



2011 Summer News

President's Message

I think the biggest news of this year is that it marks the 20th anniversary of the Friends of the Nanticoke River! That is a milestone few small organizations such as ours ever attain. Congratulations; we have certainly made a mark on the conservation landscape with our efforts. You have been a wonderful group of people to work with and for, and I hope that our organization continues to influence the health and beauty of the River for at least another 20 years.

One thing that strikes me about the current situation for our group and others advocating for conservation is the changing tone within the governmental entities that have much control over policy. From Washington to Salisbury and Georgetown, there has been a trend towards marginalizing environmental advocacy. I believe there are important reasons why this is neither a good thing nor a necessary transition, but it means we have to work hard to show our government officials that we are both reasonable and serious. This is something the Friends have always tried to do, with relatively good success. Our partner organization Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth has also developed a strong track record in this arena, as they are working very closely with other stakeholders and with city and county officials in developing a Watershed Implementation Plan (see below for more).

So what's a Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP)?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has established a Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, which is a tool to reduce the nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment that enters our streams and rivers and flows to the Bay. The EPA has developed specific limits for these pollutants to protect and improve the Bay's health. These limits are called total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) and they are designed to improve water quality in all of the Bay's rivers and streams. The six Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia arrived at the TMDLs from **Watershed Implementation Plans**. Those "Phase I" WIPs were approved by the EPA last winter. Now Phase II is underway. In WIP II, local elected and appointed leaders, who have direct control of planning, zoning, stormwater districts, sewage treatment plants, and soil conservation districts, and who are accountable to local constituents, have the opportunity to ensure that restoration efforts meet local needs, as they develop plans that detail the actions they will take at the local level.

Here is where citizens get involved! Wicomico County is getting underway with its WIP II now. The Wicomico County Planning & Zoning Staff will host a public information meeting on the WIP II process for the "general public and stakeholders" on Tuesday, August 30 at 6:30 pm in the Danang Room at the Civic Center. Carrie Decker from DNR will be introducing the process and requirements, and Keith Hall of P&Z will summarize the work the county has done to date. All citizens of Wicomico County who care about the health of our rivers should try to attend and provide feedback to the County.

In Dorchester County, the WIP II process is well underway, and working well because, as described by DCPG, "all levels of government are on the same page. ... a group representing the farming community, city and county officials and citizens have made unprecedented progress toward putting together a concrete plan to clean up our waterways. The Watershed Implementation Plan will combine the best of local restoration opportunities with regional know-how and accountability. For the first time, [there is] real hope that the Choptank, the Nanticoke and the Chesapeake Bay will be healthy waterways again." See <http://dcpgonline.org/> for more information.

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance is assisting Sussex County with its WIP II.

Hebron Development Update

The Waller Landing project appears to be completely stalled. Since the public hearing in April of 2010, no action has been taken by the Town and the developers have simply put the land up for sale. We are keeping watch on the situation and hoping for a resolution that will protect Rewastico Creek and address the actual needs of the Town at the same time.

Nanticoke Creekwatcher Report Card

The 2010 Nanticoke Watershed Alliance Creekwatchers' *Nanticoke River Report Card* was released this fall, and it gives the Nanticoke River an overall grade of C+. This is down slightly from 2009, and reflects in part an increase in nitrogen in the river's upper tributaries. (Plug for TMDLs!)

The Nanticoke River is still one of the most pristine in the entire Bay region, and its watershed developed area is only about 6%. This is below the 10% threshold where negative impacts to aquatic life become apparent, and it is great impetus for continuing our vigilance and dedication to protecting this wonderful resource.

Nanticoke River Cleanup

As part of the Delmarva Power - sponsored Coastal Cleanup, the annual Nanticoke River cleanup will be held at Roaring Point Park on September 17, from 9:30 am till we're finished! We will provide free t-shirts, bags, gloves, snacks, and cleanup supplies. Please bring sunscreen, insect repellent, hats, etc.

Membership

We have gained several new members through our website. If you have joined there, (or if you still haven't paid dues for this year) please take time to fill out the membership form below and submit with your dues for 2010. Thanks!

OUR MISSION:

To protect and preserve the unique natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Nanticoke River watershed throughout its extent for the benefit of present and future generations.

The Friends of the Nanticoke River is a section 501(c)(3) organization, and contributions are tax-deductible.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE NANTICOKE RIVER - please choose a membership level:

- Individual/Household \$20 Supporting \$50 Benefactor \$100 Other_____
- Student/Senior \$10 Corporate \$100 Patron \$200 +
- Reduced rate membership in the Nanticoke Watershed Preservation Group \$5.00 plus above contribution
- Joint membership in the Wicomico Environmental Trust \$10.00 plus above contribution

Enclosed is a check for \$_____

Name _____ E-mail address _____

Address _____

City _____ County _____ State _____ Zip _____

PLEASE RETURN TO: THE FRIENDS OF THE NANTICOKE RIVER, P.O. Box 15, Nanticoke, MD 21840-0015