

Waterway Views

Summer 2006

"Crystal Clear it Starts— Right Here — Our Water"

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Haywood Waterways Association, Inc.

Planning for the Future, Planning for Success

The HWA Board of Directors began a strategic planning process with a "self assessment" retreat in September 2004. We used the workbook "Benchmarking Your Organization's Development" to assess our strengths and weaknesses and evaluate our organizational management. Two areas of concern that could affect the sustainability of HWA became immediately evident. HWA has historically been heavily dependent upon grants for its operating income. Loss of a major grant could create a serious financial crisis and result in the loss of key staff. Secondly, a very small group of people was responsible for much of our work. Loss of a few critical members or staff could also cause serious problems. If HWA was to remain successful, the Board needed to develop and implement a long-range management plan.

A strategic plan was needed, but we needed help creating it. HWA received a grant from the Community Foundation of Western NC to help underwrite the cost for a planning consultant.

We chose the Institute for Conservation Leadership. They understood small conservation organizations like HWA, our management needs and were qualified to lead us through the strategic planning process. They also provided additional financial assistance through the Mott Foundation. The Institute and HWA share common interests in their missions and the Institute demonstrated a genuine interest in seeing HWA prosper.

We began the consultation process with a list of specific needs and objectives. Most of our major objectives were identified during the first Board retreat; however some were refined as we developed the strategic plan. The Board and staff knew we needed a funding strategy that would diversify our revenue sources and we wanted to begin building a reserve account for those rainy days that inevitably

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

HWA has undergone a fundraising campaign to ensure its continued existence. One of the first changes identified was a need to increase our membership rates (see the back page). Additional fundraising details will be found in the Fall newsletter.

come. We also wanted to make the best use of our Board and staff time. Rethinking some of our ways of doing business and the realignment of management duties were recommended by our consultants. Plans are underway to implement these changes and a new fundraising program.

Developing our strategic plan was a protracted, time consuming process. It involved the entire Board and staff, with a committee of five assigned to working through the details. We began by evaluating our strengths and weaknesses and then considered their relative importance. We also had members of the community complete a questionnaire that provided some good insight on the public's perception of HWA. After many hours of meetings, research and



The HWA Strategic Planning Retreat: the Board of Directors enjoyed a day indoors at Lake Logan. photo by Charles Schaefer

writing, the strategic plan was completed.

The final plan is the consensus of the full Board and staff. It focuses on Board development, fundraising, public relations and a succession plan to ensure a smooth transition when current officers and staff leave HWA. It includes our philosophy and mission and the management actions necessary to maintain a strong organization. It is a living document that will change as circumstances warrant. Strategic planning is one of those things you don't know you need until you do it. It was a good experience for the Board and staff.

HWA has a history of success. Working with our partners, we have leveraged very limited resources to produce some impressive results. Together we have written 44 successful grant applications that have brought more than \$4.28 million to Haywood County. When you include the local matching contributions, over \$6 million in education, storm water management, stream restoration and other projects have been accomplished. We want to build upon this success.

Engaging local businesses and the many talented folks in Haywood County will increase our effectiveness and strengthen us financially. How well we do this will, in part, determine the future of

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HWA. Our water resources benefit the entire community in many ways, aesthetically and financially. They contribute to the quality of life we enjoy in Haywood County. You can be a part of the local effort to help protect and conserve our water resources. Become involved with one of the HWA committees and include HWA on your list of charitable giving. Give as generously as you can. If you are a current member, please consider increasing your level of financial support. Let's keep HWA a strong, successful organization now and into the future. Our children and grandchildren will thank us.

HWA is a 501(c) 3 tax exempt non-profit, charitable corporation.

The Benefits of an IPSI

Our Integrated Pollutant Source Identification (IPSI) data continues to help regional agencies tackle water quality issues. The Tennessee Valley Authority developed the IPSI using color-infrared aerial photography to identify sources of non-point source pollution (anything that doesn't come out of a North Carolina Department of Natural Resources regulated pipe) in the county. It has been a critical tool for obtaining grants and helping our local agencies improve water quality in the county.

Several regional organizations have found our IPSI data very useful. The Environmental Quality Institute at the University of North Carolina – Asheville used the data to study the effects of 2004's hurricanes and subsequent floods on stream banks and erosion. The DENR WaDE (Wastewater Discharge Elimination) program used the data to assist their survey of septic system conditions in the Richland Creek Watershed.

TVA is currently working on a revised IPSI thanks to contributions from the Pigeon River Fund, EPA and TVA. They collected aerial photography when the leaves were off back in March and are in the process of putting together the final product. We should have it in November. The new data will enable us to see how the watershed has changed with the hurricanes of 2004, a changing population and anything else that might be changing the landscape.

Do you live next to water?

We are looking for folks interested in allowing the establishment of conservation easements and stream mitigation/restoration projects on their streamside property. There is money available for folks interested. Benefits include: income and estate tax deductions, preserving greenspace, protection of streams and aquatic life, and protection of riparian buffer zones that in turn protect water quality. You would not give up ownership of your land but you would give up certain rights, such as where you would construct buildings or driveways. Please call us at 828-452-9077 for more information.

HWA is expanding its Board of Directors and seeking candidates for the new positions. If you believe clean water is a valuable resource, have fundraising or member recruitment skills and a desire to serve HWA, please contact us at 828-452-9077.

Water Quality Workshops in the GSMNP

HWA's project manager, Eric Romaniszyn, helped Susan Sachs and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Appalachian Highlands Learning Center at Purchase Knob host two water quality workshops for local middle and elementary school teachers. The Park and Haywood County are faced with many tough issues that affect water quality, such as acid rain deposition, exotic and invasive pests, erosion and sedimentation, and bacterial contamination. These workshops provided a venue for discussing the issues as well as hands-on training of ways we measure water cleanliness – by monitoring the bugs that live in the water and water chemistry. Through raising awareness and increasing the skills of our educators, we hope to build a conservation-minded generation of students that's ready to tackle the difficult tasks of preserving our water quality, especially with an ever increasing population. Gail Heathman from the Haywood Soil & Water Conservation District was also an integral part of the events. She presented several fun hands-on activities that could be included in the student curriculum. It's certainly entertaining to see grown adults enjoying themselves acting like elementary and middle school students again!



Susan Sachs discusses water quality issues and bug sampling techniques. (Photos by Eric Romaniszyn)

Volunteers Needed for Big Sweep

The 2006 North Carolina Big Sweep is a one day event held to clean up litter along North Carolina's waterways. Since its inception in 1987, more than 200,000 Big Sweep volunteers have retrieved over 7.5 million pounds of debris from North Carolina's environment (visit www.ncbigssweep.org for more details).

The Haywood County Big Sweep will be held Saturday, September 23, from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Haywood Community College students will join forces with volunteers from the High Technology Center and Whitewater of Waynesville to lead groups along Richland Creek. Volunteers should plan to meet at 9:00 a.m. in the Bi-Lo's Grocery Store parking lot off Russ Avenue in Waynesville. Local Big Sweep sponsors include the Natural Resources Division and High Technology Center of Haywood Community College, Haywood Waterways Association, Commission for a Clean County, Richland Creek Action Committee and Whitewater of Waynesville.

Please help by adopting a stream for clean-up. Last year over 5,000 lbs of trash was removed from a 4 mile stretch of Richland Creek! Garbage bags will be provided. Bring insect repellants, sunscreen, gloves and appropriate clothing for getting dirty. For more information contact Dave Dudek @ 627-4564. **SHOW YOU CARE!!!**

The Spring Envirothon

They may not have intended to stay involved – after all, teachers are busy people. But despite the demands on their time and giving up a spring weekend to travel to Burlington, four middle school teachers and one high school teacher have returned year after year to serve as Envirothon team advisors. Ask them why they do it and the answers revolve around something very important in these teachers' lives: the students. They like seeing the students enjoy learning. They like offering their students opportunities to learn in outdoor settings and seeing their students realize why the things they learn in school are important. What these teachers don't seem that concerned about



Mike Whitmire, Chairman of the Area I Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts presents the award for highest scoring middle school team to the WMS team "GEEKOS". L-R, Mike Whitmire, Stephanie Burris, Rachel Sease, Oliver Marth, teacher/advisor Jennifer Beasley, Molly McClure and Emily Fender.


– Harold Shepard, Tim Shepard (brothers) and Angie May (Canton Middle School), Jennifer Beasley (Waynesville Middle School) and Mark Ethridge (Tuscola High School) – is being repaid for all the effort, caring and extra time they give that makes the Envirothon program possible for their students. And that's good, because I suspect the answer would be, to borrow a well-known advertising phrase, "priceless".

The Area I Envirothon committee, made up of members from 16 WNC soil and water districts, will soon meet to determine whether this year's Area Envirothon will be held in the fall, as in recent years, or in the spring, as it was last April. Another change applied to last year's Envirothon – for the first time it was held at the Mountain Research Station in Waynesville instead of Deep Creek Campground in Bryson City. There are decisions to be made, but one thing will hopefully remain the same: Haywood middle and high school students who are interested in all things environmental will again be able to enjoy the challenge of competing in those five categories – Forestry, Aquatics, Soils, Wildlife and Current Environmental Issues – and we'll all be better off for what these bright, eager young people – our future environmental stewards – are learning so well. — *Gail Heathman*

Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Meeting

The Hugh Hammond Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society held their 56th annual meeting in Waynesville this year. Because HWA was selected as their Natural Resources Enhancement Award recipient in 2005, Ron Moser and Eric Romaniszyn were invited as guest presenters to discuss past successes, current projects, and future directions. Thanks to Perry Wilkerson and the Chapter for the award and providing the opportunity to speak about Haywood Waterways.

Upcoming Events


 Our annual Kids in the Creek event is scheduled for September 18-21 at the Canton Recreational Park (across from Pisgah High School). Come watch as nearly 700 eighth-graders experience hands-on learning as they rotate among four stations: water chemistry, fish, benthic macroinvertebrates, and a watershed model called the Enviroscope. Of course, we won't be educating all 700 students at the same time! Each middle school (Waynesville, Canton, Bethel) will divide into groups, with one group attending a half-day event. Two events will occur each day, the first from 8:45 to 11:15 am followed by the second from 11:45 am to 2:15 pm.

This event is followed by a classroom evaluation of the data collected. It will include the calculation of an Index of Biotic Integrity, or IBI, which is an assessment of the fish community and is one method of determining water cleanliness. This also gives the students an opportunity to interpret data and develop analytical skills that help them with end of grade testing.




Kids in the Creek participants are always impressed by the water bugs!

Kids in the Creek is a memorable experience for all the students; we always hear from those students that have been through the program how it was one of their best experiences in eighth grade! This is HWA's premier education event, come out and see what it's all about!





 Haywood SWCD offers 25th Conservation Field Day




For 600 fifth graders, the Conservation Field Day has all the elements kids love. The weather is October-crisp, they're outdoors in a farm atmosphere and they get to do things like make water cycle bracelets and stroke fox pelts. Lunchtime means a picnic on the grass, and when it's all over they climb back on the buses clutching a tree seedling to plant at home.

This fall when Haywood SWCD offers the field day, it will be the 25th time. That means that many of the students have parents who also attended the field day as children. None of the present District staff were working at the District back then, but a member of the District's Board of Supervisors, Bill Yarborough, was instrumental in getting it started. As Haywood's District Conservationist in 1981, Bill was there when the field day was first offered to high school students. Later on the field day was adapted to fifth graders and continues to be an opportunity for students to learn from a wide variety of resource experts who generously donate their time – among them, and much appreciated, is HWA's Eric Romaniszyn! — *Gail Heathman*

 Feel free to give us a call if you want more information about either of these events: 838-452-9077.

Freshwater Facts

-  97% of the earth's water is saltwater in oceans and seas. Of the 3% that is freshwater, only 1% is available for drinking and other uses, the remaining 2% is frozen in glaciers and the polar ice caps.
-  Canada has about 9% of the world's renewable fresh water supply, compared with 18% for Brazil, 9% for China and 8% for the United States.
-  The World Commission on Water for the 21st Century reported in November 1999 that more than half of the 500 major rivers in the world are going dry or are seriously polluted.
-  Contaminated rivers and surrounding basins contributed to 25 million environmental refugees in 1999 which exceeded the number of war related refugees.

-  It is estimated that contaminated water and poor sanitation cause 30,000 deaths around the world each day.
-  80% of diseases in developing countries are water related.
-  About 70% of your brain is water. Think about it. And use it to absorb more tips about how to conserve our precious waterways!

Sources: ABC News, Colorado Water Resources Research Institute, US Environmental Protection Agency, Environment Canada: A Primer on Fresh Water



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TO:

Our Thanks to the Pigeon River Fund for supporting HWA



You Can Help To Save Your Waterways
Join Haywood Waterways Association, Inc
Annual Membership Application



Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Business Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Fax _____

Work Worth Doing

Annual Membership Category (circle one): Family \$30 Individual \$20 Student \$10 Business/Organization \$50
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