

The Tributary

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2010 Annual Meeting: 21 April 2010 7:00 pm "Protection of Buckhannon River Water Resources"

This year our annual meeting will feature a panel discussion by three experts on water safety. As you well know, the Buckhannon River is the source of drinking water for the over 20,000 residents in our watershed. Understanding the protection that is in place to safeguard our water supply, as well as how we protect the upstream sources of water, is of great importance to our residents. Please come to the open meeting, renew your membership, and join us for a discussion of water resources important to Buckhannon River watershed residents! A question and answer period will follow the main meeting.

The meeting will be held in the Upshur County Commissioners' Room, top floor of the Courthouse Annex, Buckhannon, WV. For directions please call the BRWA.

**JOIN OR RENEW
YOUR BRWA
MEMBERSHIP
TODAY!**

Guest Speakers:

John Northeimer, Geologist, Surface Water Assessment Program, Office of Environmental Health Services, WV Bureau for Public Health.

Craig R. Cobb, PE, Supervising District Engineer, Environmental Engineering Division, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources/Bureau of Public Health.

Tom Landis, Chief Operator, Buckhannon Water Department.

2009 Strawberry Festival Photo Contest Winner

"Rockin' River", Frank Eskew, 3rd place winner, Adult category.
Location: below Bean's Mill. Photo provided courtesy of Mr. Eskew.

2009 Strawberry Festival Photo Contest Winner

"Beans Mill" photo by Dylan Mills. Honorable mention, youth category.
Photo provided courtesy of Mr Mills.



www.buckhannonriver.org

Updates on research, projects, and activities within the Watershed
Check it out!

New Logo!

WVWC graphic arts student Ryan Carpentier (WVWC BFA, 2009) designed this new logo for us. It features two canoeists, an angler catching a fish (maybe the old trout logo!) and of course the beautiful green mountains. We hope you enjoy it!



Moving forward at Smooth Rock Lick

Photos by G. Paul Richter

Construction is scheduled to begin this spring (April 2010). WVU's Brady Gutta and Alpha Associates engineer Steve Buchanan have worked diligently to prepare engineering plans for a series of settling ponds to process the acid mine drainage originating in upper Smooth Rock Lick (SRL).

As you may be aware, acid mine drainage in this stream has resulted in very low numbers of invertebrate species (particularly acid-intolerant species) and also fish. With the restoration of Smooth Rock Lick (sites 1, 2, and possibly 3) we will eliminate a major source of acid mine drainage and move towards recovering the fish and invertebrate populations in years to come. Students from WV Wesleyan College (WVWC) have collected water, invertebrate, and fish samples from Smooth Rock Lick where it meets with the Buckhannon River, just above Alexander. There were 14 families of invertebrates collected in October, 2009; the majority of individuals represented acid-tolerant species. A scant 8 fish were collected by the WV DNR (all

creek chubs, but no juveniles).

Ongoing research projects at WVWC include monitoring water quality for pH, iron, selenium, aluminum, as well as chlorine and other ions.

WVWC professors in the departments of Biology and Environmental Science and Chemistry are working together with undergraduate students to address the water chemistry issues at SRL. We intend to chronicle the project here in the Tributary as well as at BuckhannonRiver.org. Stay tuned!



Acid outfall at SRL.



Brady Gutta (far right) speaks to engineers about SRL.

Buckhannon River Watershed Association

Acting Board Chairperson:
D. Gasper

Board Members:
K. Bjorgo-Thorne
R. Calkins
K. Conde
T. Hackett
T. Landis
J. Mitchell
G. Paul Richter

Oh No! Didymo!

Photo and text by WV DNR

The invasive algae known as Didymo (or rock snot) has been found in the Elk River in the Webster Springs area following reports from anglers that heavy algal mats were seen in the Elk River. DNR staff collected samples from three locations near Webster Springs. The samples were sent to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for confirmation. All three samples contained Didymo.

Didymo is a common name for *Didymosphenia geminata*, a freshwater diatom species that can form extensive mats on stream beds. The thick mats can smother native algae and aquatic insects, and make fishing very difficult. These thick mats appear slimy, but feel more like cotton or wool fabric. The algal mats are also called "rock snot" and can be white, yellow or brown in color. The

algae form stalks that attach to

rocks. While the algae eventually die and break off, the stalks persist and may impact stream habitats and aquatic organisms for weeks or months.

Didymo is native to the northern latitudes of North America, Europe and Asia. Its range has expanded and it now can be found in rivers in the western United States and more recently in Maryland, New York, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Vermont. It has also been found in three western Virginia rivers (Jackson, Pound and Smith).



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BRWA Recognized at Watershed Appreciation Day

Once again our organization was recognized at the WVWN's annual Watershed Celebration Day, held November 19, 2009 at Blackwater Falls State Park. Pictured at right are G. Paul Richter and Don Gasper holding the certificate for "Outreach and Education", which was shared with Plateau Action Network of Fayette County, and Sleepy Creek Watershed Association of Morgan County.

Over 100 volunteers attended the event and were given awards for their work to create partners, to implement projects, to educate their communities and to monitor water quality to determine project success. "We host this event to show our gratitude for the many hours volunteers give to improving West Virginia's streams and rivers" said Jami Thompson, Manager, WV Watershed Resource Center. The highest honor went to the **Coal River Group as the 2009 Watershed Association of the Year**. The group received a \$5,000 cash award donated by the Dominion Foundation. The Division of highways also provided highway signs designating the watershed association as the watershed of the year.

New Watershed Association of the Year went to Meadow River Watershed Association, Greenbrier County and Potomac Valley CommuniTree Chapter, Hardy County. The **Guiding Light** award went to Bill Thorne of Monongalia County.

~From the WVWN website (www.wvca.us/wvwn)



G. P. Richter (l) and D. Gasper (r)

Upshur County 5th Grade Students tour the Water Plant

In October 2009 all Upshur County 5th grade students (approximately 280) visited the City of Buckhannon's Water Treatment Facility

located on Wood Street. Upon arrival students were given an overview of the entire water treatment process. The Buckhannon River as a source water supply and the impoundment storage capacity were discussed. Conventional surface water treatment practices and the disinfection processes were explained as the students walked around the treatment basins. Students also visited the filtering stations and the water meter repair shop. In the Operator Control room students learned how water quality tests are performed both before and after chemicals are added to treat the water. At the end of the tour

students were provided a drink - and the importance of water conservation and the prevention of water pollution, both surface and ground waters, were emphasized.

Handouts were provided to the students as they loaded the bus for the return trip to school. The handouts consisted of a "water maze" that showed how water travels from a water source to a treatment facility, through a distribution system and to their homes, and a "word search" puzzle that used words relevant to important safe drinking water issues. Feedback from classroom teachers as well as the students was positive. ~Contributed by Tom Landis



Didymo (Continued from page 2.)

How can you prevent the spread of Didymo? There are four steps you can take:

CHECK: Before leaving the river, look for strands of algae on your equipment. Remove them and leave them on site.

CLEAN: Choose a method that will not harm your equipment. Soak items for one minute in a 2% bleach solution (1 cup of bleach mixed with 3 gallons of water) or a 5% solution of salt, antiseptic hand cleaner or dishwashing detergent (2.5 cups mixed with 3 gallons of water). Scrub or spray larger items such as watercraft with the same solution, ensuring surface contact for at least one minute.

DRY: If cleaning is not practical, allow all items that came in contact with the water to completely dry then keep them dry for another 48 hours. Freezing is also effective.

LEAVE: Fish, plants, rocks and vegetation should not be moved between waterways.

What should you do if you think you have found Didymo? Contact the DNR fisheries biologist at the nearest district office to report possible Didymo outbreaks. WV DNR Office at French Creek: 304-(304) 924-6211 or the Elkins Operations Center at 304-637-0245. For more information go to: <http://www.wvdnr.gov/Fishing/didymo.shtml>.