



NEW RIVER WATERSHED ROUNDTABLE QUARTERLY MEETING

New River Valley Business Center | New River Room
January 29, 2020 | 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees: Bob Popp, Leigh-Anne Krometis, Suzanne Joyner, Steve Rapp, Cathy Hanks, Josh Nease, Brad Buchanan, Ralph Robertson, Anthony Akers, Laura Walters, Pete Jackson, , Catherine Cotrupi, Lara Nagle, Katelyn Kast, Laurie Buchwald, Bill Long, John Burke, Patricia Colatosti, George Santucci, Paul Moody, Michael Harvey, Steve Knowles, Kevin Byrd, Nicole Hersch, Larry Willis, John White, Lucy Baker, Terri Morris, Bill Oak, Liam O’Brien, Karen Kolvaka, Brandon Burkey, Neal Thompson, Jessica Taylor, Ann Goette, Charlie Mullins, Michelle Brown

2. Doodle Dust Dilemma FOPC, NRC, VT BSE

- Doodle dust is a manufacturing byproduct produced between 1904 and 1968 in the Town of Pulaski. The EPA reports around 45,500 tons of slag were produced. This slag was sold as fill dirt and can be found throughout Pulaski. In 1983 significant levels of compounds in soil and water levels were found including: lead, selenium, copper, zinc, arsenic and chromium. In the late 80s the EPA capped a portion of the soil containing these levels on the banks of Peaks Creek, just downstream of downtown. This cap is eroding and doodle dust is being released into Peak Creek, particularly during high water events. Friends of Peak Creek, Friends of Claytor Lake, Virginia Tech’s Bio-Systems Engineering Department, Town of Pulaski, Pulaski County Board of Supervisors, Silver Jackets and New River Conservancy are working together to highlight and resolve the issue.
- Learn more at the storymap [here](#).

3. ReNew the New All

- Each locality will set their own date. However, it looks like August 30th, 2020 will work for many partners.

M	T	W	TH	F	S	Su
24 <i>VT starts RadU starts</i>	25	26	27	28	29 <i>ReNew the New</i>	30
31	1	2	3	4	5 <i>Home</i>	6
7 <i>Labor Day</i>	8	9	10	11	12 <i>Home</i>	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 <i>Away</i>	20

4. Spring Clean-ups All

- Virginia Tech, The Big Plant 2020, February 29th, [register](#)
- Giles, Ramps in Roads, March 28th, meet at Eastern Elementary, bused to 4 sites.
- VT Big Event, April 4th, [register](#) a project site or volunteer
- Town of Christiansburg, April 11th, 10 am to noon, Diamond Hills Conservation Area
- Radford University, Household Hazardous Waste Event, April 11th, 9 am to 2 pm
- Montgomery Co, Broomin' n Bloomin', April 25th
- Friends of Peak Creek, April 25th, weather date, May 2nd
- Friends of Claytor Lake, TBD

5. Virginia Tech, Philosophy of the Environmental Conservation Dr. Karen Kolvaka

- Dr. Kolvaka is looking to connect students with environmental conservation service learning and educational events in the region. If you would like student support for an event reach out at kkovaka@vt.edu

6. Watershed Stories Project Dr. Jessica Taylor

- Dr. Taylor will work with students from Dr. Kolvaka's course to train them in the art of capturing oral histories. Students will then interview folks from around the region to capture their relationship with local water sources. Audio and video for these stories will go on the media page of the Watershed Roundtable Website.

7. New River Water Trail Mileage Markers.....Giles County ReNew Committee

- Stencil Vendor:
- Mile Marker support: Contact Nicole Hersch

Affordable Decals
 Cathy Dowdy, 540.921.7329,
cdowdy@pemt.net,
 2733 Virginia Ave, Narrows, VA

Version 2: Vertical



Version 1: Horizontal



- Giles has their stencils ready and is waiting for warmer weather to implement.
- Directions to add boat launches into google maps:
<https://www.businessinsider.com/how-to-add-location-in-google-maps>

8. POWER Grant Kevin/Nicole

- Appalachian Regional Commission POWER Grant funds are for targeted investment for economic growth in coal-impacted communities in Appalachia. The Commission is looking to apply for funds to enhance the NRWT to improve regional talent attraction and retention and quality of life amenities for the New River Valley. The grant requires a 50/50 match. We will be reaching out to potential partners over the next few weeks.

9. Systems Thinking Workshop Kevin/Nicole

- Workshop was sponsored by the NRV Livability Initiative Leadership Team. The goal of the Watershed Roundtable’s participation in the event was to gather area leaders and discuss how to transition from an education network to an action network. Moving forward we will work to:
 - i. Expand the Water Watcher Program, coordinate water quality monitoring locations around the region, test additional sites, train additional monitors
 - ii. Promote Watershed BMP installation, specifically Riparian Vegetation Workshops and Tree Plantings
 - iii. Create Healthy Watershed Ordinances, support MS4 programs and localities in promoting healthy watershed development practices
 - iv. Expand membership and sponsorship of the Watershed Roundtable
 - v. Increase the connection between watershed stewardship and river recreation through the New River Water Trail and clean river initiatives, such as ReNew the New.

10. New River Water Watchers Report..... Suzanne Joyner (NRC)

- In general, most measurements were in the normal range. The pH values tended to be higher, due to karst. Dissolved Oxygen values were in an optimal range for fish habitat. Turbidity was generally low, except after major rain events. The only anomalies were detected in the bacterial (E.coli) counts. While most sites had occasional spikes in the bacterial counts, usually in the summer, two sites had consistently higher than normal levels: Upper Stony Creek and an unnamed tributary of Tom’s Creek.
- E. Coli is the most pervasive impairment in the watershed, although we have seen some improvement as funds have been available to implement agricultural best management practices across the region.
- There is an interest to work with DEQ on their testing protocols which may ultimately help to de-list some local streams, particularly the Little River. The protocol requires weekly sampling for nine weeks straight.

11. Water Quality Monitoring..... Kevin/George

- The Commission has been working to identify all of the groups performing water quality monitoring in the area to aid in the selection of new monitoring sites, as well as identify and eliminate overlap in existing testing sites. Because we were short on time, we have tabled this conversation for the next meeting.
- Please find a map of known testing sites attached.
- New River Conservancy is hosting a water quality re-cert in March and is hoping to identify new sites and new volunteers before then.

12. Report Out All

- Upcoming Events (Continue to email Nicole@nrvc.org with event details)
 - Water Quality Monitoring Training Date, TBD

- Riparian vegetation planting workshop..... Date, TBD
- Karst Workshop April 8 & 9
- Plant SWVA Natives Campaign Nicole
 - The Commission pursued a grant to bring the Plant VA Natives campaign to SWVA. The campaign encourages homeowners, landscape companies, and wholesale and retail nurseries to utilize native plants more often through the development and printing of a 70-page full-color regional native plant guide, demonstration gardens, website, etc. The campaign intends to highlight the water quality benefits of conservation landscaping practices.
- Watershed Roundtable Website
 - The new website will have a self-reporting clean-ups page—drop a pin and fill in a metrics form to be tallied in region-wide efforts. The new website is on track to be live before spring clean-ups.

2020 Meeting Dates

January 29th, 2020

April 29th, 2020

July 29th, 2020

September 30th, 2020