



# Sassafras Update

Sassafras River Association  
PO Box 333  
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April 2007

## SRA Cleans Up!

The SRA's third year participating in the Bay-wide cleanup, *Project Clean Stream*, was our best yet! We had 66 volunteers — compared with 42 last year — working at 6 sites to give the Sassafras River shoreline a "spring cleaning."



Everyone came to help — Cub Scouts, students from Washington and Chesapeake Colleges, residents from Kentmore Park, Budds Landing, Fox Hole Estates,

Ches Haven, Shorewood Estates . . . and Congressman Wayne Gilchrest.

We added three new sites to this year's cleanup: Sassafras Natural Resources Management Area; Colchester Farm Community-Supported Agriculture, and Second Chance Horse Farm.

There was plenty of trash to go around — we picked up one and a half tons of it, including a truck bed liner, an outboard motor, 3 - 55 gallon drums, a plastic dinghy, and a Dale Earnhart



baseball hat. Many thanks to all our volunteers!

### Eyes on the Bay

Chris Trumbaur from the Department of Natural Resources gave the April meeting of the SRA a sneak preview of the Maryland Biological Stream Survey's (MBSS) planned activities for this year — and the new 3-year results for Sassafras River monitoring to be published soon.

Chris walked us through all of the information available on the DNR's "Eyes" website ([eyesonthebay.net](http://eyesonthebay.net)) from the Sassafras River monitoring stations at Georgetown and Betterton. New for 2007 will be water quality mapping — monthly visits that will give us a detailed picture of the state of our River.

Chris also told us how our "Sassafras Samplers" results are an important supplement to the DNR data.

## May 8 — Update on the Bay Restoration Fund

Our May 8 meeting (7 pm at the Granary Restaurant) will focus on the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) — the "flush tax" — and how it's being used to retrofit septic systems with the latest nitrogen-removing technology.

We've learned through past presentations how important it is to maintain our

traditional septic systems by having them pumped out on a regular basis — at least every 3 years, more often if you have a large family or place unusual demands on the system.

But we've also learned that even the best-maintained traditional septic systems are not designed to remove nutrients from our waste

water — and that it's those nutrients which fuel the growth of algae and ultimately rob the Bay of the oxygen on which aquatic life depends.

Amy Moredock will explain how Kent County is implementing the BRF and the requirements for obtaining BRF assistance for modifying your septic system.

### "Reaching for our Riverkeeper"

It's a new year, and we're calling 2007 the year of "Reaching for our Riverkeeper®." That reflects our hope to raise the funds we'll need to join the Waterkeeper® Alliance and hire a "Sassafras Riverkeeper." Your membership contributions will be an important part of the effort!

#### Quick Takes

- **May 5** is the "Dogwood Days" festival in Galena. The SRA will sponsor a 5K "Run for Our Riverkeeper," we'll have a float in the Parade, and our Information Booth will be at the festival. We need runners, marchers, and other volunteers. Elynn Vail is the contact — (410) 648-6994.
- **May 5** will also see the inaugural "Plantation Ball" at our partner, the Mount Harmon Plantation in Cecil County. The Ball is a formal dinner-dance and will be an evening of great food, dancing, and fun. For tickets call (410) 275-8819 or visit [www.mountharmon.org](http://www.mountharmon.org).
- **May 19** will mark the beginning of 2007 work for the Sassafras Samplers. If you want to join our water monitoring program as captain or crew, contact Science Committee Chair Ted Carski on (410) 275-1316.