



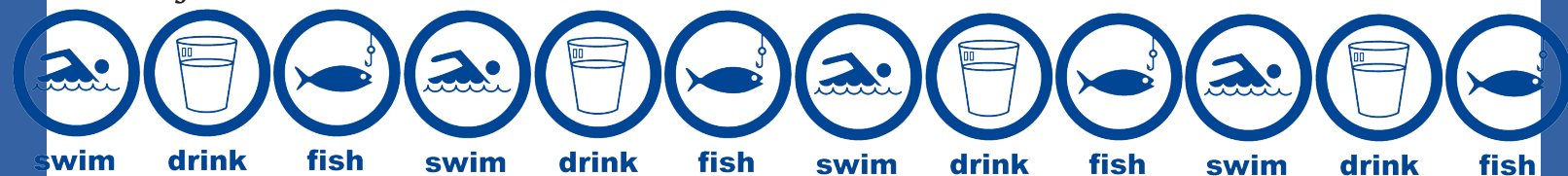
Potomac Riverkeeper Moves to Stop Sewage Discharge into Creek



Sump pipes from mobile home park discharging sewage water

For years, residents of Walnut Point West Road in Hagerstown, MD, have lived with foul smells and polluted well water. In August Potomac Riverkeeper took action to stop the ongoing sewage discharges from failing septic systems by filing a Notice of Intent to Sue the Deer Lodge Mobile Home Park for violations of the Clean Water Act. If no action is taken within 60 days to resolve the pollution violation, we will file suit against the mobile home park for the ongoing discharge of sewage. The discharge which is linked to the Park's septic tanks through a series of sump pipes contains fecal coliform and e.coli. The septic sewage ultimately discharges to a tributary of the Conococheague Creek, which flows into the Potomac River.

story continued on page 3



Clean Water Act 40th Anniversary Panel, Rally & Paddle!

Join us on **Saturday, September 15th for the Rally for Clean Water**, a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act at the Georgetown Waterfront Park. The entire family is invited to participate in our morning paddle on the Potomac River at 11:00 followed by a series of clean water advocate speakers and local waterkeepers at noon, highlighting progress made with this landmark legislation and envisioning a hopeful future for the next 40 years. This is a unique opportunity to paddle right alongside your local Riverkeepers. The rally will culminate with a river clean up starting at 1:30. Visit <http://www.potomacriverkeeper.org/CWA40Rally> for info and to register for the paddle and/or river clean up.

Before the Rally, join us for **"Clean Water Act – 40 Years Later,"** an expert panel discussion on Thursday, September 13 at 8:30am at The Hamilton LIVE. Panelists include: Chuck Fox, Program Director, Oceans 5 and former EPA Special Advisor on the Chesapeake Bay; Steve Fleischi, NRDC Senior Attorney, Water & Climate Change; Ken Kopocis, Senior Advisor for EPA's Office of Water; and Azzam Alwash, Founder & President, Nature Iraq. The discussion will be moderated by Alexandra Cousteau, President, Blue Legacy International and Potomac Riverkeeper Board Member. Congressman John Dingell (D-MI) will give opening remarks. Visit <http://www.potomacriverkeeper.org/CWA40Discussion> for info and to register.



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The North Branch: A River Reborn, Threatened Again

Polluted by decades of acidic water draining out of old coal and mineral mine shafts, the North Branch of the Potomac was once considered dead. This acidic water, known as acid mine drainage (AMD), drained into the streams and rivers, causing the water to turn bright orange and turning the North Branch into a lifeless river. People living in the area remember a time that the river was ignored, treated as if it was not there.

The rebirth of the North Branch began after the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) was passed in 1977 to regulate active mines and the older abandon mines. SMCRA set up an AMD fund that is financed through a tax on active mines. For the North Branch, the SMCRA funds were put towards active treatment on twelve higher priority mine drainages. Calibrated lime dosers quickly adjust the pH back to normal and allow the toxic metals to settle out faster and in a shorter distance. This gives the rest of the stream a chance to rebuild and develop a productive stream habitat. By the 1990s, the North Branch started to reclaim itself as a productive and useful river. The dosers breathed new life in to the North Branch, but the addition of the Jennings Randolph Dam, built in 1981, allowed it to become the most popular cold water fishery in the East.



The North Branch flows 103 miles from the Fairfax Stone in West Virginia through Western Maryland to the confluence of the South Branch of the Potomac.



Example of recent acid mine drainage exposure turning the stream bright orange.

The dam was built to provide flood control, a reservoir, and to be a buffer for upstream acid mine drainage. An additional benefit was the creation of cold water conditions in the North Branch that support State stocked brown and rainbow trout, and the successful spawning of native trout. The deep Jennings Randolph Lake has stratified layers of cold water which the dam operator can extract and discharge to the North Branch. An explosion of recreational opportunities from fishing to white water kayaking has boosted the once starved economy with a \$3 million recreational tourism industry. The recovery of the North Branch has been a remarkable achievement.

However, the vibrantly productive North Branch of the Potomac is once again threatened and the substantial progress may be reversed. Money to maintain dosers, limited lake capacity, and new dam operation priorities are at the root of the threat.

The life expectancy of the Jennings Randolph Dam is less than originally predicted. The steep slopes, active surface mining and intense rain events have increased sediment run off to the lake, filling the depths and decreasing the water capacity. The cold water fishery of the North Branch depends on the deep cold water of the lake and once the lake starts to fill in, it will be difficult to maintain cold water discharges.

[story continued on page 2](#)

The North Branch *continued from page 2*

In addition, the retention of water during the summer for beach use and the diversion of water for power, lessens the amount of water released to achieve cold temperatures down the entire length of the North Branch. Temperatures in the downstream sections are reaching into the 90's (°F). The stressed conditions have caused recent fish kills and threaten the naturally reproducing trout.



Jennings Randolph Dam is located at mile 47.

More immediate and threatening is the fact that the SMCRA funds will stop in 2025 and the availability of the money for maintaining dosers may end in 2017. If Congress or Maryland does not develop a contingency plan the North Branch will see a return to polluted, bright orange waters. Potomac Riverkeeper is working with stakeholders to explore new funding options. The protection of water quality and cold water fisheries is vital for the river and the economy of the area.

Sewage Discharge *continued from page 1*

For over twenty years, people living in the area have endured distressing conditions. Over the past 12 months we have made several attempts to resolve the situation without legal action. The county's health department has virtually ignored these residents and has done nothing to investigate and solve the problem. Every time it rains, it smells like a sewer. Not only do the residents suffer, but the health of the Conococheague suffers and more pollution ends up in the Potomac.

The mobile home park was constructed over 40 years ago and has over 50 trailers with individual septic tanks and drain fields, many of which seem to be failing. In the 1980's, adjacent property owners experienced storm water flooding from the mobile home park. In response, residents filed numerous foul smell complaints to the Washington County Health Department and had to purchase expensive water treatment systems. No action was taken to find and stop the source of pollution which led residents to contact Potomac Riverkeeper.

Report Pollution

301-POTOMAC & 540-837-1479 (Shenandoah)
www.potomacriverkeeper.org/report-pollution

On the River



Ed Merrifield
President
& Potomac
Riverkeeper



Jeff Kelble
Shenandoah
Riverkeeper



Brent Walls
Upper Potomac
River Manager



Alan Lehman
Agricultural
Project Manager

DC Staff

Robin Broder
Vice President

Whit Overstreet
Communications & Outreach
Manager

Sarah Sorenson
Development & Partnership
Associate

Kirby Reed
Production & Membership
Coordinator

Shelley Alingas
Education & Outreach
Coordinator

Potomac Riverkeeper Ed Merrifield to Retire

Dear Friends,
I want to let you know that I will be retiring at the end of this year. For the past ten years, this full-time job has been all-the-time work and I am now ready to slow my pace and enjoy this magnificent river we've been protecting.



I have had the privilege of working with incredible people, including our members, who understand the importance of healthy rivers and streams and are dedicated to making a real difference. For this I am truly grateful.

Leaving an organization where I once was a staff of one is not easy, but thanks to a great board of directors, and a hard working, passionate staff, I am comfortable leaving at this time. I know they will keep the organization advancing and also retain the culture that has helped make us the force for clean water we have become.

Thanks again for everything. Potomac Riverkeeper exists because of your help and support.

Ed Merrifield

Ed Merrifield, Potomac Riverkeeper/President

Alexandra Cousteau Joins the Board

We are thrilled to welcome Alexandra Cousteau to our Board of Directors. Alexandra is a National Geographic "Emerging Explorer," filmmaker, globally recognized advocate on water issues, and President of Blue Legacy International.

In June, we honored Alexandra Cousteau with our Protector the Potomac Award at our Potomac River Gala in June. In March, she premiered her short film, *Our Nation's River: A System on the Edge*, featuring Potomac Riverkeeper Ed Merrifield.



Photo Credit: Blue Legacy

Save the Date!

Join us as we celebrate Ed's retirement with him on the *Cherry Blossom* Sunday, October 21st!

Shenandoah Riverkeeper Receives Capacity Building Grant

You may have noticed Shenandoah Riverkeeper's interns this summer. Thanks to a 3-Year Capacity Building Grant from the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, Jeff Kelble now has more help and resources to do outreach to the community, provide new informational resources to river users (for an example see Swim Guide app featured on page 6), and build support for his work.

Jeff would love to hear from you about things you like, things you need, and even your concerns and questions about the Shenandoah River. There are many ways to do this -- follow him on Facebook.com/ShenandoahRiverkeeper and on Twitter.com/ShenandoahRK. Hear him on 95.3 "The River" Monday and Friday mornings. Email him at Riverkeeper@shenandoahriverkeeper.org. And don't forget – Become a Member!

Fishing, Dancing & Celebrating the River!

Our **5th Annual Shenandoah River Rodeo** on July 14 was a near perfect event. While four inches of rain fell just south of the Bentonville Low Water Bridge Campground, about 200 friends and members danced and partied on the banks of the river on a warm summer evening.

A record number of fishermen (25) and guides (13) wrangled with hundreds of smallmouth bass, a musky, some largemouth and even a carp. The winning team, guided by Brian Trow of Mossy Creek Fly Fishing, tallied 49 smallmouth and only one largemouth. In keeping with our tradition, embarrassing prizes were given to the winners. This year for first prize Justin Bieber backpacks were passed off as tackle packs for plano boxes!

Once again Bundy rocked out a monster BBQ, door prizes, and some awesome bluegrass music from Uncle Henry's Favorites got people up for line and square dancing. We want to thank the local fishing guides (see a list on our website) and all the Rodeo sponsors and door prize contributors, including Keeper Springs Natural Spring Water, REVO sunglasses, Mossy Creek Fly Fishing, and KEEN shoes.



Shenandoah Riverkeeper Jeff Kelble and his daughter enjoying the music!

Shenandoah Riverfest Wildly Successful!



People enjoying the river along with Shenandoah Riverkeeper Jeff Kelble during Riverfest!

Overwhelming numbers of people turned out for **2012 Shenandoah Riverfest** on August 11. More than a thousand people from all over the Mid Atlantic enjoyed a fantastic summer day.

We think Riverfest has found a new permanent home at the Shenandoah River State Park. At one point, Shenandoah Riverkeeper Jeff Kelble walked along the river and counted more than 150 people swimming, wading, fishing and paddling in the pools and riffles of the river. Many others were enjoying a free canoe or tube float, bike rides, arts and crafts, BBQ, live music, and the many critters, including an alligator.

And don't forget the Raffle! A canoe, kayaks, weekend get-aways and other prizes were won by lucky Riverfest guests.

We had a great number of partners, exhibitors and sponsors who helped make the Riverfest a success – including Friends of the Shenandoah River State Park, Downriver Canoe Company, Front Royal Canoe Company, Shenandoah River State Park, Front Royal Visitors Center, 95.3 “The River”, Skyline Canoe Company, and many more!

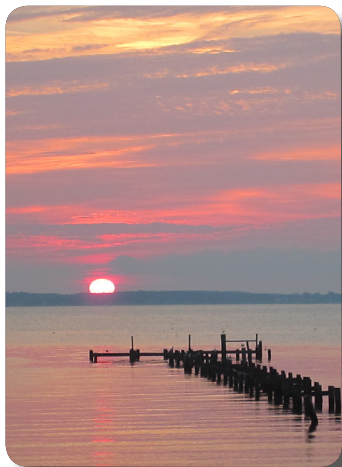
Shenandoah Riverkeeper Jeff Kelble Named Conservationist of the Year!

Shenandoah Riverkeeper Jeff Kelble was named River Conservationist of the Year by the Float Fisherman of Virginia - Roanoke Valley Chapter! The “Randy Carter” Award is named after one of Virginia's finest paddlers and original conservationists.



Island to Island 2012: Taking a New Course

Undeterred by the hardships that they endured during last year's Island to Island trip, Whit Overstreet, Communications Manager for Potomac Riverkeeper, and Joe Hage, Caretaker for the Sycamore Island Club, set off yet again on a paddling odyssey down the Potomac. The goal of this year's Island to Island trip was to highlight the work and impact of Potomac Riverkeeper along the river, to promote recreational use of the great resource in the backyard of our Nation's capital, to share the sights and sounds of the lower Potomac with the hope of inspiring others to get out and explore their river, and lastly to bring in some grassroots-style fundraising to support the mission of Potomac Riverkeeper.



There were a few planned differences between last year's pilot run and this year's excursion. First, a new destination: this year the two paddled all of the way to where the Potomac meets the Chesapeake Bay at Smith Point, Virginia before crossing the mouth of the Potomac at the river's widest point to reach Point Lookout, Maryland. Second, a new distance goal: 165 miles following an unconventional route along the Virginia shoreline once below the Nice Memorial 301 Bridge. Third, working with nature: by picking an optimal week of the month, Joe and Whit were able to paddle with the tides in their favor.

The trip would not have been possible without the help of many supporters and sponsors. Though by no means exhaustive, the following parties contributed to the success of Island to Island 2012: Mike Aronoff of CKAPCO donated paddling technique and safety lessons as well as lending a boat for the trip; Jefferson Glassie, President of Jefferson Islands Club, sponsored the trip and organized the celebratory event at the trip's conclusion; Peter Bross, Potomac Riverkeeper board member, was a major sponsor of the trip; Alice Ferguson Foundation gave permission for the two to stay on the property of Hard Bargain Farm; Virginia DCR staff at Westmoreland and Caledon State Parks provided advice and accommodations above and beyond expectations; and the proprietors of Fletcher's Boat House, Coles Point Marina, Coan River Marina, and Smith Point Marina were generous in the hospitality they extended to the two paddlers. Thank you to all of the others who helped to make Island to Island 2012 a success.



Whit Overstreet canoeing down the Class III/IV rapids of Little Falls

To read our blogs and see pictures from the journey, visit: www.potomacriverkeeper.org/island.

Free Swimming/Boating Guide Now Available!

Smart phone and internet users now have access to a free guide which Shenandoah Riverkeeper built to show people where they can find public access to our rivers and streams. Shenandoah Riverkeeper paired up with Waterkeeper Alliance to create this easily accessible resource that will help you get out and enjoy the Shenandoah River.

Search for The Swim Guide in the app store on your iPhone®, iPad®, iPod touch® and Android. Or go online to www.theswimguide.org For more info, visit <http://www.shenandoahriverkeeper.org/shenandoah-river-swim-guide>.



Great Response to Member Survey

In February, we mailed out over 1600 surveys to our members and posted the survey on our website and social media asking for their thoughts and opinions on our work, our communications, and ways they would like to be involved with us. The response was great, with over 250 respondents by mail and online. We found out that most of you have been members for several years, think that all of the issues we work on are important, enjoy our print newsletter, and would like to see more ways to be involved. We loved hearing from you and will take what you've told us to make improvements. Thank you!

Thank You Summer Interns!



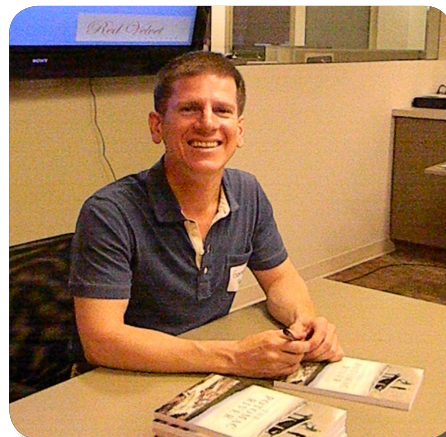
Ian White, after a hard day of work on the river

Thank you and good luck to all our wonderful Summer Interns! In the DC office we had Ian White, a U. Notre Dame student, working as our full-time Development & Production Intern. Ian worked on a number of projects including event prep for our annual Gala and fundraising research. Ian was joined by our Legal Intern Zac Mason from American University Law School and Amelia Grubb, a rising high school senior, who helped out for a few weeks on our education and outreach initiatives.

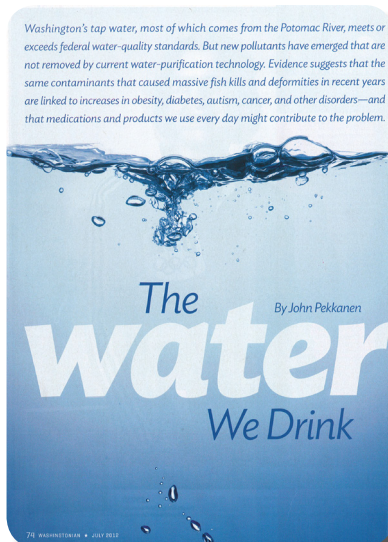
We would also like to thank our Shenandoah Riverkeeper interns, David Estoclet, Craig Buller, and Dylan Cooper who helped with new outreach initiatives and algae research. Additionally, we would like to recognize Our Task Inc. for creating several promotional videos this summer.

Book Talk with Garrett Peck a Success!

Thank you to all our members who came out to our Book Discussion and Presentation with Garrett Peck, author of *The Potomac River: A History and Guide*. It was a wonderful evening full of good conversation, great food, and awesome company. A few copies of the book are still available for sale on our website so get yours today! Book sale proceeds benefit Potomac Riverkeeper.



Garrett Peck signing books after his talk



In the News! What's in the Water We Drink?

Vicki Blazer, USGS scientist, reports that the "toxic soup" of endocrine disrupting compounds (EDCs) found in our rivers comes from homes, farms, and industry and causes intersex fish and fish kills. If it affects fish, what does that mean for humans?

To find out more, read the July edition of *The Washingtonian* magazine and learn what Shenandoah Riverkeeper Jeff Kelble, Potomac Riverkeeper Ed Merrifield and Vicki Blazer have to say about EDCs and the Potomac River.

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RiverWatch

The Newsletter of Potomac RIVERKEEPER, Inc.

Support Potomac Riverkeeper this Fall!

Patagonia Footwear Week

September 14 -30

We are partnering up with Patagonia for their Footwear Advocate Week. Potomac Riverkeeper will receive \$10 for every pair of Patagonia Footwear sold at Patagonia in Georgetown between Sept 14-30.



Benevolent Media Photo Exhibit

September 23

Calling all environmentally conscious photographers!

Submit your favorite photos from the Rally for Clean Water on Sept 15 (see pg 1) to be considered for "Reflections," a photo sale and fundraiser to celebrate clean water and river conservation. This event is co-hosted by Benevolent Media and Potomac Riverkeeper and will feature light snacks, drinks and music. Proceeds from sale of the photos will benefit Potomac Riverkeeper.

EarthShare & CFC

September – December

Giving has never been easier! Sign up to pledge a small amount of each paycheck to help support us!

EarthShare & CFC Number : 87828



Give to the Max

September 20

Potomac Riverkeeper is participating in the annual Give to the Max Day, a 24-hour fundraiser that benefits local non-profits serving the greater Washington DC metro area. Last year we raised over \$6,700 in just 24 hours! Help us compete against other local non-profits by donating on Sept 20th.



Groupon Grassroots Campaign

October 1 – 7

Help support our Riverwatcher Program by donating at least \$10 during our Groupon Grassroots Campaign this October. Learn more about our volunteer program at www.potomacriverkeeper.org/riverwatcher