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# UPPER TENNESSEE RIVER ROUNDTABLE

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April 2000

## *From the Watershed Manager:*

*Neal Kilgore*

Greetings to you as we roll into the first spring of a new millennium! This is an era of many “firsts” and I’m excited to be part of it. As you probably know by now, we are in the process of establishing Virginia’s first “Roundtable” complete with bylaws, a strategic plan, and a governing body (*i.e.*, Executive Board). Speaking of “firsts,” this is the first time we’ve initiated a follow-up report since the Roundtable meetings began. We hope you find it informative and useful. We would like to hear your comments and suggestions about how to improve it.

Our primary motivation behind providing this update is to help you understand what has happened since our last meeting and what you can expect at the next Roundtable Meeting. From a distance, it may seem like the Roundtable process is moving very slow. From our perspective, it is all we can do to keep up with getting the foundation prepared so the real work can begin (*i.e.*, addressing water quality and quantity in the Clinch, Powell, and Holston Rivers).

Since our first meeting on June 21, 1999, we have:

1. Established an “Ad Hoc” Committee to develop bylaws, mission, and vision
2. Began the development of a Strategic Plan for the Basin
3. Proposed written bylaws to the Roundtable in November
4. Proposed mission and vision statements to Roundtable in November of 1999

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## Quote to Note:

*“Be the change you want to see in the world.”*

- Mahatma Gandhi



## What’s a Roundtable?

By Brian Schmidt, DCR

Picture a group of people sitting at a round table. We cannot pick out any leaders or authority figures because everyone’s seating position is identical to everyone else’s. All faces are toward the center of the group and each person can see and be seen. This round table picture describes the ideal physical setting for an open discussion where no one has authority and everyone can have a say. It’s a situation where good ideas can rise to the top. This describes the philosophy behind the “**roundtable** process”, which is the heart of our organization.

Unfortunately we don’t have a round table big enough for our group, but the philosophy stands. This is a “grass roots” effort. It is inclusive. Everyone is encouraged to come to the gathering and provide input. The bylaws support the **roundtable** process by describing the direction the group wants to take, and by outlining the methods they will use to make their ideas reality. See the description of the Bylaws on page 3.



5. Held an "Organization Coordinating Group" meeting with all agencies interested in sharing their expertise and resources in the Roundtable effort
6. Visited County Boards of Supervisors in the Basin to provide updates and request participation
7. Held a second Roundtable Meeting (fall 1999)

**Since our second meeting on November 18, 1999, we have initiated:**

1. A "Communication's Matrix" to promote understanding of responsibilities between agencies
2. A logo contest in schools throughout the Clinch, Powell, & Holston Rivers (see update on page 7)
3. Five grant proposals (submitted for review)
4. An update to Roundtable meeting attendees
5. Appointments to the Executive Board
6. Revisions to the bylaws as requested by the Roundtable in November of 1999
7. Participated in meetings with TVA to investigate the possibility of a "bi-state partnership"
8. The planning process for our third Roundtable meeting on Thursday, April 27, 2000
9. Hired two Nutrient Management Specialists

Establishing a "Roundtable" is a challenging endeavor, but I wholeheartedly believe it will be worth the effort in the long run. There is room at the "table" for everyone and all issues need to be considered in an open process that promotes involvement from anyone interested. Thank you for your interest. I look forward to seeing you at our next Roundtable Meeting on Thursday, April 27, 2000.



**"Reflections in the Water" (by Neal Kilgore)**

Whenever I happen to be traveling, I find myself taking a closer look at rivers and streams. Occasionally, my mind wanders to a time, maybe 200 years ago, when rivers and streams were quite unlike what we see today. Please allow me a moment or two, to paint a picture on the canvas of your imagination.

Picture your favorite river, then add various shades of green vegetation on every square inch of soil. From the vibrant, shade tolerant plants on the forest floor to the majestic canopy of hardwoods, you see the full spectrum of vegetation typically found in a mature forest. If you see any exposed soil at all, it is from a tree that was uprooted during a recent storm or where wildlife have worn a path to a favorite drinking spot.

Imagine the riparian zone full of hardwood giants with a canopy of leaves so thick that raindrops from even the most intense storms could not make a direct hit on anything in the understory. Wildflowers are interspersed along the forest floor as far as you can see in a host of shapes and colors that challenge your senses and imagination.

Looking into the water, you see hues of blue and green from the reflection of the clear blue sky and the surrounding forest. The riverbed is composed of large rock, turtle-sized cobble, and a gravel substrate. You can often see shadowy images of fish lumbering lazily in the free flowing currents. Other shadows dart so quickly that it seems impossible for fish that large to swim that fast. Still, other fish hush the silence as they surface to prey upon unsuspecting insects in the shallow water.

Kneeling down at the water's edge, you turn over a few rocks to see what else can be discovered. Immediately, a crayfish scoots away quickly in reverse. Mayflies and stoneflies cling to the rock's under side as other unrecognizable critters scurry to find new shelter. No wonder there's lots of fish here, there's lots of aquatic "bugs" for them to feed on!

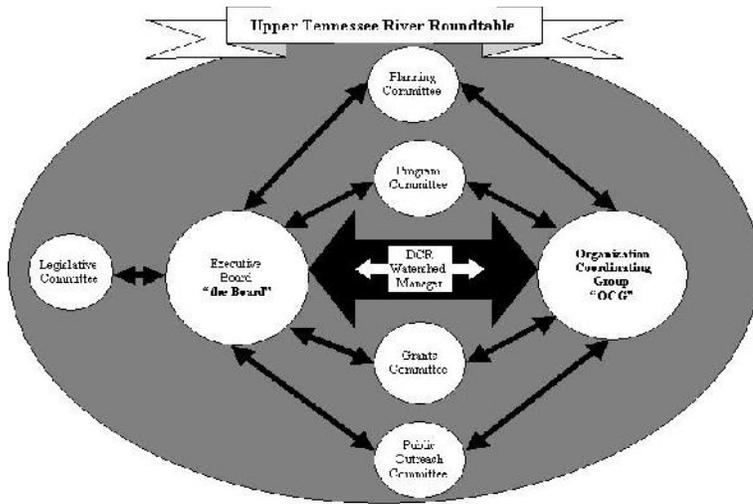
As you continue to investigate the frenzy of activity under the rocks, you notice how clear and cold the water is. It's a simple cause/effect relationship. The water is clear because there's no exposed soil and it's cold because the trees flanking the river nearly form a tunnel to shade the water. The lower temperature means the water holds more oxygen, which enables the river to support large and diverse populations of fish.

Now, back to reality and the year 2000. Compare the river of the early 1800's to today's river with urban sprawl, livestock access, industry, cropland, litter, and logging. Even if we could magically make the water pristine clean, how long would it be until the water was impaired again (assuming today's potential for pollution)? Not very long, I'm afraid.

The key to long term water quality improvements is relating the need for clean water to the people in the watersheds until they develop a "land ethic." The water quality in our rivers and streams today is a *reflection* of the priorities of people that live in adjacent communities. Just as we can enter someone's home and get a feel for the priority they place on keeping their house clean, we can walk along a stream and sense the priority that people place on keeping their streams clean.

If a streambank has exposed soil, is void of trees, or is frequently muddy, that's not natural. As a society, we need to distinguish between what we consider "normal" and what is really "natural." I'm not advocating that we return every stream back to its natural state. However, we need to understand what a natural stream looks like before we can manage our waterways for real improvements.

Is it realistic to think that we can have pristine rivers and streams like we had in the early 1800's? Good question! You tell me what you think is realistic. I think we can accomplish whatever we can clearly visualize. One thing I know is this. It is quite unrealistic for any one person or group to achieve long-term water quality improvements through a solo effort. On the other hand, there's no limit to what we can accomplish *together* if we share the same vision for our rivers and streams. What's your vision? ***What reflections do you want to see in the water?***



**What's in the Bylaws?**

By Brian Schmidt, DCR

The Bylaws state the Name, Vision, Mission, Structure, and Operating Procedures of our group. Here they are:

**Name:** the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable (called the Roundtable)

**Vision:** 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.

**Mission:** 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 in serving as an advocate for our water resources.

**Roundtable:** A gathering of people who have an interest in the water quality of the Upper Tennessee River watershed. Anyone who is attending a Roundtable meeting is considered a member and can vote at that meeting. The Roundtable is open to all, and is the controlling group of this "grass roots" effort. Two major bodies assist the Roundtable with carrying out its chosen mission. They are the Board and the OCG.

**The Board:** The Executive Board (called the Board) carries out the day-to-day business of the Roundtable. It is designed to ensure that all groups with an interest or "stake" in the water quality of the Upper Tennessee River watershed are represented. This smaller group will meet more often than the Roundtable and will take action to carry out the direction given to them by the Roundtable. They will report their actions to the Roundtable at each meeting. Legislators for the region are encouraged to participate as non-voting honorary members of the Board.

**Stakeholder Groups Represented on the Board:**

**Agriculture, Aquatic Resources, Citizen ("At Large"), Coal, Conservation Groups, Education, Environmental Groups, Fishing/Hunting Groups, Forest Industry, Industry, Local Government, Other Recreational Uses, Planning District Commissions, Real Estate Development, Small Business, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Tourism, and local "grass roots" Watershed Groups.**

**The OCG:** The Organization Coordinating Group (called the OCG) is open to any organization at the federal, state, or local level that is willing to provide technical, financial, or other help to improve the water quality in the Upper Tennessee River watershed. This group has the know-how and funds for carrying out the wishes of the Roundtable, and since there are many organizations that contribute, it is important that their efforts are carefully coordinated. The idea behind the OCG is, "We can achieve more by working together."

**Committees:** Most committees serving the Roundtable will only exist for the time required to get their job done, but some jobs are long term. For the long term jobs there are 5 standing committees to serve the Roundtable.

**Standing Committees:**

**Legislative, Grants, Program, Public Outreach, Planning**

**DCR Watershed Manager:** Think about the many stakeholders, and organizations, and programs, and individuals that are in the Roundtable "orchestra". To help this grand group to play well together we need a conductor, someone who is looking at the big picture, and helping everyone to be at the same place on the same sheet of music. Our conductor is the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Watershed Manager. His job is to help everyone to make his or her unique contribution to water quality. Like a conductor who does not play an instrument in the performance, the Watershed Manager does not have a vote, but serves as a coordinator, helping everyone to work together to reach the mission of the roundtable.

**Strategic Plan**

By Juanita Wells, Watershed Planning Facilitator

The Upper Tennessee River is composed of the Clinch, Holston, and Powell Rivers. The basin drains over 2 million acres in 4400 miles of streams. In June of last year, a basin wide coalition was formed, the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable. The Roundtable is dedicated to protecting and repairing our waters. With assistance from New River-Highlands Resource Conservation & Development, Black Diamond Resource Conservation & Development and Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the first project of the Roundtable, to develop a strategic plan focusing on water quality and quantity, is under way. The strategic plan will enable the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable and communities to better understand how we can make a difference. The Roundtable will be exploring for funding to begin implementation of the plan. The Roundtable is a coalition to where future funding can be considered and administered.

To understand what problems exist within the basin, meetings had to be conducted. This process included public meetings in each of the 38 sub-watersheds, civic group meetings, and technical meetings focusing on agency involvement. Over 47 public, civic, and technical meetings have taken place, and over 500 people have provided input for the Strategic Plan.

The Upper Tennessee River Strategic Plan will address issues and concerns of water quality and quantity within the basin. The plan will detail solutions to those problems. During the public input process, 20 broad categories became evident, issues ranging from agriculture and livestock to water supply. Below is a list of the categories to be addressed in the strategic plan:

Agriculture /Livestock	Nutrients
Education	Recreation: Fishing and Wildlife
Endangered Species	Recreation: Tourism -
Erosion and Sedimentation	Relationships
Forestry	Riparian Habitat and Loss
Hazardous Materials and Waste	Stormwater Management
Highways	Straight Pipes/Sewage
Karst	Trash/Litter
Mining	Urban Non Point Source Pollution
Monitoring	Water Supply

The plan has three phases. Phase 1 was the gathering of background information. Phase 2 is the gathering of current conditions. This phase included the process of going to the public, civic groups, and agencies to collect all issues and concerns within the Upper Tennessee River basin. The third phase is the draft and final document, including an executive summary. The Upper Tennessee River Strategic Plan is entering the final phase. The draft strategic plan completed in April.

In the past year, many positive things have occurred. More people are learning about water quality and how they can make a difference. The people are showing us that they care about their environment and their waters. The agencies are working together focusing in one direction. We are working with agencies, organizations, and groups that we have never worked with before. This region is moving forward with enthusiasm and we have only just begun.

# Getting Conservation on the Ground: “The snowball effect”

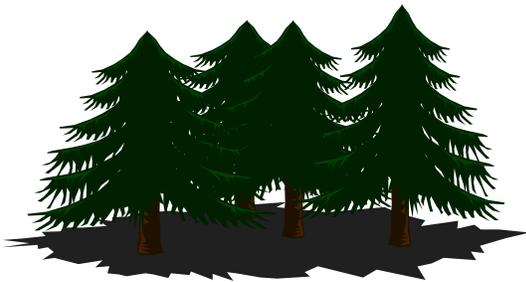
By Tony Pane, DCR

About 2 years ago the Holston River Soil and Water Conservation District successfully applied for a Water Quality Improvement Fund Grant for the Rhea Valley Project in Washington Co. The project focused on grazing land protection with an emphasis on stream bank and riparian buffers.

Green Valley Poultry Farms initially installed 4 watering troughs, approximately 2000 feet of pipeline line and 3500 feet of stream bank protection through the project. They found themselves so pleased with the results that they installed an additional 1500 feet of stream protection and implemented a comprehensive controlled grazing system that required 2 miles of additional fencing, 2 more miles of pipeline and 10 more troughs.

Because of a very successful working relationship with the conservation partners, Holston River SWCD and USDA, it should come as no surprise that Green Valley Poultry Farm was the first to have a potential Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) area evaluated that would create over 40 acres of riparian buffers and karst area protection.

This model of how good conservation project work leads to more best management practice (BMP) installations may be part of the explanation as to the incredible interest in the CREP program in Washington County. Holston River SWCD has a waiting list of about 130 landowners interested in the CREP program which pays for 75% of BMP installations and provides a significant rental rate for land going into riparian buffers, wetland restoration or karst area protection. If one thing leads to another as it has in the past, then in the words of Holston River SWCD employee Wayne Turley, “It all sort of snowballs” there will be even more opportunities for outstanding conservation accomplishments in the future.



There are few best management practices (BMPs) that can match the environmental benefits of establishing a riparian buffer by excluding livestock from the stream with fencing.



If the stream is fenced, alternative watering facilities must be provided. This portable waterer does the job and allows the farmer flexibility in pasture management.

## NATURAL HERITAGE AND WATER QUALITY

By Clairborne Woodall, DCR

The Virginia Department of Conservation Recreation's Natural Heritage Program was created in 1986 to perform a systematic inventory of natural heritage resources (rare species, significant natural communities, and geologic features), to manage and provide information on these resources, and to prioritize, protect, and manage Virginia's system of Natural Area Preserves. The Virginia Division of Natural Heritage and other state Natural Heritage Programs are networked with Association of Biodiversity Information, which maintains an international database that includes information of aquatic species and habitats. Coupled with other agencies' water quality data, this information can be very useful for identifying areas of water quality concern, as well as providing for conservation efforts. Regional staff are available for consultation, including issues concerning riparian restoration, invasive species, and prescribed burning. For more information, contact DCR's Division of Natural Heritage, 217 Governor Street, 3rd Floor, Richmond, VA 23219. 804-786-7951. [www.state.va.us/~dcr/vaher.html](http://www.state.va.us/~dcr/vaher.html).

## Virginia Naturally 2000

Governor Gillmore is calling for Environmental Education to be a unifying theme for 2000 in Virginia. The Challenge:

***To make it easy for every Virginian, young or adult throughout his or her life, to learn about the environment, and translate this into positive action making wise choices so family and community can prosper.***

All Virginia State agencies have been asked to support this initiative. A web site is being established to provide a place where all can communicate, share knowledge and technology, and link programs. The web site is:

**[www. VA.naturally.com](http://www.VA.naturally.com)**

## *April is the Month for Operation Spruce Up*

Operation Spruce Up is a month-long campaign to encourage Virginians to learn about, enjoy, and care for our state's magnificent natural resources. So get into the water, visit a state park or wildlife area. Plan something for you, your group, or your community. It can be educational, recreational, environmental, or any combination. And don't forget to register your efforts with the Operation Spruce-Up Committee. All participants will receive a certificate from Governor Jim Gilmore. Call 1(800) 933-PARK for a registration package.

## Active Watershed Groups

By Neal Kilgore

In the Upper Tennessee River Basin there are 38 subwatersheds. Below is a listing by county of the subwatersheds that have established groups. Eventually, we hope to have an active watershed group in each subwatershed. Most of the groups listed below were formed to “improve water quality.” However, it is becoming more important to form groups to “protect the existing water quality” **BEFORE** it gets to the point where it needs to be improved.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the people serving on these watershed groups. They are the “unsung heroes” that volunteer their time toward an effort of great importance to their communities to serve people that often do not understand or appreciate their contribution. The Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) is only one of many agencies dedicated to the improvement AND protection of water quality. I would like to encourage the people serving in these watershed groups to call on us to assist you in your efforts. We can direct you to potential funding opportunities, educational materials, workshops, and possibly connect you with professionals that specialize in specific water quality issues.

### Washington County

- ◆ Middle Fork Holston Water Quality Committee
- ◆ Beaver Creek Watershed Committee
- ◆ Friends of the South Fork Holston

### Wythe County

- ◆ Middle Fork Holston Water Quality Committee

### Smyth County

- ◆ Friends of the North Fork Holston
- ◆ Middle Fork Holston Water Quality Committee
- ◆ Friends of the South Fork Holston

### Russell County

- ◆ Cedar Creek Watershed Committee
- ◆ Community For Clinch River – Honaker
- ◆ Big Moccasin Watershed Committee
- ◆ Copper Creek Watershed Committee

### Wise County

- ◆ Guest River Group
- ◆ Hands Across The Mountain

### Scott County

- ◆ Partners For Big Stony Creek
- ◆ Big Moccasin Watershed Committee
- ◆ Copper Creek Watershed Committee

### Lee County

- ◆ Wallens Creek Watershed Committee
- ◆ Indian Creek Watershed Action Group
- ◆ Martin Creek Watershed Group
- ◆ Friends of the North Fork Powell
- ◆ Community For Hardy Creek, Powell River

### Tazewell County

- ◆ Friends for Clinch Headwaters



## Nutrient Management

By Shelley Stinnett and Brian Schmidt, DCR

Water quality has become a major concern not only in Southwest Virginia but also worldwide. Excess nutrients in water can lead to increased algae growth. The algae uses up oxygen, which is needed by fish and other aquatic life.

The key to reducing nutrient delivery to the water is management. With the appropriate application rate, timing and handling of soil amendments the amount of nutrient loss can be reduced. Good management of nutrients not only improves water quality but also **CAN SAVE THE OPERATOR MONEY**. Not only agricultural operators benefit from good nutrient management, but also homeowners, gardeners and golf course operators.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) provides help with developing Nutrient management plans. These plans are written on a site-specific basis and identify how plant nutrients can be managed for optimum production and for the protection of water quality. Assistance with developing Nutrient management plans is provided free of charge and is voluntary except in the case of VPA permits.

Farmers who must have a VPA (Virginia Pollution Abatement) permit from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) need a DCR approved nutrient management plan for their operation. These permits are required for confined animal feeding operations having liquid waste and more than 200 dairy cows, 750 swine, or 300 beef cattle (feedlots). According to Virginia State law all farmers that require a VPA permit must apply to DEQ to obtain a permit by July 1, 2000.

DCR has recently hired two part-time Nutrient Management Specialists to assist with nutrient management. **Shelley Stinnett**, who has a Masters Degree in Crop and Soil Environmental Science from VA Tech., is working with **agricultural nutrient management** out of the Abingdon DCR office. She assists farmers with the development of nutrient management plans, manure sampling and pre-sidedress nitrate testing.

**Brian Schmidt**, who also works out of the Abingdon office, assists with **non-agricultural nutrient management**. Brian has 17 years experience with the Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service), and has a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Harvard. He is available to help with appropriate nutrient use for lawn management, golf course management, mine reclamation, construction, gardens, and other non-agricultural applications. Both Shelley and Brian will also assist with developing innovative approaches to using existing nutrients to their best advantage, such as sawdust, compost, chicken litter, etc. Shelley or Brian can be reached at (540) 676-5529.

**WHAT'S YOUR WATERSHED?**

## Urban Programs Update

Phyllis Hinch, Environmental Engineer, DCR

DCR's (Department of Conservation and Recreation) Training and Certification program for Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) has occupied a large portion of our time since January, 2000. In addition to the regularly scheduled Inspector and Plan Reviewer training, there have been classes in Basic ESC and ESC for Inspectors held specifically for Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) personnel in Southwest Virginia.

This is a result of a joint initiative by DCR and VDOT to enhance consistency of VDOT projects and is part of an ongoing effort statewide to obtain certification for VDOT field personnel. Over 200 inspectors, resident and assistant resident engineers and environmental personnel from VDOT's Bristol District have attended this training in Abingdon over the past few months. All personnel who successfully complete these training courses propose to take the Inspector Certification exam on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

As part of the same initiative, a 'Contractor Certification' course was developed in 1999 and administered in several locations across the state. Two of those courses were held in Abingdon in April and December, and an additional eight courses are scheduled for April, 2000, two of which will be held in Southwest Virginia. Each of these classes will accommodate a minimum of 100 people.

On another note, due to a recent vacancy in the New River Watershed Office, those of us in the surrounding offices have found our coverage areas temporarily adjusted to accommodate the vacancy. I am currently anticipating working with several additional areas, including Wythe, Carroll, Grayson, Pulaski and Floyd counties, so, additional state agency projects can be expected in the near future. We hope to see this vacancy filled soon, along with two others that were vacated in the recent months. Along with these positions, Urban Programs plans to add two additional field positions soon which will work primarily with local compliance issues across the state.



Land disturbing activity with erosion control measures in place.

TMDL literally stands for TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD, which means the greatest amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive without violating water quality standards. A stream segment can be in one of three TMDL stages:

- 1) TMDL listed: The stream segment is on the 303(d) list, that is, its been identified as impaired and needs a TMDL for the pollutant that has impaired the stream segment.
- 2) TMDL Study: The stream segment is under study to develop a total maximum daily load.
- 3) TMDL Implementation: The stream segment has an approved TMDL and all activities on the stream must be geared towards meeting the total maximum daily loading value.

All three stages of the TMDL process provide for public input. The success for cleaning up waters of the state is directly related to public involvement and public commitment. Therefore, it is important that you understand what TMDLs are.

### THE TMDL LIST

Streams become part of the Clean Water Act 303(d) TMDL list, when monitoring data indicates that there are parameters not meeting the Virginia Water Quality Standards. Standards describe, or limit, the amount of a pollutant that can be in the water and still have aquatic life, fishing, shellfish, swimming and drinking water uses supported. Common pollutants are fecal coliform bacteria, sediment, and nutrients.

### THE TMDL STUDY

Virginia must develop a TMDL for all of the streams listed on the 303(d) TMDL list. This is accomplished through a TMDL study. There are three phases to the TMDL study. First, the watershed is characterized by identifying stream flows and channel shape, land uses, soil types, and pollutant sources. Secondly, pollutant loads from both point and nonpoint sources are determined either by collecting water samples or by land use estimates. Then, pollutant load reductions are allocated to each source so that the water quality standard is met. This is determined by trial and error. The point source loads, nonpoint source loads and a safety factor are added together and compared to the water quality standard. Various reduction combinations are assigned to the sources, until the sum does not violate the water quality standard. At this point, the Total Maximum Daily Loading in the stream segment is defined, and the study is complete. The TMDL study must be reviewed and approved by EPA and adopted by the Virginia Water Control Board.

### TMDL IMPLEMENTATION

Virginia State regulation requires that an implementation plan be developed for each TMDL. The implementation plan is the method of achieving the total maximum daily load so that the stream segment will meet Virginia Water Quality Standards. Point sources are addressed by DEQ, and nonpoint sources are addressed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

### TMDL STATUS IN UPPER TENNESSEE RIVER BASIN

The first TMDL study in the Upper Tennessee River was for Hutton, Hall, Byers, and Cedar Creeks, four adjacent tributaries of the Middle Fork of the Holston River. These creeks violated the fecal coliform bacteria water quality standard. A TMDL study has been completed and the comment period for the draft TMDL ended April 11, 2000.

There are about twenty-five impaired stream segments identified in the Upper Tennessee River Basin. As water quality testing continues there is potential for the identification of more impaired stream segments. If you have any questions about TMDLs please contact Nancy Norton at DEQ at telephone number (540) 676-4807 or email address [ntnorton@deq.state.va.us](mailto:ntnorton@deq.state.va.us). If you have questions about the water quality data that DEQ uses to assess the streams in the Upper Tennessee River Basin contact Teresa Frazier at (540) 676-4805.

We would like to acknowledge the following persons for their support of the Upper Tennessee Roundtable: Dr. George Constantz, Canaan Valley Institute, Blaine Delaney, Gary Boring, The Honorable David G. Brickley, Jack E. Frye, Joe Elton (State Parks), Matt Bley, Mike Overstreet (DEQ), TVA, Lois Boggs, The "Ad Hoc" Committee.

### Directions to the SWVA 4-H Center

**From Interstate 81:** Take Exit 19 off Interstate 81. Go approximately ¾ mile west toward Abingdon on Route 11. Turn right onto Hillman Highway just after the Lutheran Church and just before the bridge (See "Home Stretch").

**From Route 19:** From Hansonville and points North of Abingdon, follow Route 19 South to Abingdon. At the intersection of Main Street (Route 11) and Route 19, turn left and proceed east on Route 11. Go through the next 6 traffic lights until you cross over the bridge. Turn left on Hillman Highway just after you cross the bridge (see "Home Stretch").

**Home Stretch:** Proceed 1.5 miles on Hillman Highway and turn right into the first entrance of the 4-H Center. The meeting is in the Dickenson Conference Center (brick building).

## LOGO CONTEST

The Roundtable is seeking a logo to put on its letterhead, envelopes, etc., and is sponsoring a LOGO CONTEST (with Virginia State Parks) for students enrolled in grades 6 through 12, during the 1999-2000 school year. Students whose designs are judged to be the best will be invited to a banquet honoring the finalists on April 27<sup>th</sup>. A **\$200 savings bond** will be presented to the student with the overall best design (donated by the Black Diamond RC&D). Second prize will be use of a cabin at Hungry Mother State Park for a weekend (\$120 value). The third place prize will be free camping for a weekend at Natural Tunnel State Park (\$30 value). The weekend passes for cabin and campground privileges were donated by the Virginia Division of State Parks.

Entry in the contest must be made **NO LATER THAN APRIL 19, 2000**. For further information please call Neal Kilgore at (540) 676-5529 or Juanita Wells at (540) 889-4180.

## Adopt-A-Stream

Do you care about Virginia's waterways? (We know you do!) You can take action to make our streams a better place for everyone, **AND** Virginia's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) can help you! Adopting a stream is simple – and stream cleanup projects are valuable learning experiences (and fun!). Participating groups receive heavy-duty trash bags, disposable gloves, orange safety vests and an 18-inch Adopt-A-Stream sign. To "Adopt-A-Stream" contact your local DCR office at (540) 676-5529.



## The Nature Conservancy Lists the Upper Clinch River as the Number One Hotspot in the U.S.

In the mist-shrouded Appalachian Mountains of southwest Virginia, pristine streams meander amidst ridges and valleys to form the Clinch and Powell rivers, the only ecologically intact headwaters of the Tennessee River system. The upper Clinch River watershed of Virginia and northeastern Tennessee is the number one hotspot in the United States for imperiled aquatic species, sustaining 31 varieties of rare mussels (a collection unmatched anywhere in the world) and 17 rare fish species. Considering as well the rare plants, mammals, and birds that thrive here, 30 species in all are federally listed as threatened or endangered.

Notwithstanding this natural abundance, the Clinch watershed has suffered deep ecological losses. Where once there were 60 kinds of mussels, about 40 now remain. A history of natural resource exploitation has damaged the environment, poisoning stretches of some rivers. Declining water quality—a legacy of coal mining and unwise agricultural practices—is the primary threat to the rivers today.

Beginning in 1990, The Nature Conservancy targeted the watersheds of the Clinch and Powell rivers as part of an ambitious ecosystem conservation program called "Last Great Places: An Alliance for People and the Environment." A joint project of the Virginia and Tennessee chapters of the Conservancy, the Clinch Valley Program has five staff working from field offices in Abingdon, Va., and Hancock County, Tennessee. The Conservancy owns six preserves in the Clinch Valley --- Fletcher Ford, The Cedars, Unthanks Cave, and Beech Grove Cliff in Lee County, Va., Pendleton Island and Gray's Island in Scott County, Va., and Powell River Preserve in Claiborne Co., Tenn. We have also assisted the Va. Dept of Conservation and Recreation in protecting the Pinnacle Natural Area Preserve in Russell County, Va..

The Conservancy's goals in the Clinch Valley are ambitious: ensuring permanent protection for the globally significant mussel shoals, working with landowners to improve farming, forestry, and mining practices, and substantially increasing the number of landowner agreements and critical areas under Conservancy management.

For more information about the Nature Conservancy efforts contact **Bill Kittrell at (540)676-2209**.

# Upper Tennessee River Roundtable

## Southwest Virginia 4-H Center Dickenson Conference Center April 27, 2000 DRAFT AGENDA

- 1:30 PM Registration
- 2:00 Welcome/Overview: Neal Kilgore, Watershed Manager  
(Upper TN & Big Sandy Rivers)
- 2:10 Elected Official(s)
- 2:30 DCR Representative and/or NRCS Representative
- 2:50 Strategic Planning Update - Juanita Wells
- 3:05 Roundtable Update – Neal Kilgore  
Executive Board, Standing Committees, Organization Coordinating Group
- 3:20 TMDL Update – Charlie Martin or David Lazarus
- 3:35 BREAK
- 3:50 “Ad Hoc” Committee Report - Lois Boggs, U.S. Forest Service (Chair)
- 4:00 Overview of Planning Process – Blaine Delaney
- 4:10 Facilitated Planning Session – Steve Talley (Canaan Valley Institute)  
Finalize Mission, Vision, & Bylaws
- 4:25 Prioritizing Strategic Issues
- 5:25 Schedule Next Meeting (Set Date, Time, & Location)
- 5:30 AWARDS BANQUET 2000
 

Erosion & Sediment Control	Media Award
Outstanding County Supervisor	Outstanding Director Award
Logo Contest Award	OCG Award
Outstanding SWCD Award	Appreciation Award
- 6:45 Closing Comments & Adjourn

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**REGISTRATION FORM:**

Please RSVP by 10 AM on April 20, 2000 by sending your registration form to DCR-Abingdon Regional Office, 252 West Main Street, Suite 3, Abingdon, VA 24210. Checks should be made payable to the Black Diamond RC&D. You may also fax your registration form to (540) 676-5527 or phone in your information at (540) 676-5529.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Attending Banquet (Yes or No)? \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting Scholarship (Yes or No)? \_\_\_\_\_ (See note on cover memo)

**\*IMPORTANT!** We must confirm the number of meals with the Southwest Virginia 4-H Center by April 20, 2000. Therefore, we must receive your faxed or mailed registration form (or your phone call) by 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 20, 2000. We can accommodate receiving your check after April 20, 2000, but no later than April 27, 2000 at the registration desk.