



Sassafras Update

Sassafras River Association
PO Box 333
Georgetown, MD 21930

December 2007

Sassafras Riverkeeper Approved!

The Sassafras River will soon have its own eyes, ears and public voice — the **Sassafras Riverkeeper**.

On December 18, the Board of Directors of the Waterkeeper Alliance approved the SRA's application to establish a Sassafras



Riverkeeper program.

The Riverkeeper will be a full-time voice and advocate — someone whose sole job is to examine the health of the River and its watershed and to take specific actions to fulfill our mission —

We will be an advocate for the Sassafras River watershed, educat-

ing stakeholders; identifying, prioritizing, and addressing issues and problems in the River and watershed; and partnering with other groups that share our vision.

The Riverkeeper will patrol the Sassafras, seeking out sources of pollution or violations which pose a threat to water quality — like Critical Area violations.

Where there's a violation, the Riverkeeper will contact the authorities and follow up to make sure corrective action is taken. If necessary, the Riverkeeper will pursue legal action to correct the problem.

The Riverkeeper will also assess the River and the watershed, identifying and prioritizing solutions to problems that threaten water quality.

Of course, the WKA's approval is only the beginning of the story. The SRA Board wants to have the Sassafras Riverkeeper on patrol by late spring. To do that we'll need to:

- Identify and hire a Riverkeeper.
- Find a boat (and everything that goes with it!)
- Set up a phone number for the public to report concerns to the Riverkeeper.

We have applied to a number of foundations for financial support and have been pleased with the responses to date. But our most reliable source of support is you, our members. Your concern for your River has brought us this far and will now make our Riverkeeper a stunning success.

Chris will give us some interesting information about how development and other practices affect the diversity and abundance of aquatic life. **Hope we'll see you there!**



January 8 — What's in the Water?

We'll return to the Granary Restaurant at 7 p.m. on January 8 for our next meeting, rescheduled from December.

We'll have two science-based presentations. Our own Science Committee Chair, Ted Carski, will talk about the results from the October 6 Sassafras Samplers and give us a summary

of the program over our 3-year history.

The second act in our "double bill" will be Chris Wiggins, who is working on his master's degree in Environmental Science at Drexel University. Chris planned and has now completed a study of the effects of land use on fish communities of the Sassafras River.

We're Getting So Close!

As this is written, we have received more than \$9,000 toward our "Reaching for Our Riverkeeper" Special Appeal.

The SRA Board extends its thanks to all of you who have responded so generously to the \$10,000 challenge made by the Shared Earth Foundation.

If you are still considering your year-end giving, remember that **your gift to the SRA will double** with the Foundation's match.

If you can help us meet our goal and fund our Riverkeeper, send your contribution today to:

SRA
P.O. Box 333
Georgetown, MD 21635

2008 SRA Calendar

This month we're sending you 2 documents; the second is our 2008 calendar. Comments or suggestions? Contact Ellyn Vail on 410-648-6994 or vaile@baybroadband.net

Upcoming highlights:

- **February.** A look at Sassafras Marinas
- **March.** Focus on the Riverkeeper
- **April.** Project Clean Stream.