

News from The New

Fall/Winter 2017

Dear Friends of the New River:

I'd like to introduce myself as new Chair of the New River Conservancy Board. I'm Laura Walters and have lived on Claytor Lake, a 21 mile wide space of the River all of my life. My family came from Grayson County and was involved in the historic dam fight, as it would have flooded all my ancestors' farm. I have worked with lake issues for years as a member and a past-President of Friends of Claytor Lake. I have been on the New River Conservancy Board for three years and am working hard to expand our reach into Virginia and West Virginia.

Water has always been a part of my life and I am passionate about its protection. My children are fourth generation on the New River. We are dedicated to protecting it for future generations. The challenge, however, is to educate others to the importance and the need.

Water is used for everything we do. We drink it, we clean with it, we play in it. NRC is dedicated to protecting the waters, woodlands and wildlife of the New, and nothing is closer to my heart.

Through our water quality efforts, clean ups, streambank stabilization to prevent erosion and siltation down river, our conservation efforts of public and private lands around the River, insure that we are fulfilling our mission. We leverage every dollar received into \$9 for protecting the New River.

NRC started in North Carolina and southwest Virginia to protect the New from another dam which would flood 42,000 acres in Ashe, Alleghany and Grayson counties.



As we move into Virginia and West Virginia, I am often asked, "What is NRC doing for me in Virginia or West Virginia?" Every bit of protection we do upstream in North Carolina protects downstream in Virginia and West Virginia. In addition, we are currently, working with Town of Pulaski and Friends of Peak Creek to stabilize the banks of Peak Creek which flows into the Claytor Lake and brings massive amounts of siltation. We also just received a Water Quality Grant to train Water Quality Monitors in Virginia, thus improving water quality. We participate and conduct clean ups in all three states removing thousands of pounds of trash and tires from the river. So, we are progressing, and I'm very excited about the upcoming year.

Join our work. Please check out our website www.newriverconservancy.org and be part of our important mission. Feel free to contact me, at any time, and thank you for being one of our supporters. Our work is dependent on your help.

For the River,



Laura Walters
Board Chair

New River Conservancy is strategically focusing on the entire New River Watershed. To help make our work more manageable and to better communicate our progress, we've divided the watershed geographically into thirds: lower, middle and upper watershed regions. We hope you, our supporters, find this helpful and insightful!



Lower Watershed

We never TIRE of river cleanups!

In June of 2017, New River Conservancy applied for and received a grant from the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection to conduct river cleanups along the New River in West Virginia.

New River Conservancy mobilized volunteers and contracted with raft guides from West Virginia to complete 12 cleanups and record a variety of information about each cleanup .

Between June and October 31, New River Conservancy staff members, 13 volunteers, and 19 contractors pulled approximately 13,500 pounds of trash and 744 tires out of the New River!



You Say Goodbye and I Say Hello

We welcome Marty Brown, our Office Manager who joined us on November 15. Marty has a strong background in Human Resources in a corporate environment and brings a multidisciplinary skillset to our office management role. She will be the new welcoming voice you hear on the phone when you call. Marty recently moved to the area to, in her words, "pursue a life of purpose and meaningful impact". The New River is her "happy place". It's ours too! While we say hello to Marty, we say goodbye to Laura Green our Office Coordinator for many years. Laura is looking forward to retirement but promises she will stay involved with New River Conservancy as a volunteer.

Welcome Marty! And, Best Wishes Laura!

Re-Energizing Water Watchers in the New River Valley

We've just received some great news for our New River Water Watchers citizen aquatic monitoring program—we've just been awarded \$5,000 to expand and re-energize the program in the New River Valley!

Funding came from the H.W. Huff Jr. Family Fund and the Susan Garrison Fund via the Community Foundation for the New River Valley. The grant will allow us to recruit and train 10 new monitors in 2018 and to upgrade our database and data visualization tools. There are a vast number of streams in our watershed that haven't had their water quality evaluated. The new monitoring gives volunteers participating in the program a better sense of the health of their local streams, helps us detect pollution that would have otherwise gone unnoticed, and also aids state and local governments with planning processes.



We need an additional \$30,000 to finish our year strong. Help Us! Please consider increasing your EOY gift, making a brand new gift, or if you've already given, making an additional gift by December 31 to protect the New.

We've Been Served!

New River Conservancy has been sued by Mountain Valley Pipeline to cross a permanent conservation easement that NRC holds in Giles County. The conservation values protected on this easement are water quality, wildlife habitat, forests, scenic beauty and open space. There is over 2,000 feet of a state designated wild trout stream, Little Stoney Creek on this easement. One hundred eighty four acres of the 208 are forested providing excellent habitat for mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects. The globally rare Diana Fritillary was found on the property.



A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. "Our Board of Directors has voted unanimously to continue to defend the easement until we have exhausted all our legal options," stated George Santucci, President. As an accredited land trust, NRC is bound to defend this easement in perpetuity; therefore, we will fight".

Quick Facts about the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP):

- MVP is a proposed 303-mile long natural gas pipeline that stretches from northwestern WV to southeastern VA.
- It is proposed to be 42" in diameter making it the largest proposed pipeline by diameter.
- It will cut a 100 foot wide deforested swath across hundreds of streams and karst (cave) systems.
- Many of the streams to be crossed are designated as the highest quality waters in VA and WV.
- This project was **NOT** unanimously approved by FERC. Commission chair Cheryl LaFleur dissented in the 2-1 vote.

[Learn more about the MVP at www.newriverconservancy.org.](http://www.newriverconservancy.org)

Please cut along dotted line and mail to: NRC, PO Office Box 1480, West Jefferson, NC 28694

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The New River Conservancy is recognized by the IRS as a 501c3 organization. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

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[Make a gift online at www.newriverconservancy.org.](http://www.newriverconservancy.org)

New River State Park Gets a NEW View!

New River Conservancy partnered with NC State Parks to purchase 117 acres for the New River State Park in Ashe County, NC to protect an additional ½ mile of the river and expand recreational opportunities.

Additionally, NRC received a grant from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund to assist with the \$600,000+ restoration project. The project will restore 2,000 feet of the river's banks and its riparian buffer to be fully healthy and functional.

Upper Watershed

Historic agricultural land use has steadily degraded the buffer over time, contributing sediment and animal waste to the river. Restoration of the buffer consists of sloping the banks to allow floodwaters to access the floodplain, installing rock structures for stability, and replanting the banks with native, woody vegetation to restore habitat and complete the riparian buffer.

Now, under the authority of the New River State Park, this property has a bright future of protecting the water quality of the New River.



Work in motion on restoration project

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