



Upper Tennessee River Roundtable, Inc. Newsletter

Spring 2006

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June 22 Semi-Annual Meeting to feature talks on rain gardens, barrels, power plant site, Assign-A-Highway

Three topics will be highlighted at the Spring Semi-Annual Roundtable meeting Thursday, June 22, at White's Mill in Abingdon. Registration begins at 5:15 p.m., with dinner at 6 p.m.

Two options are available for dinner: barbecue sandwich, potato salad, cole slaw and dessert for \$10 or sausage dog and trimmings for \$5. A portion of the proceeds of

the sale of each meal will be kept by the Roundtable for future funding needs.

Please notify the Roundtable office by June 20 if you are planning to attend the dinner. You may pay in advance or at the mill. Speakers for the occasion will focus on the Virginia Environmental Endowment grant results for rain barrel and rain garden workshops. The Assign-A-Highway

Program will be featured as well as a talk about the proposed Dominion Power Plant site in St. Paul in Wise County. For more information, call 276-628-1600.



Letter from the Roundtable Chair



Dear Friends,

The Roundtable is experiencing quite a busy time, with an expanded staff, additional grants and plenty of fundraising work to do. We welcome your input and your assistance with projects and fundraising.

We've raised nearly \$10,000 toward our summer goal of

\$25,000. We need to continue to raise funds to sustain the Roundtable when the EPA grant ends. If you'd like to get more involved with fundraising or other efforts, please contact the staff or the board.

As we prepare for the Spring Roundtable Semi-Annual Meeting, I'd like to issue a special invitation to you. I'm very pleased that

White's Mill will be hosting our dinner this year, set for Thursday, June 22. Registration will begin at 5:15, with dinner to be served at 6 p.m. Be sure to arrive early to participate in our silent auction. If you have an item to donate, please notify the Roundtable office at 276-628-1600. See you soon.

George Price

Results show success of variety of Roundtable projects

By Carol W. Doss, Coordinator

There's never a slow season at the new Roundtable office where we are tackling projects at full speed. In April lots of partners helped us complete a successful Litter Summit with more than 140 participating. We finished the rain barrel workshops, with

141 people making 135 barrels, and completed the environmental emergency response conferences with 83 trained. The rain garden at St. Paul High School is done and lots of other work is underway. In February, we welcomed a new Office of Surface Mining Volun-

teers In Service To America worker, Kristin Costanzo, who moved here from Charlottesville, just as Shane Barton, our other OSM/VISTA did last year. Shane is staying with us another year. This summer we also welcomed Chris Green, an OSM intern.



Second from left, Sue Smith of Keep America Beautiful talks with Roundtable Coordinator Carol Doss, far left, new Assign-A-Highway Coordinator Bobby Justus and new OSM/VISTA Kristin Costanzo at judges' dinner. At far right, Blaine Delaney of Black Diamond RC&D is beside Greg Cross, Wise County Litter Control, at Litter Summit in St. Paul.

Photos by Jim Smith & Carol Doss



Monitoring program continues to expand

By Martha Chapman, Conservation Assistant

So far, 2006 has been a very exciting year for the Roundtable's Citizen Monitoring Program. In December of 2005, the Roundtable received funding from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Citizen Monitoring Grant program. With these funds, we were able to purchase supplies and put together 10 Save-Our-Streams (SOS) monitoring kits, as well as purchase 10 Coliscan® Easy Gel Bacteria monitoring kits.

Ten sites throughout the Clinch and Powell watersheds were selected for bacteria and SOS monitoring. Monitoring kits have been distributed to Dante Lives On!, Clinch Valley Soil and Water Conservation District, Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Team Estonsa at St. Paul High School. Currently, I have completed monitoring and training sessions in seven of those 10 watersheds.

The SOS method of water quality monitoring evaluates the biological community of a stream and uses the

existence of benthic macroinvertebrates to measure water quality. These benthic macroinvertebrates, or bugs, live in the bottom of streams and are good short-term indicators of water quality because they differ in sensitivity to pollution.

These bugs are somewhat immobile and cannot avoid pollution events or other forms of stress that may be overlooked by other methods of monitoring.

This expansion of the Roundta-

ble's Citizen Monitoring Program is part of our EPA Targeted Watershed Grant. Throughout the rest of the EPA grant period, I will be conducting an SOS and bacteria monitoring training session in one county per month. Certification sessions for SOS monitoring will be offered frequently.

If you are interested in participating in the Citizen Monitoring Program, please contact me at (276) 628-1600.



Martha worked with these Emory and Henry College students who learned Save Our Streams monitoring as part of a class. Volunteers are still needed for this component of the EPA Grant. To volunteer call 276-628-1600.

Photo by Carol Doss

Acid Mine Drainage tie dying popular at local event

By Chris Green, OSM Intern

Children were entranced by the Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) tie dying activity sponsored by the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable Saturday, June 3, at Clinch River Days in St. Paul. Many children opted to stay and watch the entire process rather than return later to collect their finished T-shirts.

The Roundtable's tie-dying activity attracted people of all ages, many of whom had not previously heard of AMD.

Office of Surface Mining Volunteers in Service To America (VISTA) workers and interns spent time talking to parents about Acid Mine Drainage and other water quality issues in the Upper Tennessee River Watershed in Virginia.

Acid Mine Drainage results from abandoned coal mine sites. When AMD comes in contact with water it lowers the pH, making the water more acidic, and often killing fishes

and other aquatic wildlife.

OSM and the Roundtable are participating in various methods of AMD treatments to improve water quality in affected rivers and streams.



Chris Green, intern for the Roundtable through the Office of Surface Mining, prepares the iron oxide for tie dying. The iron oxide was extracted from a stream with Acid Mine Drainage. Chris is wearing a shirt he tie dyed using the iron oxide.

Photo by Carol Doss

New Assign-A-Highway Coordinator promotes program

By Bobby Justus

As the new Regional and State Assign-A-Highway Coordinator under the Roundtable, I've approached localities in 15 Planning District Commissions in Virginia since April 10. Of those 15, I've made five presentations so far. Five new localities have joined the program.

The Assign-A-Highway Program utilizes criminal probationers to pick

up litter along roadsides on a scheduled basis. Assign-A-Highway is very organized, is usually maintained by one person, and has the judicial support needed for its success.

The probationers are assigned to equal sections of highway and are indirectly supervised by a Litter Control Officer. The Litter

Control Officer works in conjunction with numerous groups to maintain the level of excellence of the program.

Other than the locality meetings, I have attended several other meetings where litter is high on the agenda and discussed the Assign-A-Highway Program during these gatherings. For more information about Assign-A-Highway, please call me at the Roundtable office.

OSM Intern creates grant applications, news releases, website

By Chris Green, OSM Intern

Several grant applications are in the works for future funding for the Roundtable.

I recently completed a Waste Management Charitable Giving application. The proposal requests funding for 54 Wildlife Center of Virginia wildlife assembly programs, which would be completed during the 2006-2007 school year. It's estimated that the Wildlife Center assembly programs would reach 16,000 students,

in addition to teachers and administrators.

Each show would feature live animals that have been harmed by pollution such that they are no longer able to live in the wild. Learning objectives would help meet Virginia's Standards of Learning.

The Wildlife Center of Virginia rehabilitates injured animals for eventual release into the wild. Those

animals that are unable to return to the wild are used for the Wildlife Center's educational component.

Other prospective grant applications that I will be focusing on this summer include Norfolk Southern and several other grant programs. In addition to the preparation of grant applications, I'll also be organizing fundraising events, redesigning the Roundtable's website, and writing press releases about various events.

OSM/VISTA works on storm water management projects

By Shane Barton, OSM/VISTA

Working on behalf of the Town of Cedar Bluff, OSM/VISTA Shane Barton secured a \$52,800 grant from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. This grant was awarded through the Water Quality Improvement Fund mandated by the Virginia Water Quality Improvement Act.

The grant requires a dollar for dollar match which Shane is securing through promised in-kind contributions from agencies and groups. The project itself is designed to not only address storm water issues in town, but also to provide demonstration sites to be used as an education tool for other regional localities trying to address these issues in their own communities.

The project is known as the Cedar Bluff Storm Water Assessment and Bio-retention Retrofit (SABR) project. The money will be used to de-

velop and implement Low Impact Development (LID) principles. The assessment of storm water discharges will lead to them being inventoried and retrofitted with rain gardens, vegetated swales and vegetated buffers. These actions are being taken to alleviate storm water discharges that are currently impacting many threat-

ened and endangered species including the Tan Riffleshell mussel whose last reproducing population in the world is found in the Town of Cedar Bluff. The project will be started later this summer and completed in one year.

Shane has also been assisting with rain barrel workshops in the region.



Shane Barton assists a member of the Master Gardeners in making a rain barrel at a Roundtable workshop held at White's Mill in May.

Photo by Carol Doss



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