



Sassafras Update

Sassafras River Association
PO Box 333
Georgetown, MD 21930

January 2009

SWAP — Dirty Water for Clean!

The first Sassafras Watershed Action Plan (SWAP) Core Team Meeting was held 7 January 2009. 22 of our 24 members joined to discuss operating guidelines, timeframe, the data inventory and next steps. The Core Team includes planners, scientists, farmers, engineers and environmentalists from Kent, Cecil and New Castle Counties. The Team will continue to meet monthly throughout the life of the project to guide the development of the plan.

Stream Corridor Assessment

The Stream Corridor Assessment is underway. The Assessment survey was developed by Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as a tool to assist environmental managers to identify environmental problems and restoration opportunities for a particular watershed. As part of the survey, trained personnel from the Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) will walk our watershed's stream net-

work while collecting data on numerous environmental issues such as eroding stream banks, inadequate stream buffers, exposed pipes, fish blockages, pipe outfalls, in-stream constructions sites and trash dumping. The survey also collects information on habitat conditions both in and near the stream.

Ken Yetman, DNR Watershed Restoration Division and Paul Sturm, Program Director, from the Center for Watershed Protection will provide a two day training to the MCC team. Sassafras RIVERKEEPER®, Kascie Herron, Executive Director, Kim Kohl and Board member, John Vail will also participate in the training. Teams of 2—3 individuals will walk the stream corridors during the months of February and March.

A Permission Letter has been sent to approximately 400 land owners in the watershed requesting access to cross their land to approach the streams. If you have received one of these letters please return the self addressed, stamped post card back to us by February 6th. This will ensure we can schedule our team within the allotted time. If you would like to join the team please let us know.



February 12 — SWAP Stakeholders' Meeting Rescheduled

Given the falling snow and the weather advisories throughout the shore we cancelled our January 27 Kick-Off Meeting and have rescheduled for February 12. Mark your calendars!

We'll meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 12 at the Galena Fire Hall to explain the steps involved in

completing the **SWAP** and to get your best ideas about ways we can restore our River.

Stakeholder meetings will take place quarterly to ensure we get your input at every step of the process. The second Stakeholder meeting will be April 14, at Galena Fire Hall, 6:30 pm.

Quick Takes

- SRA co-Founder and Treasurer, **Ellyn Vail**, was presented with the **Ellen Fraites Wagner** award from the Chesapeake Bay Trust during a reception held at the Banneker-Douglas Museum in Annapolis. The award recognizes a Maryland citizen who has shown tireless dedication to help preserve and protect the Chesapeake Bay. Ellyn is a champion for the Sassafras and the Bay and we're very proud of this well-deserved recognition.
- Many thanks to **Vic Priapi of Priapi Nurseries** who has donated a prize for our next SWAP meeting. Vic has also agreed to host a spring work shop in conjunction with SRA addressing Bay-friendly gardening techniques. Registration details will follow.
- Read the Sassafras **RIVERKEEPER's** monthly column on page 2 and find out how volunteers can assist with **SWAP**.

Concerns or Questions?

Contact the RIVERKEEPER

The **RIVERKEEPER's** telephone number is (410) 708-3303 and her email address is riverkeeper@sassafras-river.org.



Sassafras RIVERKEEPER'S® Cove

I NEED YOUR HELP!

The upcoming months will bring plenty of volunteer opportunities. I would like to take this time to announce a couple of trainings as well as the kick-off of the Sassafras Samplers' 2009 monitoring season!

Water Quality Sampling

If you are interested in water quality monitoring in either the main tidal portion of the Sassafras River, or the non-tidal freshwater streams you will need to attend a training to familiarize yourself with the new equipment we will be using this year. Once you are trained, you will be given a few sampling locations that you will be responsible for sampling once a month with another partner or in a group.

Benthic Sampling

Another indication of stream health requires sampling the bottom or benthic habitat of the stream to see what kind of aquatic insects live there. The population size and species of these bugs tell us whether the quality of the stream is poor or good. In order to do this type of sampling, you must attend a one day training given by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Once we are trained we will go out on our own and sample streams in the Sassafras to see what kinds of insects are there. This sampling only needs to be done once, and can be completed in a couple of days.

Training Schedule

Equipment Training

Saturday February 28th, 2009
9 AM to Noon
Washington College
Toll Science Building
Chestertown, MD

Stream Waders Training

Saturday March 7th, 2009
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM
West Nottingham
Academy
Colora, MD

Copy and paste the link below into your internet browser for more information on the training and directions to West Nottingham:
http://www.dnr.state.md.us/streams/mbss/w_new.html

If you have any questions regarding trainings or sampling programs in general, please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me.

If you are interested in attending either or both trainings please give me a call and I will register you. As always, thank you for your interest and support.
These programs are only as strong as our volunteer participation!

See you on the Sass,

Kascie Herron
Sassafras RIVERKEEPER

Dirty Water for Clean!

SWAP —

