

# THE RIVER RUNS

News from the Cowpasture River Preservation Association



## Inside This Issue:

- Ø From the President
- Ø Executive Assistant's Corner
- Ø Flooding Highlights
- Ø Education in Action!
- Ø Annual Meeting
- Ø Pipeline Update
- Ø The Plein Air Festival
- Ø Swinging Bridges Essay
- Ø Walton Tract Clean-Up
- Ø Member Profile—Lou & Betty Robinson
- Ø Field Trip Highlights
- Ø Summer Picnic Announcement
- Ø Join or Renew Your Membership

This photo, taken by Kathy Farmer, is from the river float preceding last year's summer picnic. The kayakers were approaching the property of Dick and Glovie Lynn, where the picnic was held.

See page 15 for details on this year's summer picnic!

## Board of Directors (2018-2019)

### Officers:

*Richard Brooks, President*

*Stewart Hobbs, Treasurer*

*Kim Manion, Secretary*

### Directors:

*Lucius Bracey*

*Caryl Cowden*

*Michael Hayslett*

*Marshall Higgins*

*Nelson Hoy*

*Steve Van Lear*

*Nan Mahone Wellborn*

*Jeremy White*

### Staff:

*Lynne Griffith,*

*Executive Assistant*

Editor: *Lynne Griffith*

Photographer: *Kathy Farmer*

## From the President

It seems as if spring skipped the Cowpasture watershed altogether this year. After the flooding of late winter, we went from cold and wet to warm and wet. April gave us above-average rainfall and below normal temps, while May delivered above-normal temps with a record amount of rainfall. Past records were measured at 10.13 and 10.14 inches for the month of May. This year, we topped 10.50 inches, with reports from Williamsville and Bolar of as much as 15 inches.



The Cowpasture is up by a foot as I write this in early June, yet we've had little rain for the past week. This summer, we'll see new channels and bars and some big changes to habitat, which means we'll have to scout out new fishing holes. But, thankfully, water quality continues to meet Cowpasture standards, based upon preliminary benthic testing. The water level has been too high to complete our May testing, but spot checks indicate the same macroinvertebrate activity that we've come to expect.

This issue of The River Runs has some great pieces. Nelson Hoy is back with the ninetieth installment in a series based upon watershed stewardship. He's written an article about swinging bridges here in our area. As a former caretaker of one of these bridges, I'm reminded of the flooding of 1985, when our farmer hooked up a tractor to lift our bridge out of harm's way, then reconsidered when he thought about what might happen if the water topped both the bridge and the tractor. Remarkably, an oak tree with a two-and-a-half-foot diameter had been swept into the river from a bank upstream, and it lifted the bridge to safety. We're grateful to Nelson, his wife, Lizzie, and others for this ongoing series.

Also, check out Lynne's piece on the Robinsons. We hope to keep our long history alive so members of all ages can appreciate and understand our roots. I'm indebted to Lou and Betty whose contributions to the CRPA have been and continue to be large.

Finally, please note that the Warm Springs Gallery's annual Plein Air Festival will focus on the Cowpasture River this year, with CRPA receiving a portion of the art sales. (See page 7 for dates and details.) And, as always, thank you to our many members who volunteer to make the Cowpasture a better river for this and generations to come.





## Executive Assistant's Corner

We've just completed a busy and successful spring season. We held two informative field trips which focused on both the vernal pools and the shale barrens of the Cowpasture River Valley. In addition, several of our faithful members turned out once again for our bi-annual Walton Tract Clean-Up where we collected trash and debris that had been discarded along the river. And, to cap off the spring season, we had our largest crowd to date for our Annual Meeting and Dinner at Camp Mont Shenandoah held on May 19<sup>th</sup>. A total of 92 people attended. Two additional members were elected to our Board of Directors at the meeting – Nan Mahone Wellborn and Michael Hayslett. We are so pleased to have them join us as we venture ahead together.



As we look towards the summer, we have another field trip to look forward to – the Purple Alien Invasion. Michael Hayslett will lead a walking tour along the lower Cowpasture and Jackson Rivers where the group will examine a collaborative management project to address the infestation of the lovely but insidious plant, the Purple Loosestrife. Our biggest event of the summer will be our annual summer picnic being held on July 28<sup>th</sup>. This year it will be located on the grounds of Nimrod Hall in Millboro. Be sure and mark your calendars and come on out and join us for the summer fun!

Finally, don't forget to send me your photos of the Cowpasture River. We're always looking for new photos to put into our newsletter, and it would be an honor to consider one of yours. Thanks!

## In case you missed the flooding. . .



Photo courtesy of Jim Bayliss

We received photos of the recent flooding from Jim Bayliss and Bill Jones. Jim's photograph, taken on April 16, 2018, shows the flooding around the Walton Tract swinging bridge. Bill's photo (bottom left) shows the confluence of the Cowpasture River (on the left) and Shaws Fork at Liberty. The bottom right photo shows the Cowpasture River Road overtopped by the river several miles upstream from Williamsville. Bill's photos were taken on April 16<sup>th</sup> around 2:00 p.m., and the gauge on the Bullpasture River at Williamsville had dropped about 3 feet from the earlier morning high (9.25) down to 6.07, or 3,470 cfs.



Photo courtesy of Bill Jones



Photo courtesy of Bill Jones

## Education in Action!

Fun times with the fifth graders from Alleghany County, Clifton Forge and Covington at the Agriculture / Ecology Day held on April 6, 2018 at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College in Clifton Forge. (Photos by Kathy Farmer)



Michael Hayslett, Puggy Farmer and Dave Peters.



Students examining the macroinvertebrates.



The gathering of students with the CRPA table in the background.



Puggy Farmer, Mike Whiteside, Dave Peters and Mike Hayslett working with the students.

River lab on the Jackson River on May 11, 2018 with 160 seventh graders from Clifton Middle School. Ten students from Alleghany High School also served as mentors and assisted the teachers and CRPA Education Committee with the seventh graders. (Photos by Kathy Farmer)



High school mentors entering the river with Puggy Farmer.



Dick Brooks (far left) and the gathering of junior high school students.



## Annual Meeting Highlights



Photo by Kevin Remington

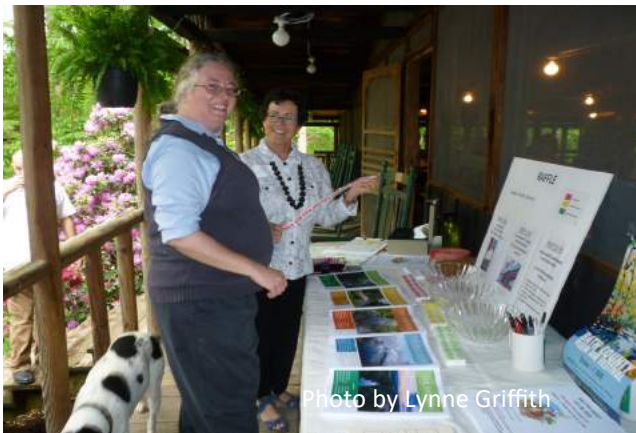


Photo by Lynne Griffith



Photo by Kevin Remington



Photo by Kevin Remington



Photo by Kevin Remington

We had 92 people turn out for our 46th CRPA Annual Meeting and Dinner. Many thanks to Ann Warner and Camp Mont Shenandoah for hosting our big event. Additional thanks to Nan Mahone Wellborn, Peg Sheridan, Debra Sheffer, Julie Farrell, Mike Whiteside and Caryl & John Cowden for contributing items to our Silent Auction. And finally, many thanks to Café Michel, Jack Mason's Tavern and Northwest True Value Hardware (all from Clifton Forge) who donated items to our raffle. It was a team effort, and we could not have done it without you.



# Atlantic Coast Pipeline Update

by Dick Brooks, CRPA Board President

The largest threat to our watershed continues to grind forward. Work is underway in West Virginia and North Carolina where trees were felled in much larger numbers than in Virginia, clearing the way for large construction crews to begin earth disturbance activities. In anticipation of pipeline construction here, the Cowpasture River Preservation Association, the Alleghany/Blue Ridge Alliance and other regional groups have launched a watchdog organization called the Compliance Surveillance Initiative. More on that later.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) has been dealt a significant blow in federal court in May of this year. The Fourth District ruled that the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) did not adequately disclose the “incidental take” of endangered species affected by the path of the pipeline. This action effectively halts the USFWS permit, and it may render other federal permits void as well since the approvals are interrelated. Dominion is arguing that only the land where endangered species are present should be off limits, but given that all the permits are additive, we believe that all construction should be halted until this can be resolved.

Additionally, the Virginia State Water Control Board (SWCB) requested public comment about the validity of the use of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Nationwide 12 permit to protect Virginia's waters. Comments were originally due by May 31, but the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VADEQ) website crashed, accepting no comments for ten days. The new deadline is June 15. It is CRPA's position that the Army Corps's permit is not adequate to protect the Cowpasture River watershed and that each waterbody crossing needs to be surveyed individually.

Now, back to the Compliance Surveillance Initiative (CSI). If or when pipeline construction begins around here, we want to make sure it causes the least environmental harm to our land and water. To do that, we need your help to monitor and fact-find, so we can deliver verified reports to the state agencies that can take appropriate legal action. We'll be checking and reporting on erosion measures that the builder puts in place as well as monitoring water quality during and after construction. If you want to be part of the CSI team, please volunteer at <http://pipelineupdate.org/csi/> or contact Dick Brooks at [drabrooks@gmail.com](mailto:drabrooks@gmail.com), 540.839.2361.

**Example of an incident report generated and qualified by CSI –**

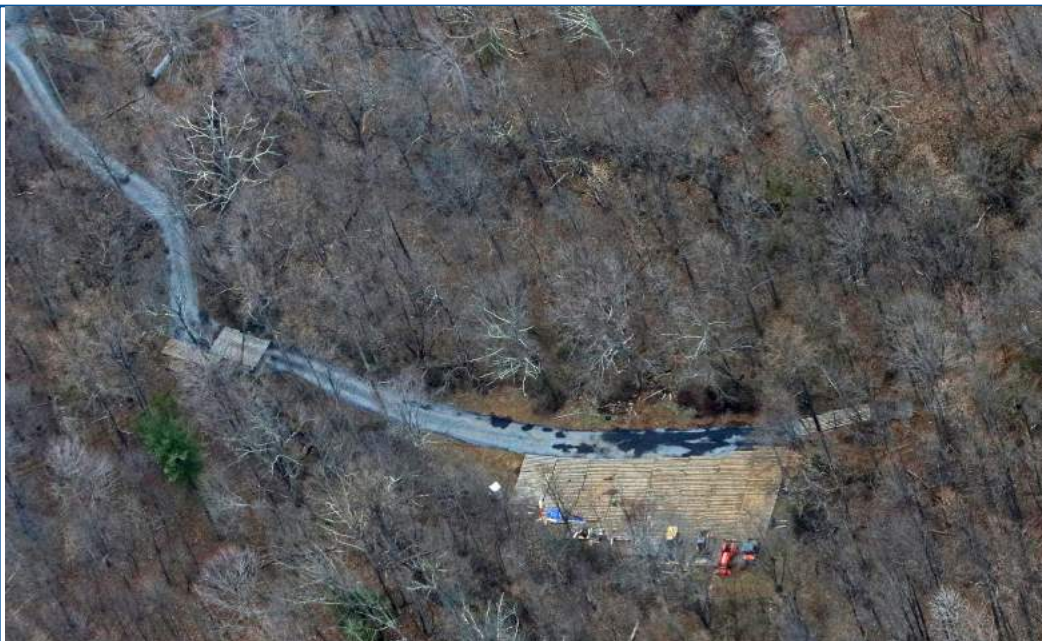
## **CSI INCIDENT REPORT: MARCH 13, 2018**

Posted on **March 28, 2018** by **DPMC Staff**

A formal request has been filed with FERC, seeking an investigation of potential violations by ACP of the Commission's Certificate and Virginia's water quality certification. Aerial photographs taken by members of the Pipeline CSI air force showed what appears to be substantial construction work in an area of Augusta County, near the site from which ACP proposes to bore through the Blue Ridge Mountains. The photographs show new and improved roads, new bridges, and what appear to be equipment parking and staging areas. See **CSI Incident Report (20180313 MP158)**.

*(continued on next page)*





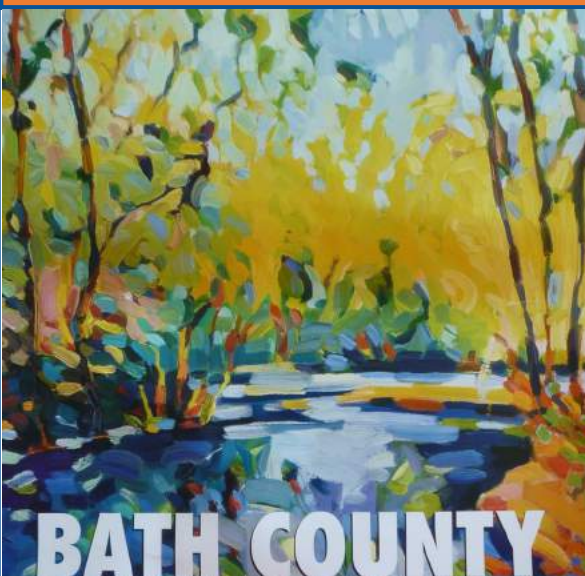
Apparent equipment staging area and new or reconstructed road and bridges observed during Pipeline Air Force surveillance flights.

The observed activities do not appear to have been authorized under any of the limited Notices to Proceed FERC has issued, which allow tree cutting by non-mechanized means. The request explains that these actions will impact water quality in a number of ways and that, since the State of Virginia has not approved erosion and sediment control and stormwater plans and its water quality certification is not effective, possible land disturb-

ance, changes to stormwater flows, and other effects must not be allowed. The submittal to FERC also notes that ACP's weekly status reports have not provided notice of any of these activities and that environmental compliance reports indicate these sites have not been inspected.

We have asked that the Commission report on its investigative proceedings and findings to us and the public and that it not invoke regulatory provisions to keep this information from citizens.

## Bath County Plein Air Art Festival



### BATH COUNTY PLEIN AIR FESTIVAL

October 1-7, 2018

WARM SPRINGS GALLERY • 12 KATYDID TRAIL, WARM SPRINGS, VA 24484 • 540.839.2985

In collaboration with the Cowpasture River Preservation Association

**We're delighted to announce that the Cowpasture River Preservation Association is the festival honoree.**

This year's annual Plein Air Festival, scheduled from October 1 – 7, 2018, will feature art and artists on the Cowpasture River. The event will include 30 professional artists, artist talks and demonstrations, a farm to table dinner, a concert by Cleek Schrey & Friends, and a gala celebration and award ceremony. The festival will be located at the Warm Springs Gallery, 12 Katydid Trail, Warm Springs, VA 24484. For more information go to [www.bathcountypeinairfestival.org/](http://www.bathcountypeinairfestival.org/).

If you can host an artist for that week and/or you have a river view you'd like to share with the artists, please contact Mindy Brooks at [mfkbrooks@gmail.com](mailto:mfkbrooks@gmail.com) or 540-839-2361.

# Swinging Bridges of the Cowpasture and Bullpasture Rivers

by C. Nelson Hoy, Forester, Rancher & Conservationist

Pure childhood nostalgia and pastoral romance! A swinging bridge over a babbling, frolicking creek in the fall or a slow moving lazy river in summertime or a rocky gorge along the Appalachian Mountains. Grandma or grandpa calling out their heart-felt warnings, "Don't run!" But it was pure joy to feel that old bridge sway and nobody even came close to falling into the cool, clear waters.

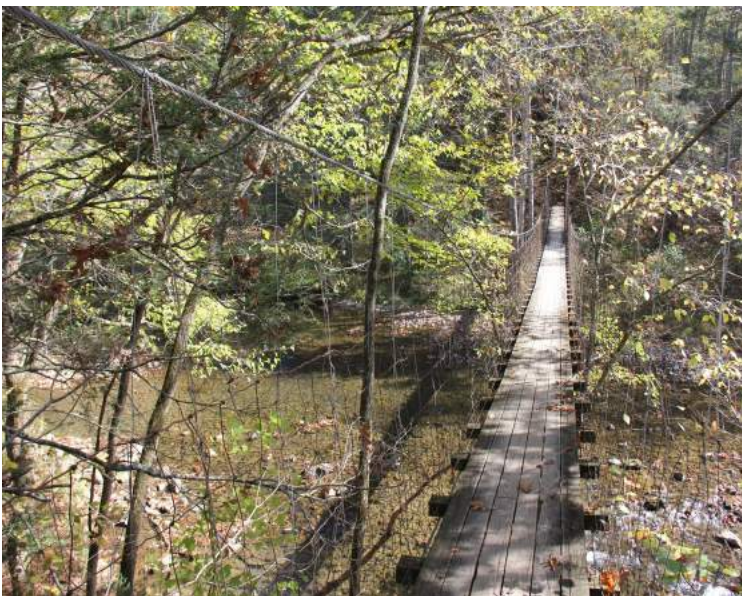
## Purpose

Suspension (or swinging) bridges were built by engineers, foresters and farmers for practical purposes including public access to federal or state recreational lands, private access to seasonal homes and camps, and pedestrian crossings at river fords or low-water crossings. Local folklore suggests that an important purpose may have been to allow rural children to cross a river or a creek at a wagon or automobile ford for boarding a school bus or other transportation.

## Engineering

Suspension bridge design and construction requires some engineering know-how. However, this simple bridge type is found in China, India, Japan, Mexico, Peru and Tibet as well as the United States. The Jacob Creek Bridge in Pennsylvania was built by James Finley in 1801 and is believed to be the first suspension bridge in America. The Wheeling, West Virginia suspension bridge built by Charles Ellet was a significant early design of an American suspension bridge. John Roebling designed the now famous Brooklyn Bridge in New York City in the 1870s, and it was finished in about 1883. Still, the most famous suspension bridge in the United States is arguably the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, constructed in the 1929-1937 timeframe.

A suspension bridge consists of four fundamental engineered components: a vehicle or pedestrian deck hung from vertical wires, the horizontal suspension cables, the supporting towers, and the dead-weight anchors. The suspension cables act in tension, pass over the towers and afterwards are



anchored on each end of the bridge in masonry, concrete or stone. The sagging cables create a curved or bowed effect across the span of the bridge. In rural settings, wire hangers attached to the bridge's main cables support in tension a pedestrian bridge-deck. The supporting towers under compression are built of wood, stone or steel.

## Builders

In the Cowpasture River watershed, swinging bridges were built by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, the U. S. Forest Service, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and most importantly, by private associations and landowners. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries built the swinging

Bullpasture River Gorge Swinging Bridge  
Owned and Operated by the VDGIF Highland Wildlife Management Area  
Photo Courtesy of Kathy Farmer



bridge across the Bullpasture River Gorge. The Virginia Department of Transportation repairs and maintains three swinging bridges in the watershed on the Cowpasture River along Junction Road or State Route 628, on the Cowpasture River at Griffith and State Route 930, and over Pads Creek at Griffith and Route 930. The U.S. Forest Service built the swinging bridges at both the George Washington National Forest's Walton and Wallace Tracts. Landowner associations and private individuals most importantly have built all of the remaining 16 swinging bridges. Curtis (Mac) Beard, Jr. of Clifton Forge has designed and built three swinging bridges across the Cowpasture River, one swinging bridge across the Maury River at Panther Gap, and a fifth across Wilson's Creek in Douthat State Park.

### Byrd Road Act

In Virginia, the Byrd Road Act of 1932 transferred the responsibility for roads and bridges from local jurisdictions to what is now known as the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). A handful of the more prosperous and independent jurisdictions did not relinquish their authority over roads and bridges, but Alleghany, Bath and Highland counties were not among those holdouts. There may be swinging bridges, nevertheless, that were built by these three counties prior to 1932 and that were not included in the VDOT inventory. Local oral history suggests that some swinging bridges may have been built under the auspices of the New Deal's "Work Programs (Projects) Administration."

### Bullpasture River Gorge Swinging Bridge

The Bullpasture Gorge swinging bridge is owned and operated by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. This classic swinging bridge with a 161 ft. span, 18 ½ ft. tall wooden towers, a 33 -inch-wide pedestrian deck and American wire fence for safety rails was built in the mid-to-late 1960s by two staff members of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries – Roy Hodge and Andy Hupman.

Located two and a half miles north of Williamsville on Indian Draft Road, or Virginia Route 678, the Bullpasture Gorge bridge provides public access into the Highland Wildlife



USFS GWNF North River Ranger District, Wallace Tract Swinging Bridge  
Demonstrating Classic Wooden Bridge Towers, Deck and Rails  
Photo Courtesy of C. Nelson Hoy

#### GWNF Wallace Tract Swinging Bridge:

- ★ Location: South of Williamsville 2.2 miles and east along Forest Road 282 another 0.8 miles.
- ★ Latitude: 38° 9'59.48"N and Longitude: 79°34'36.62"W
- ★ Documentation: Google Earth Pro satellite imagery, USGS Williamsville 7.5 Minute Quadrangle.
- ★ Internet Reference: <http://www.sahale.com/kimberling.htm>
- ★ Owner: U.S. Forest Service, North River Ranger District
- ★ Purpose: Provides public access to the USFS GWNF Wallace Tract for hiking, bicycling, hunting, fishing and primitive camping.
- ★ Bridge Builder: Mack McFarland
- ★ Date: 1991-92
- ★ Span Length: 150'
- ★ Travel Deck Width: 3'
- ★ Tower Height: 34' tall CCA treated southern yellow pine.
- ★ Anchor Type: 14 cubic yards of concrete deadmen /w/ 1-1/2" ASTM A 307 rod each mainline.
- ★ MainlineSize: 1", ASTM A 603, 7x7 Wire Rope
- ★ Construction Company: Sahale, LLC built this bridge for the U.S. Forest Service based on a traditional design supplied by the National Park Service. The treated timber towers are set in concrete abutments and the mainlines are anchored to concrete deadmen using fabricated steel rods. Cable suspenders support a floor beam and diaphragm braced stringer deck system. The railing consists of dimensional horizontal rails affixed to 4 x 4 posts, which in turn are attached to the stringer box frame. The bridge was erected by pre-assembling the tower poles on the ground and tilting them into position, then casting the abutment concrete in place. Skylines were used for erection of the main span, including installation of suspenders, floor beams, and stringers." SOURCE: Sahale, LLC website.

Management Area Bullpasture Mountain Tract and to the east bank of the Bullpasture River for naturalists, photographers, birders, painters, fly fishermen, hunters, trappers, hikers, bicyclists and primitive campers. The Highland Wildlife Management Area features an Appalachian oak and hickory forest, small wildlife clearings and soft mast plantings – apple, cherry and dogwood. Game species include black bear, whitetail deer, wild turkey, grouse, squirrels and rabbits. The Bullpasture River is a well-stocked mountain stream offering trout in cool clear waters to the delight of adults and youngsters who love to fish.

The Bullpasture Gorge itself is a scenic waterway with cliffs and large boulders and presents a sometimes dangerous challenge to the whitewater enthusiast. The Bullpasture River from its confluence with the Cowpasture River north and including the Bullpasture Gorge is eligible for designation under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act because it is free-flowing with outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational and geologic values.

### Walton Tract Swinging Bridge

The GWNF Walton Tract swinging bridge is owned and operated by the U.S Forest Service, Warm Springs Ranger District, and it provides public access to the George Washington National Forest on the west side of the Cowpasture River for naturalists, photographers, birders, painters, fly fishermen, hunters, trappers, hikers, bicyclists and primitive campers. The Walton Tract is located five and a half miles south of Millboro Springs along Virginia State Route 42 and one and six tenths miles west along Virginia Route 632 or Grizer's Gap Road and then Wallawhatoola Road. The woodlands and fields found along both sides of the Cowpasture River provide a diversity of wildlife habitats with wildflowers to enjoy in the spring and early summer while the river itself may be more directly experienced by canoe. Wildlife viewing opportunities for bird enthusiasts along the river banks include green and great blue herons, wood ducks, belted kingfishers, pileated woodpeckers, blue jays, American crows, white-eyed vireos, red-tailed hawks and turkey vultures. Also found along the banks are bullfrogs, eastern painted turtles, occasional northern water snakes and black rat snakes. Game species include black bear, whitetail deer, wild turkeys, rabbits, raccoons, squirrels, muskellunge, perch and smallmouth bass. The Walton Tract swinging bridge, most likely constructed in the late 1970s, spans 218 ½ feet across the Cowpasture River, features 32 ft. tall steel I-beam towers, and the pedestrian deck is 30 inches wide.

### Burnett Swinging Bridge

A swinging bridge over the Cowpasture River in its mid-reaches has served local families for three or four generations. The original swinging bridge at this location was most likely built post-World War II. Several decades ago, however, a Colonel Coffee known in local folklore for greeting canoeists with a shotgun for trespassing on “his” river cut the bridge down, arguably because hunters were crossing the Cowpasture to the Colonel’s



USFS GWNF Warm Springs Ranger District, Walton Tract Swinging Bridge  
Photo Courtesy of Kathy Farmer



side. Edward Walters, Sr. subsequently built a cable trolley to ferry family members, guests and their provisions across the Cowpasture River. But before the cable trolley, Eddie Walters, Jr. remembers hiking north to the Virginia Elk Youth Camp swinging bridge to cross the Cowpasture River in high water on his way to school.

The Walters family in 1988 commissioned Curtis (Mac) Beard of Clifton Forge to build a new swinging bridge across the Cowpasture. This swinging bridge, according to Mac Beard's recollections, is unique among Cowpasture River bridges in that as many triangles as possible were incorporated in the design. A triangle is a stable element in construction, especially in swinging bridges. The top pick-up cables formed triangles left and right. The towers were set at angles to form triangles at both ends, and the pedestrian deck was about 54 inches wide at both ends but reduced to 38 inches at the middle to form two more triangles. Flying braces were fabricated by Joe Wood to pull the cables to the correct width across the span. Thus, the Walters' bridge is a stable structure more like a sidewalk than a swinging bridge. Edward Walters, Sr., his grandson Roland and Mac Beard put down the pedestrian deck. Mac fondly remembers the project as "a wonderful experience." This swinging bridge now known as the Burnett Swinging Bridge provides private access to family-owned property on the west side of the Cowpasture River.

### Aesthetic Values

Swinging bridges along the Bullpasture and Cowpasture rivers create special opportunities for both residents and visitors to enjoy the aesthetic values of these pastoral waterways. Citizens gain more convenient access to public lands for hunting, fly fishing, photography, painting and quiet enjoyment. Local photographer Kathy Farmer has captured a dozen outstanding photographic images of swinging bridges along the Bullpasture and Cowpasture rivers. Nan Mahone Wellborn of Roanoke and Highland County has painted with oil on canvas a Cowpasture River swinging bridge and many waterscapes.

### Intrepid Explorers

In the Cowpasture River watershed, there are about 22 swinging bridges. Google Earth Pro was used for desk-top reconnaissance, and 20 of these bridges were found with space satellite imagery. But



Burnett Family Swinging Bridge Over the Cowpasture River  
Painting by Nan Mahone Wellborn with Oil on Canvas.

because the river is sometimes hidden in defile by steep terrain or heavy foliage along narrow stretches, it is possible to miss a swinging bridge when using space-based imagery. Two swinging bridges were therefore found by ground reconnaissance.

Across the northern Cowpasture River there are at least four swinging bridges – the Opal Alt Farm Bridge, the Wright Family Bridge, the Salmons Family Bridge and the Meadows Family Bridge. Across the Bullpasture River there are at least three suspension bridges – the Neil Family Bridge, the Crooks Family Bridge and the VDGIF Bullpasture River Gorge Bridge. Across the southern

Cowpasture River there are another 15 swinging bridges – the Bullpasture and Cowpasture Confluence Bridge, the USFS GWNF Wallace Tract Bridge, the Buxton Farm Bridge, the Riverjack Lane Bridge, the USFS GWNF Walton Tract Bridge, the Horeb Baptist Church Bridge, the Lynchburg Camp Bridge, the Christians Farm Bridge, the Highlander Hunt Club Bridge, the Burnett Family Bridge, the VDOT Griffith Cowpasture Bridge, the VDOT Pads Creek Bridge, the Beard Family Bridge, the Nicely Family Bridge and the River View Bridge.

#### Research Sources:

- ✦ Google Earth Pro, 2017 Edition.
- ✦ Kimberling Creek Swinging Bridge, Sahale, LLC, Trail and Bridge Planning, Engineering & Construction, Photographic Gallery, 1992. See: <http://www.sahale.com/kimberling%20gallery.htm>.
- ✦ Latincsics, Tibor, P.E., Conklin Associates, Design and Construction of the Pochuck Quagmire Bridge -- A Suspension Timber Bridge, Appalachian Trail, Vernon Valley, New Jersey, (Morgantown, West Virginia: USDA USFS National Wood in Transportation Information Center, NA-TP-04-97, November 1998, 154 pages.
- ✦ Steinman, David Barnard, A Practical Treatise on Suspension Bridges: Their design, construction and erection, (New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, /w/ 59 illustrations, Three Design Charts, 1922, 204 pages. Note: this technical reference will be primarily of interest to civil and mechanical engineers.

## The Walton Tract Clean-Up



Many thanks to all who turned out for our bi-annual clean-up at the Walton Tract on April 28th. We had a great group of volunteers who rounded up several bags of garbage for us. Special kudos to Sophie Waller for spotting a rusty old barrel and helping us to get rid of the eyesore. We appreciate the ongoing support of the Potomac Hunt Club who faithfully shows up for this event. (Photos by Kathy Farmer)



### DATES TO REMEMBER

**July 7, 2018 (Saturday, 9:00 AM—12:00 PM):** Purple Alien Invasion Field Trip. *Registration opens June 8.*  
**July 28, 2018 (Saturday, 3:00 PM—8:00 PM):** Summer Picnic and Family Fun Day  
**October 27, 2018 (Saturday, 1:00 PM — 4:00 PM):** Bi-Annual Walton Tract Clean-Up



## Member Profile — Lou and Betty Robinson

By Lynne Griffith, CRPA Executive Assistant

Did you ever wonder how The River Runs got its start? We have Lou Robinson to thank for that. The first issue was published in Spring of 2001. There had previously only been a one-page newsletter, but Lou felt the need to expand it into several more pages. The current President at the time, Bob Brooks, was receptive to the idea, so Lou ran with it! He even found the perfect person to do the desktop publishing – Sharon Sherrard, the wife of the minister of the Presbyterian church at Windy Cove. In fact, it was Sharon who came up with the name, The River Runs. She edited and laid out the newsletter for many years. Lou usually wrote at least one article for each issue, and he ended up overseeing it for six years. His main focus was twofold: write about river monitoring and also write about the people who lived in the Cowpasture River community. Shortly after launching The River



Lou and Betty on their property which borders the Cowpasture River

Runs, he also started up our website for us — [www.cowpastureriver.org](http://www.cowpastureriver.org). It all began with Lou!

After Lou became involved with the newsletter, Bob Brooks started asking Lou to attend some board meetings, and Lou ended up becoming a CRPA board member. He served on the Board of Directors for two terms, from 2001 to 2007. He went off the board for a couple of years but came back on again in 2009, serving three more years. He officially left the board in 2012. For a number of years, he was both the Secretary and the Treasurer, and in the Summer of 2012, he was the Vice President.

Lou and his wife Betty reside in McLean, Virginia, where they have lived since 1969. They have been coming down to the Cowpasture River for 29 years, driving down about once a month. They say that McLean is their home, but the Cowpasture River is their getaway! In the beginning, they used to stay at the Circle H Campground. They bought a trailer and rented a space from Bill Hearn, the campground owner. But when Bill closed the campground in 1994, they began looking for their own piece of property along the river. They ended up finding a great riverfront property right off of the Cowpasture River Highway, and they moved their trailer to that picturesque spot. They've been there ever since. They have fond memories of as many as 25 people camping out on their property at one time (family members, their kids and their kids' friends). They would pitch tents and sleep out on the screened in porch. They are grateful for the many years of family gatherings on the river.

Lou went to Virginia Tech and graduated with a BS in Electrical and Electronics Engineering. He worked for many years as an electrical engineer. His first job after graduation was in Florida, but he and Betty eventually moved to northern Virginia for another position. In 1989, Lou founded Winning

Proposals, Inc., serving as its Chief Operating Officer. The company consists of talented technical writers, graphic artists and others with expertise in the proposal writing business. Lou sold the company 12 years ago but still works there two days a week.

After Lou graduated from Virginia Tech, Betty was a stay-at-home Mom until her youngest child entered the second grade. At that point, Betty became an Instructional Assistant at the Fairfax County Public Schools in northern Virginia, working at the same school that her children went to. Her job was within walking distance of her home, and she worked there for 23 years.

Lou and Betty have two children – a son and a daughter. Their daughter lives in Philadelphia and has three children. She recently became a teacher's aide and works with handicapped children. Their son is married and lives in New Jersey. He works in the theater with sound and lights, and he has worked extensively on Broadway.

When asked what issues CRPA should focus on in the future, Lou and Betty mentioned their desire to see the river opened up, to a greater degree, to the public for activities such as boating, fishing and general overall recreation. Although they realize this can be a controversial issue, it is their belief that even though landowners might own the land at the bottom of the river, that no one owns the water on top. They would like to see everyone be able to enjoy it.

We are forever indebted to Lou and Betty for their years of faithful service to the CRPA, and we are grateful that they continue to find their way back to the river, over and over again.

## Field Trip Highlights

### Vernal Pools of the Cowpasture River Valley (March 31, 2018) led by Michael Hayslett



Photo by Lynne Griffith



Photo by Peg Sheridan

We had two successful field trips during the Spring. 12 people came out to hear about vernal pools and to explore these rare mountain wetlands and their aquatic wildlife. In the photo to the left, Michael Hayslett is showing the group a spotted salamander egg mass. 14 people turned out to learn more about the rare habitats of the shale barrens. Staff Botanist Johnny Townsend from the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation led the group.

### Shale Barrens of the Cowpasture River Valley (May 18, 2018) led by Johnny Townsend



Photo by Lynne Griffith



Photo by Dave Peters

← The Shale Barren Buckwheat. There are only four species of this plant in the East. Per Johnny Townsend, this "species is a relic of another climatic phase and time. The plants 'stranded' on the dry shales in our area went on their own evolutionary journey."



# CRPA Annual Summer Picnic & Family Fun Day



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**SATURDAY, JULY 28, 2018**

**COME JOIN IN THE SUMMER FUN!**

<b>3:00—5:00 p.m.</b>	Socialize, games, guided river float
<b>5:30—6:30 p.m.</b>	Cocktail hour
<b>6:30—8:00 p.m.</b>	Picnic dinner

**WHERE:**

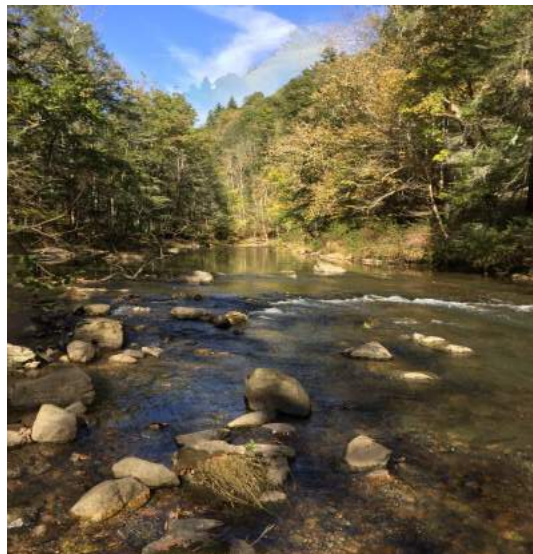
Nimrod Hall, 216 Nimrod Drive, Millboro, VA 24460

**COST:**

- \$10 per person; children 12 and under are free.
- Beverages and meat will be provided by the Association.
- Bring your lawn chairs and a covered dish item. (You will be assigned a category for your covered dish item when you RSVP.)

**RSVP Deadline:** July 25, 2018

**RSVP:** Email [directorcrpa@gmail.com](mailto:directorcrpa@gmail.com) or call Lynne Griffith, CRPA Executive Assistant, at 540-620-7795.



**DIRECTIONS:**

**From the Clifton Forge Area:**

- Starting at the intersection of I-64 and Rt. 42 (Cowpasture River Road), go about 12.3 miles on Rt. 42 and take a left onto State Road 655 (Nimrod Drive). (The left turn is just past the dumpsters which will be on your right.) Follow the signs to the picnic.

**From the North:**

- Starting at the intersection of Hwy. 39 and Rt. 42 in Millboro Springs, take Rt. 42 for 4 miles south and take a right onto State Road 655 (Nimrod Drive). Follow the signs to the picnic.



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## Protect The Things You Love

**Please join us today. The river needs your time, talent and support!**

**Your donations are tax deductible!**

☒ \$25 Adult Membership (minimum annual dues  
per individual

☐ \$50 River Guardian Donation

☐ \$100 Headwaters Circle Donation

☐ \$250 Watershed Steward Donation

☐ \$500 Wallawhatoola Society Donation

☐ \$1,000 Bedrock Patron Donation

☐ Memorial Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$12 Junior Membership Dues

☐ I am a NEW member!

☐ I am RENEWING

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY — STATE — ZIP

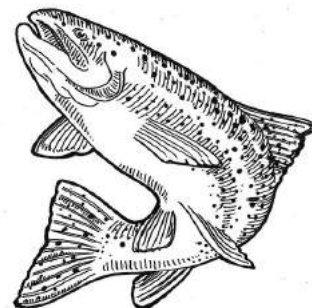
PHONE

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I prefer to NOT have my name published as a contributor.

☐ Please send my newsletter by email version only.

☐ I am interested in becoming a volunteer and/or river monitoring.



(Note: A financial statement is available upon written request from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services — Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs.)