



River Watch



Potomac RIVERKEEPER

The Newsletter of Potomac Riverkeeper, Inc.
Volume 6 Issue 2, Summer 2009

Shenandoah RIVERKEEPER

We Can End Excess Poultry Waste!

Submit Public Comments to the Shenandoah Riverkeeper

by Jeff Kelble, Shenandoah Riverkeeper

Did you know that 80% of all poultry waste created by growers in Virginia is sold or given to neighboring farms which are not subject to regulation? This is the biggest environmental loophole in the Commonwealth and we're trying to close it, but we need your help!

A proposed regulation will require all significant poultry waste end users and poultry brokers to test their soil **before they apply the waste as fertilizer**. This will prevent the over-application of phosphorous. Unfortunately, this has been the custom due to imbalanced chemical concentrations in poultry waste. It will also end the practice of storing waste in huge piles out in the rain and applying litter right down to the stream banks.

These are important and necessary changes that are long overdue, but

unless we hear from you they are never going to become law.

The proposed regulation is open for public comments until August 21, 2009. You can read the regulation at: <http://www.townhall.state.va.us/L/comments.cfm?stageid=5172>.

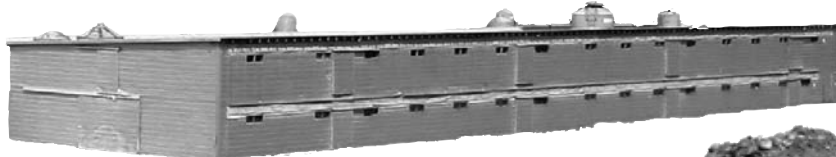
We all know lobbyists for the factory farms will be representing their interests, which is why we need YOU to help us represent the interests of everyone who enjoys the river, receives drinking water from the river, and wants to protect this natural resource for future generations.

Want to submit comments? You can send them to me and I will make

them part of the official record. Email me at JEFF@SHENANDOAH.RIVERKEEPER.ORG and be sure to include:

- 1.) Your name
- 2.) Your full address
- 3.) Your telephone number
- 4.) Describe how you use or enjoy Virginia Rivers which are affected by pollution
- 5.) Comment in favor of the pending regulation

Pass this along to everyone you know who fishes, paddles, canoes or lives in the Shenandoah Watershed. This is the #1 issue among anglers in Virginia--and may be our biggest chance to improve water quality this year. We need as many comments as we can get!



In Virginia, 4/5 of chicken waste goes unregulated. YOU can help us stop this by submitting public comments!



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Cleanup at Poplar Point

by Damien Power, Communications & Outreach

In June 2008, **Potomac RIVERKEEPER** took action to clean Poplar Point in Washington, DC, after decades of pollution left Poplar Point contaminated with arsenic and lead, among other pollutants.

We formed a coalition that said it would sue those responsible for the pollution if Poplar Point was not cleaned up.

I am happy to report that our efforts turned into actions, and plans to

clean Poplar Point are underway! By filing an intent to sue, our coalition prompted the District of Columbia and National Park Service to initiate a CERCLA (more commonly known as "Superfund") clean up.

I think this is one more way that watershed residents, and groups that represent them like **Potomac RIVERKEEPER**, can improve their local water quality.

Stay tuned for more updates!



Jeff Kelble
Shenandoah Riverkeeper

Penny for Your Thoughts? How About Cleaner Water in Our Community!

Public Comments Hold Polluters Accountable and Keep Rivers Clean. Period.

On the previous page, I told you about Virginia's new poultry regulations and why you should comment on them. Currently, we have a system where 80 percent of the waste created at industrialized chicken farms is sold or moved off premises, but we only have regulations that apply to the remaining 20 percent. These types of loopholes aren't the result of malice or incompetence, but they do demonstrate the need for public participation in the permitting process.

When permits and regulations come up for review, you better believe that organized industries are going to lobby for their interests. I am doing my part to stand up for our community's interests, but if I'm going to be successful I need YOU to back me up and show your support!

Most of the time, Ed and I are checking to make sure permits and regulations 1.) have meaningful ways for the public to participate in the process and 2.) use the full force of law to keep pollution out of our waterways and protect already impaired waters from further degradation. You can help us guarantee these protections by supporting our comments with comments of your own.

Here is another way to stand up for our community's interests (in addition to the poultry reg.):

Virginia's Post-Construction Stormwater Permit (Comments Accepted June 22--August 21)

Virginia is poised to be a leader in the Chesapeake Bay Region by instituting regulations which require pollution controls to function in construction developments AFTER they have been completely built, and for decades into the future. This will build on already existing requirements for sediment controls during the construction process. These regulations have been under development for nearly three years and are based on modeling done for the Chesapeake Bay and represent the kind of pollution control we need if we're going to ever fix the bay.

If you agree with me and want to submit comments, or if you just want more information, please send an email to JEFF@SHENANDOAHRIVERKEEPER.ORG (more of my contact information is on page 6).

Our community's water doesn't stop at state lines, and neither does our community's voice. You do NOT need to live in Virginia to submit comments.

Ed Merrifield

Potomac Riverkeeper



Maryland Improves Construction Sites, Thanks to Our Challenge

The State of Maryland will change the way it requires developers to prevent pollution at construction sites from running into local rivers and streams, thanks to **Potomac RIVERKEEPER** and a coalition of other Maryland Waterkeepers.

The coalition announced in May that it has reached an agreement with Maryland's Department of the Environment over its challenge to Maryland's general stormwater permit for construction sites.

Recently, we learned that Maryland has already allocated funds for the improvements required by the settlement.

The settlement will mitigate polluted stormwater runoff at construction sites in three ways:

3.) it improves protections for water bodies that are already overwhelmed by polluted runoff

Polluted runoff usually leaves construction sites in the form of mud and sludge during periods of heavy rain and runs into storm drains or directly into water bodies like the Potomac River.

In some locations, such as Cumberland and Washington DC, the sediment problems are complicat-

ed by combined sewers (that hold both rainwater and raw sewage).

When it rains in these areas (more than 1/10 of 1" in some places), these ancient sewers are often overwhelmed and the raw sewage and other pollutants flow directly into the Potomac River and its tributaries without first being treated.

Just one more way we are ensuring the safety of drinking water!

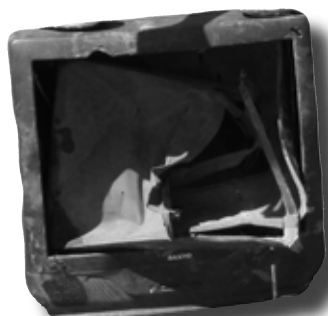


Public participation is mandatory when stopping pollution, call 202-222-0707 to find out more about our Get the DIRT Out program!

Did you know the Mattawoman Creek was named one of America's most endangered rivers because of rapid overdevelopment? Find out more at www.americanrivers.org!

Saturday, April 4, 2009
21st Annual Potomac River Watershed Clean-up!

Potomac RIVERKEEPER joined thousands of volunteers around the watershed who took part in the 21st annual Potomac River Watershed Clean-up. Among other things, our dedicated group removed a television from a creek near Bull Run Regional Park. Thanks again to Trader Joe's for supplying food and drinks.



Volunteers: 12,661
Sites Reporting: 480
Tons of trash: 277.1
Tires: 2,060
Recyclable Beverage Containers: 174,200
Plastic Bags: 40,903
Cigarette Butts: 31,275
(as of May 26, 2009)

Thursday, April 21, 2009
Emmy Award Documentarian Talked to Riverkeeper Crowd!



Potomac RIVERKEEPER and The George Washington University hosted Emmy Award and Pulitzer Prize winner Hedrick Smith the night his latest film debuted on the PBS show *Frontline*.

Hedrick showed parts of "Poisoned Waters" and took questions from members and guests of **Potomac RIVERKEEPER**.

"Poisoned Waters" examines the growing hazards of water pollution. Through interviews with scientists, environmental activists, corporate executives and average citizens, Hedrick reveals that today's growing environmental threat comes not from the giant industrial polluters of old, but from chemicals in consumer products, prescription medicines and household cleaners. You can view the film at www.potomacriverkeeper.org.

"The environment has slipped off our radar screen because it's not a hot crisis like the financial meltdown, war or terrorism," Hedrick says. "But pollution is a ticking time bomb. It's a chronic cancer that is slowly eating away the natural resources that are vital to our very lives."

Photo of Hedrick Smith by Susan Zox

POTOMAC

HOSTED BY

River Champions

Peter Bross & Lisa Rarick

*Potomac Riverboat Company

River Protectors

*Barnes Vanze Architects, Inc.

Tom & Karen Ehrhard

Avis Ogilvy Moore

Mac Thornton & Molly Carr

*Wiebenson & Dorman Architects PC

River Defenders

Linda & Stan Collyer

Sally Davidson

Sarah Epstein & Donald Collins

Stan & Linn Oaks

George Ohrstrom

Andrea & Dendy Young

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Katherine Baer & Michael Paul

Judith Bell & Dick Goodwin

Elizabeth Birnbaum

Brent & Terry Blackwelder

Merci Bowie & Joshua Lukens

Kim & David Brock

Robin & Mike Broder

*Brodie, Collins, Cherel & Associates

Marney Bruce

*Calleva

*Canoe-Kayak and Paddle Co.

Carole Cavanaugh-Fettig & Ron Fettig

Barbara & Clem Dinsmore

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Peter & Ginger Evans

Jim & Nicole Fary

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Larry Gladieux

Gerald & Helen Halpin

Jack & Rachel Kelble

Stella Koch & David Kinney

Patricia Kurpiel

Ed & Donna Merrifield

Erik Meyers

Pat Munoz & Dorcas Adkins

Ltg. Max & Priscilla Noah

Judith Rotman

*Spectrum Printing

David Wember & Elizabeth Moore

George Wyeth & Julie Greenberg

* Thank you to our corporate sponsors!

POTOMAC RIVER GALA

Sunday, June 7, 2009

Thank you to everyone who came out to our sixth annual Potomac River Gala! We had a great time, and would especially like to thank the Potomac Riverboat Company for donating the *Cherry Blossom*! The weather was cool, the auction items were hot, and the food was delicious!

Together we were able to raise over \$45,000, a record high for Potomac Riverkeeper! We will use the money, as always, to protect and restore the Potomac River and its tributaries. The proceeds from our special appeal, will be used to equip our soon-to-be-hired Upper Potomac River Manager with the tools he or she will need to expand our mission in this part of the watershed. Charlotte Hall accepted, on behalf of the Potomac Riverboat Company, **Potomac RIVERKEEPER's** first annual "Protector of the Potomac" award.

Thank you! Together, we raised over \$45,000 to protect and restore the Potomac River and its tributaries.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

We are already beginning to plan next year's Potomac River Gala! In 2010 we will be back on the *Cherry Blossom*!

Don't miss your chance to enjoy food and drinks on the premier boat in Alexandria's harbor!

Join us!

Sunday, June 6th, 2010 (tentative)
aboard the *Cherry Blossom*
3 Cameron Street
Alexandria, VA Waterfront

We hope to see you there!



We had it all: the Cherry Blossom on a great day (top), food (above left) a silent auction (above) and a live auction (far left). Left: Charlotte Hall receives the "Protector of the Potomac" award

Clean Water Bill Moves to Senate for Vote!

Great news from Capitol Hill! On June 18, the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) passed the Clean Water Restoration Act.

The Clean Water Restoration Act is an opportunity to restore and maintain the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. These protections were written into the Clean Water Act of 1972, but have been eroded by Supreme Court decisions beginning in 2001.

The act will now move to the Senate floor for a vote. Go to www.cleanwaternet.org for updates and information on how you can get involved!

Making Changes that Don't Make the News

by Ed Merrifield, Potomac Riverkeeper

At the end of last year, I noticed that the EPA was creating a "Handbook for Developing Watershed TMDLs." I was troubled by the handbook because it violated some of the Clean Water Act's (CWA) requirements and weakened the effectiveness of TMDLs--which are the CWA's safety net to make sure that already polluted waters don't become more polluted. In effect, if your stream were polluted and should be cleaned up, the pollution might not be corrected if another stream not too far from yours was a little cleaner than usual.

Early this year, I asked our lawyers at Georgetown Law to look into this and in February we sent comments to the EPA on a draft copy of the Handbook. Our comments made it clear that the Handbook violates the CWA and omits important information and procedures. We heard nothing from the EPA until a few weeks ago. As it turned out, they received only three comments on this handbook, but all three were remarkably similar. They have asked to meet with us, Friends of the Earth, and the Massachusetts Coalition for Water to discuss our comments. This meeting will take place in July. Stay tuned ...



We're Everywhere...

You Can Follow and Support Potomac RIVERKEEPER on:

Facebook: facebook.com/PotomacRiverkeeper

Twitter: twitter.com/potomacriver

United Way: # 9335

Combined Federal Campaign: # 87828

Contact Us

Potomac RIVERKEEPER

Address

1717 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036

Main Office Line

202.222.0707

Fax Line

202.783.0444

Email Address

keeper@potomacriverkeeper.org

Website

www.potomacriverkeeper.org

Shenandoah RIVERKEEPER

Address

Shenandoah Riverkeeper
P.O. Box 405
Boyce, VA 22620

Main Office Line

540.837.1479

Fax Line

540.837.1479

Email Address

jeff@shenandoahriverkeeper.org

Website

www.shenandoahriverkeeper.org

River Watch is designed and edited by Damien Power

Online Resources

www.whatsonmyfood.com

Did you know that an average American child gets 5+ servings of pesticide residues in his or her food and water *each day*? Visit this site to learn what pesticides are on specific types of food and take action on a variety of issues!

www.saveantibiotics.org

Log on and read articles like "Failure to Yield: Evaluating the Performance of Genetically Engineered Crops" and "Green Cuisine: Earth-Friendly, Healthy Recipes from Top Chefs and Local Farmers"

Staff

Ed Merrifield

Potomac Riverkeeper & President

Jeff Kelble

Shenandoah Riverkeeper

Robin Broder

Vice President

Nadia Elguindy

Programs & Development

Damien Power

Communications & Outreach

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Andrea Young

It's Time for Results, Not More Promises and Studies

by Robin Broder, Vice President

In May, President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order allowing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to play a greater role in cleaning the Chesapeake Bay. The order was announced at the annual meeting of the Chesapeake Executive Council, who admitted last year that their 25-year effort to clean the bay had failed.

The order authorizes EPA to penalize states that do not take enough action, and couples long-term goals with short-term benchmarks that must be met along the way. The benchmarks are designed to buck the trend of politicians who campaign to clean the bay and then set deadlines that expire after they leave office.

Benchmarks and Executive Orders are improvements, but they do not guarantee a clean--and safe--Chesapeake Bay. In order to have real results we need accountability.

That is why **Potomac RIVERKEEPER** is one of 70+ organizations that, on May 20, launched the **Choose Clean Water Campaign** to hold the federal government accountable for its promise to deliver a clean bay.

The Choose Clean Water Campaign will seek federal leadership to improve water quality in the hundreds of streams and rivers that flow into the Chesapeake Bay. The coalition and the members of its non-profit organizations will work with both the federal government and local communities of the 53 members of Congress that represent the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The campaign's initial focus is on results in three specific areas:

- 1.) Ensure that all sources of pollution to the bay are reduced to no more than the bay can sustain.**
- 2.) Reduce pollution from highway runoff and encourage less consumption of land for new development.**
- 3.) Change legislation to address the strain of global warming on our impaired and stressed waterways.**

Visit www.choosecleanwater.org to sign up for updates!

Below: polluted runoff from highways and animal waste are two culprits that are killing our rivers, streams and the Bay.



The Faces are the Same...

But we've switched up a title or two. Ed Merrifield is still the Potomac Riverkeeper, but is moving from Executive Director to President. Robin Broder, formerly our Director of Operations, is now **Potomac RIVERKEEPER, Inc.'s** Vice President.

YES! I want to protect and restore the Potomac River! Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership gift to help

Potomac RIVERKEEPER keep our Nation's river clean!

☐ \$35

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \$250

☐ \$500

☐ Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please make checks payable to **Potomac RIVERKEEPER** and mail to:
1717 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036
Or visit www.potomacriverkeeper.org and click on "Support Us"



☐ I want to be a Riverwatcher, send me information today!

☐ I would like to designate Shenandoah Riverkeeper!

☐ I can't contribute, but please put me on your mailing list!

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Potomac RIVERKEEPER
Shenandoah RIVERKEEPER



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Come to Our 2nd Shenandoah River Rodeo!

*Join us once again to celebrate the river and support **Shenandoah RIVERKEEPER**. We will be on the banks of the South Fork of the Shenandoah at the Low Water Bridge Campground for some fishing, good food, lively music and camping.*

Saturday, September 12

4:00pm - 9:00pm

Low Water Bridge Campground

Indian Hollow Road (Route 613 off Route 340)

Bentonville, Virginia

Tickets

Members: \$30/person

Non-Members: \$50/person (includes 1yr. membership)

Get more info and purchase tickets at:

WWW.POTOMACRIVERKEEPER.ORG

Sponsorship levels

Smallmouth Bass \$1000

Musky \$500

Carp \$250

Rock Bass \$100

**Food, Drinks and Free camping
on Saturday night!**



Photos by King Montgomery

Want to spend the day fishing in the rodeo with a guide? If so please let us know - the minimum donation is \$250 per person - first come first serve. Email jeff@shenandoahriverkeeper.org