are nine sampling sites downstream from the concrete bridge at Teas.

- Mouth of Mullins Branch (just below Teas bridge)
- Mouth of Georges Branch
- South Fork just upstream from Georges Branch
- South Fork just below Robert's Mill
- Mouth of Bishop Branch
- Mouth of Dickeys Creek
- South Fork just below Water Street in Sugar Grove
- Slemps Creek in Sugar Grove
- Cressy Creek just below the post office

Although all nine sites have shown pollution by both coliform and e-coli, the two cleanest sites appear to be Bishop Branch and Mullins Branch. Both of these small streams run through areas with cattle, but neither area has known "straight pipes" discharging human sewage into the water.

By far the dirtiest site is Slemps Creek at Sugar Grove. Testing has shown this small stream to be highly polluted with both coliform and e-coli. Slemps Creek runs through one large dairy operation and numerous older houses. It is not known at this time whether there are any straight pipes discharging into the stream, but it appears highly likely that there are failing septic systems at several of the houses. In addition, there are two or more abandoned businesses (an old service station and a tavern) that could still be polluting the stream.

The site on the South Fork just below Water Street in Sugar Grove has also shown a high amount of both total coliform and e-coli. The houses in this area are old, are very close to the river and may have failing septic systems or straight pipes, but this needs further investigation.

Water flowing out of the Flat Ridge Road area of Sugar Grove in Cressy Creek also shows high pollution. This is a densely populated area that is situated on sandy/rocky soil. There are a lot of older homes as well as two trailer parks, one of which features older trailers occupied mostly by renters.

Sugar Grove does not have municipal sewage processing but municipal water is available. Several trailer parks in the community have septic tanks and drain fields rather than sewage systems.

Additional water testing and research into location of straight pipes and failing septic systems is ongoing. When sufficient data has been generated it will be turned over to DEQ or other appropriate government agency for action.

All sample collection is being done on public property, primarily where streams cross highway rights-of-way. Although some landowners have been very cooperative some sites require safe and legal entrances on private property along these streams.

Draft Meeting Agenda: October 23, 2003

- 6:00 p.m. Dinner  
(Welcome by Don Gowan, Chair – Upper Tennessee River Roundtable Executive Board)
- 6:40 p.m. Call to Order, Don Gowan  
BUSINESS SESSION, Don Gowan (Review Voting Procedure)

APPROVE MINUTES – from May 9, 2003 Meeting (Southwest Virginia Community College)

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports (30 minutes)

- a) Planning Committee:
- b) Public Outreach Committee:
- c) Grants Committee:
- d) Legislative Committee:
- e) Organization Coordinating Group:

NEW BUSINESS

- 7:20 p.m. Presentation "Tennessee Growth Readiness"
- 7:35 p.m. Guest Speaker John Ross
- 8:00 p.m. Open Forum & Closing Comments – Don Gowan, Chair
- 8:45 p.m. Adjourn

Note: The timeframes indicated above are intended to serve as a guide. However, the meeting will adjourn no later than the time indicated above.

**Directions:** From I-81 Exit 17 take VA-75 towards South Holston Dam, Turn Left on Country Club Drive (SW) immediately before Long John Silvers, continue straight Country Club Drive (SW) becomes Winterham Drive, turn right on to Country Club Drive. Glenrochie Country Club will be on your right. 628-3674 or 628-3059

✂  
**Dinner will only be available for those that pre-register.** Make your check payable to the UTRR. (Agency Representatives \$12 and all others \$8.00) **Pre-Registration Deadline: October 16, 2003**

Send registration by mail, fax, or email to: Theresa Carter, 252 West Main Street, Suite 3, Abingdon, VA 24210. Fax (276) 676-5527, or Email [tcarter@dcr.state.va.us](mailto:tcarter@dcr.state.va.us)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization or Watershed Group \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail (print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_

## Organization Coordinating Group Meeting

**The Upper Tennessee River Roundtable (UTRR) Organization Coordinating Group (OCG) will be meeting on Thursday, October 23, 2003, in Abingdon at the Department of Environmental Quality Office, from 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM. As you may recall, the OCG is any agency or organization that is willing to provide financial and/or technical assistance to the Roundtable.**

For the purposes of this meeting, we will be focusing primarily on the “technical assistance” since the UTRR will be receiving an \$800,000 grant award from EPA. Don Gowan, Chair of the UTRR Board of Directors, has been working closely with EPA representatives to finalize the details of the grant agreement. Don will also be available at the OCG Meeting to provide an update and answer questions regarding the projects and requirements. This is a great opportunity for the Roundtable and the Upper Tennessee River Basin in general. Thank you for all you have done to support the Roundtable. This is what we’ve been waiting for – to collaborate and cooperate in implementing on-the-ground projects that improve water quality. Please contact me at (276) 676-5529 or [nkilgore@dcr.state.va.us](mailto:nkilgore@dcr.state.va.us) if you have any questions. Looking forward to seeing you there! Neal Kilgore, OCG Chair

## Workshop on Voluntary Wetland Restoration Opportunities in Virginia On November 19th, 2003

Announcing the first of several workshops on Voluntary Wetland Restoration Opportunities in Virginia, to be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2003 at the Piedmont Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in Richmond, Virginia.

The main purpose of the workshop is to encourage voluntary wetland restoration and enhancement on private and public lands through the education of Virginia citizens on available technical and financial opportunities. This workshop is part of our on-going efforts to establish a Virginia Citizen Wetland Education, Outreach, and Monitoring Initiative, funded through a grant from the EPA to the DEQ and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (Alliance). This initiative will provide public education and outreach concerning wetland restoration in Virginia and wetland assessment monitoring of created, enhanced, and restored wetland areas.

Leaders of natural resource associations and organizations including watershed, civic, land trust, state, federal, and local governments have been invited to participate in the workshop. If you are a member of one of these organizations and are not aware whether or not a representative has been invited or, are a private landowner and are interested in attending the workshop, please contact the Alliance. The Richmond workshop is one of four scheduled to occur across Virginia between now and the end of 2004; three similar workshops are planned for 2004 for the Northern, Roanoke and Tidewater areas of Virginia. Although the workshop is free for all participants, registration is required no later than November 14, 2003. A workshop brochure containing an agenda and registration details are available on the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's calendar of events on their Website at [www.AllianceChesBay.org/events.cfm](http://www.AllianceChesBay.org/events.cfm). This will also include the most up-to-date agenda. Agenda highlights include:

- Defining Wetland Restoration and Enhancement and the tools available for identification of sites with restoration potential
- Technical and Financial Assistance available for Wetland Restoration and Enhancement within Virginia
- Case Studies

For specific questions regarding the workshop, please contact Hadley Milliken ([hmilliken@acb-online.org](mailto:hmilliken@acb-online.org)) or Stacey Moulds ([smoulds@acb-online.org](mailto:smoulds@acb-online.org)) of the Alliance at 804.775.0951.

**John Ross**  
**Guest Speaker for the**  
**Fall UTRR Meeting**

author of  
*“Trout Unlimited’s Guide to  
America’s 100 Best Trout Streams.”*

John has fished many of the streams in this book including the Clinch River. According to the publisher “The information he’s compiled will make you want to grab your gear and head for the one of these rivers.” The book was the winner of the “National Outdoor Book Award.”

**It is truly an honor and a memorable opportunity for John to join us on October 23.**



Drawing by: Geof Markovich

## Upper Tennessee River Roundtable Hires New Coordinator...

During our Fall Meeting please come and meet our new Coordinator, Carol Doss. Carol brings vast experience of grant writing, volunteer management and board development to the Roundtable. She graduated from Radford University with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism specializing in public relations and editorial writing. Here are just few of her many accomplishments:

- ❖ Keep Virginia Beautiful, Inc.'s first Melba H. Massie Award of Excellence in recognition of years of service to Wise County.
- ❖ Lonesome Pine Soil and Water Conservation District award for contributions to Guest River Watershed Restoration Project.
- ❖ Tennessee Valley Authority award for outstanding service.
- ❖ Wise County Chamber of Commerce first President's Award for Community Service.
- ❖ Organized comprehensive litter prevention and recycling program, including education, publicity, recycling, cleanup, and law enforcement, worked with volunteer executive committee to assist in meeting goals
- ❖ Secured grants for business waste reduction program, plastic recycling project, tree planting, seed distribution, and statewide education project serving 13 localities utilizing a local educator and customized materials
- ❖ Coordinated process for revision of local littering ordinances and worked on littering complaints with law enforcement agencies.
- ❖ Served as team leader for solid waste, publicity, and education for Guest River Watershed Restoration Project. Instrumental in establishment of outdoor classroom, removal of more than 40 illegal trash dumps, implementation of Guest River Education Days, coordination of teacher workshops, development of special events to collect discarded appliances and household hazardous waste, and more.



**UTRR Coordinator Carol Doss**

### Announcements:

- ❖ Neal Kilgore and his wife Karen are the proud parents of a baby boy. Konnor Wilson Kilgore came into the world on June 18, 2003 at 6lbs.15oz and 19 ½ inches long.
- ❖ There are a few open seats on the Roundtable. If you would like to be considered for one of these seats please contact Don Gowan, UTRR Chair or Carol Doss, UTRR Coordinator.
  - Citizen "At Large"
  - Local Government: (Russell County, Scott County, Smyth County)
  - Local "Grass Roots" watershed groups: Powell River Watershed

Mission Statement: The Mission of the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable is to achieve clean water throughout the watershed with the involvement of citizens in planning, education, coordination, attracting funding and serving as an advocate for our water resources.

**Upper Tennessee River Roundtable, Inc.  
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