

THE RIVER RUNS

News from the Cowpasture River Preservation Association



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Special ***Thanks!*** goes to **Angie Brackenridge Hinebaugh** for our cover photo this issue. Her view of the Cowpasture River from the swinging bridge below Griffith Knob in Allegheny County won an Allegheny Highlands Chamber of Commerce photo contest and appears online at *Pictures on Pinterest*.

This wintry image also appears in the CRPA's new 8-panel membership brochure (See page 7).

Angie is a new CRPA member who lives in Clifton Forge with her family and enjoys kayaking the lower Cowpasture near the Walton Tract and from Sharon Park to the Evans Tract.

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Editor: Mike Hayslett

Photographer: Kathy Farmer

From the President

Cowpasture Ramblin'

Friends & Associates:

The Cowpasture River Preservation Association (CRPA) represents about 350 individuals, all with a common commitment to preserving surface and ground water quality. Our Association's members contribute their time, talent and treasure to ensure cool, clear, water. Some environmental challenges, however, require resources well beyond the CRPA's financial wherewithal and subject matter expertise. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline threat and fight being a case in point.

Your Association, with these limitations in mind, works to advance collaborative relationships with other environmental organizations. Several illustrations include:

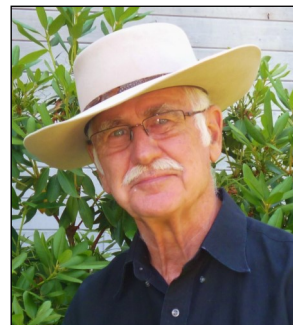
- ◆ The Cowpasture River Preservation Association together with the Valley Conservation Council conceived and organized the round-table workshop that formed the Alleghany-Blue Ridge Alliance (ABRA) – now 50 organizations plus strong.
- ◆ The CRPA together with a dozen environmental non-profits and the Southern Environmental Law Center delivered a critical review of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's arguments for conversion of 10 Virginia Outdoors Foundation conservation easements.
- ◆ The Cowpasture River Preservation Association established collaborative relationships with the public school systems in Alleghany, Bath and Highland Counties in support of the Commonwealth's Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) program.
- ◆ The Association collaborates with the U.S. Forest Service on two initiatives – i.e., the bi-annual clean ups of the USFS Walton Tract on the Cowpasture River and stakeholder involvement with the USFS Lower Cowpasture River Restoration Project. The U.S. Forest Service oversees conservation practices on 50% of the acreage in the Cowpasture Watershed.

In the coming new year, I foresee collaborative opportunities with The Nature Conservancy being our best hope for enlightened water resource stewardship during the second coming of the Dark Ages. Also please note that the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is the second largest land management agency in the Cowpasture Watershed with responsibility for the Highland Wildlife Management Area and the ground water-dependent the Coursey Springs Fish Cultural Station.

Please contribute your talent to advancing collaborative relationships for the Association and the River.

With warm regards,

Nelson Hoy, President



Executive Director's Corner

Happy New Year, Friends!

After a little over a year into this role as your Director, I've been reflecting — as we tend to do at this time of year — and I realize how important are relationships and a “sense of place”, to ***Protect the Things You Love***.

Relationships among people can certainly be complicated, but relationship to a place (i.e., love for a place) seems more simple, and it is commonly the essence of a conservation mind-set that desires to preserve a place in its past (or “natural”) state.



While corresponding about the passing of a dear member of the CRPA (Please see page 14 for our memorial to Peggy Paxton), I thought about their home here in these Allegheny ridges and valleys — *their place* in our watershed — and what that area has also meant to me over the years.

The *place* I'm referring to is the Longdale Furnace area of eastern Alleghany County. This under credited finger of the Cowpasture River watershed is the Simpson Creek valley, and it even includes water flowing off of Rockbridge County slopes that makes its way down to the river below Sharon Park.

This valley was a favorite haunt of mine in my early years growing up here in the Highlands region.

I was especially drawn to the headwater streams of that area: the North Branch of Simpson in the *Rich Hole Wilderness Area*, Blue Suck Branch in the *Longdale Recreation Area* (See the photo on page 15) and to the surrounding national forest lands for hunting, hiking, and exploring the wilds. I recall many personal experiences over the years with ravens, native brook trout, black bears, salamanders, rattlers, spring gobblers, hemlock trees, songbirds, wildflowers, whitetail bucks, etc.

All these wild elements were (and are) part of the allure and appeal to me of living in our less trammled region. My relationship with that natural place and all those creatures helped fashion my *sense of place* and as a result, my love for the beauty of our region and its watersheds.

Our relationships to the wildlands, water, wildlife, and people that live among them is a reminder to continue to fight for the preservation of these wild things we love and the privilege it is to live among the rivers, forests, ridges, caves, and pools of these Allegheny Mountains.

So my New Year reflections and resolutions compel me to encourage our readers to carry your love for natural places and *Nature* into this new year — holding high your “conservation banner” — with a renewed determination to enjoy and protect our precious watershed, its water quality and wildlife, plus the scenic beauty and recreation it affords to all of us!

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike".

Water Resources Stewardship

THE VALUE OF WATER: Cool, Clear, Water

by C. Nelson Hoy, Forester, Rancher and Conservationist

WILLIAMSVILLE – Bob Nolan in 1936 stroked the lyrics to "Cool Water", a now classic western cowboy poem and song about a man and his mule, Dan, and the mirage of cool, clear, water in the dry desert of the American south-west. More than 80 years later, the Cowpasture River Valley of Virginia's surface and ground water resources are at risk of degradation from the development of an industrial-scale gas pipeline. The Cowpasture River Preservation Association (CRPA) in an effort to highlight the environmental risks and exposures is working to determine the value of the Valley's water resources and to protect both surface and ground water in the watershed. So then why should water conservation measures matter to citizens, students and local public officials?

Water Ecosystem Services:

Homesteaders, farmers and businesses in the Cowpasture and Bullpasture Rivers Valley are 100% dependent upon cool, clear, water and use water for at least eight purposes:

- 1) Domestic Water Wells – The water ecosystem services include water for drinking, cooking, bathing, gardening and washing.
- 2) Public Water Wells – The ecosystem services are almost the same as for domestic wells.
- 3) Farm Livestock Water Supplies – Services include water for draft horses, beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and fish.
- 4) Farm Irrigation Water Supplies – Agricultural uses includes operations such as commodity crop farms, landscape and horticulture businesses , tree nurseries and fish hatcheries.
- 5) Commercial Water Withdrawals – Commercial water uses include golf courses, local and state installations, hotels and restaurants, laundromats and car washes among others.
- 6) Outdoor Recreation Usage – Recreation-based ecosystem services include fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, boating and swimming.
- 7) Non-consumptive Water Services – Non-consumptive uses include painting, photography, scenery enjoyment and property view sheds.
- 8) Natural Heritage Water Services – Cultural contributions include aesthetic values, existence values, endangered species values, bequest values and option values.

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The Value of Wells and Springs:

The University of Minnesota's Natural Resources Research Institute concluded twenty years ago that ground water was vastly more valuable than surface water – about 13 times more valuable in terms of economic activity and jobs. According to The Value of Water Campaign, “The average American uses 176 gallons of water per day – that's 64,240 gallons per year.” How do we use this water? “Seventeen percent goes toward your morning shower, 27% is used by the toilet, your faucet drains 15%, the clothes washer another 22%, miscellaneous needs take up 5%, and those pesky leaks steal another 14%.” The author's cost estimates presented below for the value of wells and springs in the Cowpasture River Valley are based upon the costs today for developing each water supply source and the costs of financing this development over the next 30 years.



Cool, Clear, Waters of the Bullpasture River Gorge. Photographic credit given to Kathy Farmer.

Livestock Well or Spring – A farmer or rancher in the Cowpasture River Valley who develops a stand-alone livestock water supply system incurs costs for well drilling and casing, a solar powered pumping plant, a water delivery piping system, a water storage tank and troughs and interest on a 30-year farm loan for a total cost of \$35,000. The development by a farm of a natural karst spring, therefore, should deliver an economic benefit of comparable value.

Domestic Water Supplies – Homesteaders in the Cowpasture River Valley who drill and develop a water supply system for their homes invest an estimated \$40,000 in drilling, casing, pump, piping, electric, a pressure tank, water treatment equipment, permits and testing.

Dairy Water Supplies – Dairies in the Cowpasture Valley that drill into a sufficiently productive aquifer invest an estimated \$50,000 or more for drilling, casing, pump, piping, electric, storage, treatment and permits and tests plus financing costs.

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Municipal Water Supplies – City and town governments in Virginia that must replace a municipal water supply well that becomes contaminated with hazardous industrial chemicals with a new well drilled into a potable aquifer face out-of-pocket expenses of an estimated \$2,500,000 or more for geophysical and hydrological studies, land purchases, engineering studies, drilling a 1,000 foot deep well and casing, pumping equipment, transmission piping, water treatment system, telemetry, monitoring and control systems, support buildings plus Municipal AA-rated bond interest over 30 years for a total cost of close to \$4,300,000.

Aqua-agriculture Usages – The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Coursey Springs Fish Cultural Center in the Cowpasture River Valley depends upon cold and pure water from the Cowpasture River which sinks and resurges as Coursey Springs the third largest spring in the Commonwealth with a flow rate of 4,000 to 16,000 gallons per minute. The author believes that the development of Coursey Springs, a natural karst spring, appears roughly comparable to the development of a municipal water supply system or about \$4,000,000 in value.

The Value of Surface Waters:

Water-powered Mills – Harnessing water resources to power mill machinery for the purposes of grinding grains, forging iron, carding wool and sawing logs enhanced the quality of life for early Americans because water-power dramatically reduced human labor. Grinding corn with water-powered millstones, instead of grinding corn by hand, freed up many hours of farm labor and at the same time, produced a more palatable food source. Sawing logs into timbers, planks and boards at a water-powered mill saved back-breaking labor in a sawyers' pit pulling a vertical saw up or down, and it allowed the building of more refined homes. Water-powered mills contributed enormous values to the Virginia frontier and allowed for a greater self-sufficiency.

Summer Camps Along the Cowpasture – For 100 years, young women and men have come in the summer time to the remote, rugged and romantic Cowpasture River Valley. Their bodies, minds and spirits have grown in the great outdoors, swimming and canoeing in the river's cool green waters, learning the skills and shouldering the responsibilities of being life guards, and learning a special appreciation for river flora, fauna and fishes. Value is demonstrated by parents and grandparents who financially sacrificed to send their children to summer camp and by "10,000" young lives that over those many years were enriched by the Cowpasture River.

Recreational Fisheries – Visitors from the Baltimore, Washington and Richmond corridor enjoy recreational fishing for trout along the Bullpasture River and eastern brook trout fishing in the upper Cowpasture River, Benson Run, Crab Run, Davis Run and Shaws Fork with estimated expenditures of \$250 per person per day for travel, lodging and meals plus secondary purchases, and with no value placed upon their time.

Rural Real Estate Values – Rivers, creeks, drafts and runs add value to rural real estate holdings by somewhere between \$10 and \$1,000 or more per linear foot of waterway frontage. Other variable factors in this calculus include the number of acres in the parcel, whether ownership is on one side of the river or stream or both, the water volume for

"Cool Water" by Bob Nolan

All day I've faced the barren waste
Without the taste of water, cool water
Old Dan and I with throats burned dry
And souls that cry for water, cool, clear water

Keep a-movin', Dan, don't you listen to him, Dan
He's a devil not a man
And he spreads the burning sand with water
Dan can you see that big green tree
Where the water's runnin' free
And it's waiting there for you and me

The nights are cool and I'm a fool
Each star's a pool of water, cool water
But with the dawn I'll wake and yawn
And carry on to water, cool, clear, water

The shadows sway and seem to say
Tonight we pray for water, cool, water
And way up there He'll hear our prayer
And show us where there's water, cool, clear, water

Dan's feet are sore he's yearning for
Just one thing more than water, cool, water
Like me I guess he'd like to rest
Where there's no quest for water, cool, clear, water.

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canoeing and swimming, the stream habitat for trout and other game fishes, and water flow during extended dry periods. But the influence on property values is real and potentially significant.

Frontiers in Water Valuation:

During the last 30-odd years, scientists, economists and statisticians have developed increasingly sophisticated tools for determining the value of water. Two leading academics in the field of how to place value on water ecosystem goods and services are Dr. Robert A. Young and Dr. John B. Loomis, both of the Colorado State University. The National Capital Project, a partnership among Stanford University, The Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund, works to integrate the emerging academic knowledge about ecosystem services and values into everyday natural resource management decision-making.

In the Cowpasture River Valley of Virginia, the CRPA's outreach initiatives work to enlighten citizens, students and public officials about the value of water resources and to protect both surface and ground water resources in the watershed.

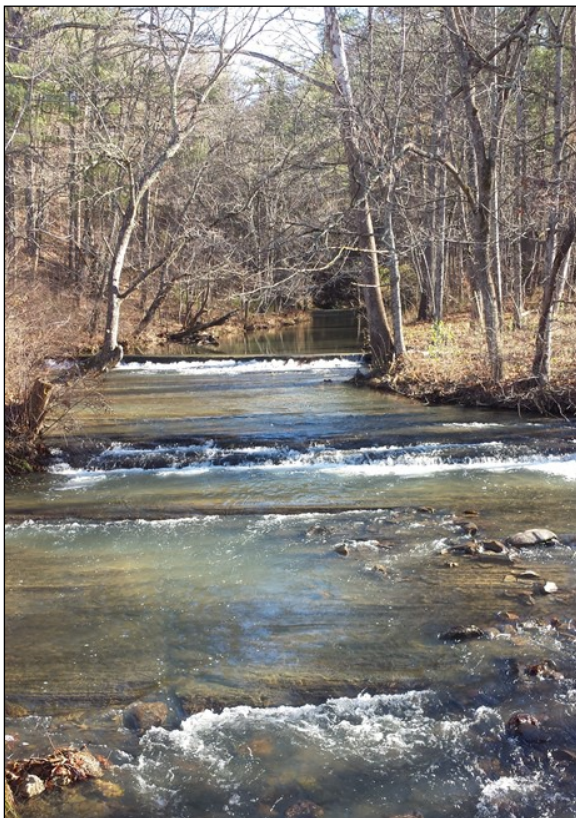
Follow-up Research Sources:

Audio Linkage for "Cool Water" by Bob Nolan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3GME0VUZiQ>

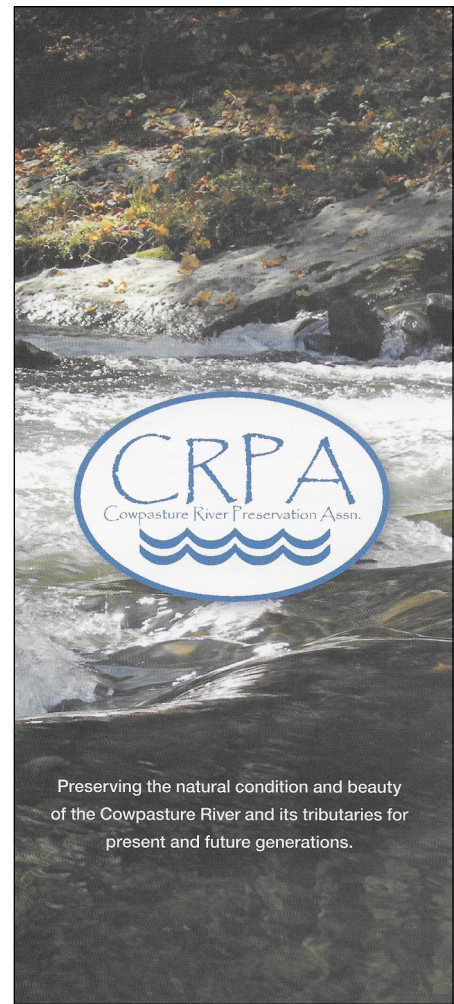
Young, Robert and Loomis, John, Determining the Economic Value of WATER Concepts and Methods (New York, New York: Resources for the Future Press, Second Edition, 2014), 337 pages.

<http://thevalueofwater.org/> See: "The Value of Water Campaign".



Lick Run at Millboro (Photo by Mike Hayslett)

New Brochure Available



Copies of the new membership brochure are available for distribution and recruitment use.

Contact: directorcrpa@gmail.com

Dates to Remember

Here's the Full Calendar of CRPA Activities & Events for 2017!

March 26 (Sunday, 1:00 - 5:00 PM): *WallaTrek 1 — Vernal Pools of the CRV Field Trip* (See details on page 10).

April 22 (Saturday, 1:00 - 5:00 PM): *Spring River Clean Up* at the Walton & Evans Tracts: Help us celebrate **Earth Day** while collecting litter with our partners, the Potomac Hunt Club and students from Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. Please contact Mike through directorcrpa@gmail.com to sign up.

May 19 (Friday, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM): *WallaTrek 2 — Shale Barrens of the CRV Field Trip* (See details on page 10).

May 20 (Saturday, 5:00 - 8:00 PM): *45th Annual Meeting* on the river at Camp Mont Shenandoah will include a Social with Silent Auction, Business Meeting, Catered Dinner, and Special Program!

July 8 (Saturday, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM): *WallaTrek 3 — Purple Alien Invasion Field Trip* (See details on page 10).

July 29 (Saturday, 3:00 - 8:00 PM): *Summer Picnic & Family Fun Day* on the river with water activities, games, a guided float on the Cowpasture, social hour, and cook-out dinner!



Oct. 13 (Friday, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM): *WallaTrek 4 — Riparian Buffer Areas Field Trip* (See details on page 10).

Oct. 14 (Saturday, 1:00 - 5:00 PM): *Fall River Clean Up* at the Walton & Evans Tracts: Enjoy autumn scenery while collecting litter with our partners. Please contact Mike through directorcrpa@gmail.com to sign up.

Explore our Website: WWW.COWPASTURERIVER.ORG

PLEASE CONSIDER A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION IN 2017 TO FURTHER THE WORK OF THE CRPA

Your Financial Gift Can Support:

- Monitoring the water quality of the Cowpasture and Bullpasture Rivers; and
- Providing watershed education to students and the public; or
- Opposing the threat of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline; and
- Memorializing members who've passed on; plus
- Providing CRPA members with annual social events for fellowship and keeping up on the latest news.



Contact directorcrpa@gmail.com or any member of our Board of Directors. Thank You!

Association News: *Meet Our Partners*

New CRPA Conservation Collaboration:

Virginia Highlands Wood Duck Club

The Cowpasture River Preservation Association (CRPA) has traditionally welcomed opportunities to collaborate with agencies and other organizations in projects that have mutual goals of watershed conservation. Examples include:

Water quality concerns and natural resource management practices on public-owned lands within the 300,000-acre Cowpasture River watershed involve the U. S. Forest Service, the Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries, and The Nature Conservancy - Allegheny Highlands Program. CRPA volunteers conduct regular litter clean-ups at public river access points along the Cowpasture, primarily on national forest lands. River monitoring and training are conducted routinely with members of the Allegheny Highlands Master Naturalist chapter. CRPA and the Jackson River Preservation Association, along with 50 other organizations, currently oppose and provide critical review of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline project. River education labs are offered to students at all levels, with the CRPA assisting Virginia Cooperative Extension and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College in offerings annually.

Let us now introduce you to our new partner: the *Virginia Highlands Wood Duck Club* (VHWDC)! At the December 4, 2016 quarterly meeting of the CRPA Board of Directors, held at the Waterwheel Restaurant in Warm Springs, CRPA leaders heard a brief presentation and collaboration appeal by VHWDC president, Arne Peterson, of Millboro.

The mission of the VHWDC is to increase nesting success of ducks by providing nest structures and improving habitat in our headwaters region. Any landowner may request a visit by a club member. If the habitat is suitable, the club will provide and erect a box free of charge. The club only requires the landowner allow an annual inspection to clean the box, take data on results and make necessary repairs. An annual report will be provided, however the location of boxes will not be divulged to the public.



Photo of Arne and wood duck nest box by William H. Funk

The 6 current VHWDC members have installed 87 boxes in 4 counties to date, but only 10 of those nesting boxes have been in the Cowpasture River Valley (2 are on the farm of board member, Dick Brooks' family). Arne's appeal to the CRPA Board and members is to find other landowners along the river and its tributaries, who are willing to have wood duck boxes installed and monitored by their volunteers. He would be happy to inspect for appropriate habitat (forested bottomland wetlands or a slow river bend), and Arne is also seeking a couple folks from the CRPA to be liaisons to our new partnership for this aspect of wildlife conservation within the Cowpasture River watershed.

Contact Arne Peterson at:

(540) 997-5216

peterstonam@icloud.com



Read the full story at <http://www.williamhfunk.com/from-cheetahs-to-wood-ducks.html>

Field Trips Initiative

More Outdoors & Explore! This was a sentiment expressed through a Member Survey mailed during late Spring of 2016. Well, you asked for it, you got it! Announcing the **CRPA's 2017 Field Trips Initiative** – designed to provide additional member activities for exploring the beauty and natural wonders of the Cowpasture River Valley (CRV) and its watershed!

The **Wallawha-Trekking** initiative will be an annual series of special educational and recreational activities on the CRPA calendar that will enhance the value of CRPA memberships. These outings will allow more opportunities for social networking, where members can see old friends plus meet and recruit new ones!

Coordination for the first year of **Wallawha-Treks** is underway. These trips will spotlight natural history topics in our watershed, while engaging members with conservation issues and professionals in the field. A 30-day advance registration by email will be used to book each activity. Space will be limited, and nominal fees will cover costs of refreshments, transportation, etc. Watch for further details in the Spring issue of this newsletter.

Tentative 2017 Wallawha-Treks Schedule:

March 26 (Sunday) WT1: **Vernal Pools of the CRV** \$10.00 per person

1:00-5:00 p.m. Explore rare mountain wetlands and their fascinating aquatic wildlife on the Buxton Farm. Led by Mr. Mike Hayslett, Principal of VA *Vernal Pools, LLC*. Vernal pools are special habitats that were featured in the 2016 Spring issue of *The River Runs*. For more information see: www.virginiavernalpools.org
Members Only Event (Limit of 20).

May 19 (Friday) WT2: **Shale Barrens of the CRV** \$10.00 per person

Explore these rare habitats and their unique wildflowers on private farms in the CRV. Led by Mr. Chris Ludwig, Chief Biologist at VDCR-Natural Heritage. *Cook-out to follow. Members Only Event (Limit of 20).*

July 8 (Saturday) WT4: **Purple Alien Invasion** \$5.00 per person

Purple Loosestrife is a lovely but insidious ornamental plant that is invading the James River headwaters region. This auto/walking tour will examine a new collaborative plant management project to address these infestations, with multiple stops along the lower Cowpasture and Jackson rivers. Led by Mike Hayslett, with personnel from the *Alleghany Highlands Master Naturalists*, *Jackson River Preservation Association*, and state agencies.
Open to All.

October 13 (Friday) WT4: **Riparian Buffer Areas** \$5.00 per person

Will be hosted by John and Caryl Cowden at Fort Lewis Lodge and feature conservation practices they have put in place, as demonstrations of riparian buffer principles and function. We plan to have forestry personnel along as guides for this field trip.

Registration by email for each field trip will open 30 days prior to the date of each field trip.

Questions or Requests? Contact: directorcrpa@gmail.com



Mike Hayslett leading a vernal pool workshop in northern Virginia. Photo by Sarah Steadman.

SPECIAL ISSUES REPORT: Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Should The CRPA Members Worry About The ACP?

by Richard Brooks, Pipeline Ad Hoc Committee Chair

*By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.*

MILLBORO – I tend to worry. As a father, I worry about my daughters and their future. As a husband, I worry about my wife and our shared direction. As a business leader, I worry about our strategy and my team. And as a landowner, I worry about my property and my responsibilities as a steward of this beautiful land.

More than a mile of the Cowpasture River runs through my family farm, so this precious watershed is currently high on my worry list. As I see it, our land and our water face certain damage and possible ruin by the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP), the largest infrastructure project that this area has seen since the construction of the Gathright Dam and creation of Lake Moomaw in 1974-79.

Why the Concern?

Dominion Virginia Power and its partners Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas and Southern Company Gas intend to build a pipeline to carry the natural gas produced in the Marcellus Formation in West Virginia to a newly proposed power plant in North Carolina. The route starts in Harrison County, West Virginia, and runs through Virginia to its destination in Robeson County, North Carolina. Additionally, a spur is planned to run from a compression station on the Virginia/North Carolina border to Chesapeake County, Virginia. Along its proposed (and highly controversial) route, the ACP will cross under the Cowpasture River near Fort Lewis. As the pipeline travels through this part of Virginia, it will travel through high hazard and karst terrain, negatively affecting our watershed for more than 20 miles.

Don't We Need this Fuel?

Dominion states that demand for natural gas is growing at 3.5 percent annually and that this growth is expected to continue through 2035. They estimate that during this period the supply of natural gas required to meet this demand needs to grow by 165 percent. An energy-industry consulting firm, ICF International, conducted primary research to come up with these numbers using two models based upon "historical relationships and expectations that ICF believes are reasonable." Armed with these numbers, Dominion plans to deliver that fuel with a massive, 42-inch natural gas pipeline.

But before anyone starts digging, let's take another look at that research. That same consulting firm, ICF International, hedges its conclusions with these remarks: "*Some of the underlying assumptions, including those detailed explicitly or implicitly in this report, may not materialize because of unanticipated events and circumstances.*" And, the consultants continue, "*ICF's opinions could, and would, vary materially, should any of the above assumptions prove to be inaccurate.*" In other words, they've delivered the information that Dominion needs to move forward, but it's not their fault if they're wrong.

Here's the counter argument. Firms unaffiliated with Dominion, such as Synapse Energy Economics of Cambridge, Massachusetts, believe that growth in natural gas usage for our region is expected to be much lower than the 3.5 percent annual increase underlying ICF International's conclusions. And Synapse doesn't assume that demand is the same year after year. They show a high and low demand for the same period of time as ranging from 13 to 33 percent respectively through 2030. That's a far cry from the 165 percent increase that Dominion projects. We already have the capacity to cover that more realistic estimate of growth.

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SPECIAL ISSUES REPORT: Atlantic Coast Pipeline

What about the pipeline's economic benefits?

The economic advantages of the proposed ACP fall into three categories, according to Chmura Economics & Analytics, another consulting firm hired by Dominion. The first advantage is the one-time construction impact estimated at \$4.6 billion over the course of construction. Next is the ongoing impact of operations, estimated at \$62.9 million. Lastly, Chmura estimates incremental tax benefits to jurisdictions of roughly \$4.2 million annually.

Are these economic benefits overstated? No one argues that construction costs are not solid estimates. In fact, costs may rise if Spring Ridge Constructors, LLC (the ACP general contractor) is required to follow as-yet-undetermined best construction practices throughout the route.

The economic calculations based on the impact of operations lack specificity and are little more than a guess by ICF International, and this is also true of the anticipated tax benefit. It's little more than a guess.

On the true cost to taxpayers, however, there are as yet no estimates. No Dominion-funded study has attempted to calculate the cost to an individual community for, say, additional fire and safety requirements. Nowhere is land value degradation mentioned, or the subsequent fall in real estate taxes. The same lack of information regarding financial impact is true for any harm the ACP causes to tourism, hunting, fishing, water quality, and the like.

One firm, Key-Log Economics of Charlottesville, Virginia, has estimated the true cost of the ACP for the four county area of Highland, Augusta, Nelson and Buckingham counties in Virginia to range from \$72.7 to \$141.2 million in one-time costs (lower land values, etc.) and the ongoing annual costs to be \$54.8 to \$67.8 million.

And, finally, there is Governor Terry McAuliffe's promise that the ACP will create new jobs here in Virginia. Governor McAuliffe raised expectations that the ACP would create 8,000 new construction and 181 permanent jobs, yet Spring Ridge Constructors is hiring for skilled positions mostly in Texas and Pennsylvania. One comment overheard recently was that, locally, Spring Ridge may hire "crossing guards."

From an economic standpoint, the pipeline is completely irresponsible.

How serious is the environmental impact?

Dominion and its partners Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas and Southern Company Gas like to speak of the energy and economic benefits while dismissing or minimizing our environmental concerns. Yet, they plan to construct and operate a 554-mile long, 42-inch diameter underground pipeline that will cross some of the most sensitive terrain to be found in the eastern United States. The company line is this: "Along the route, best-in-class restoration and mitigation techniques will be used to protect native species, preserve wetland and water resources, control erosion and minimize emissions. The design, construction and operation of the pipeline will strive to exceed compliance with all federal procedures and regulations to minimize and mitigate the impact that the pipeline route has on natural resources, areas of historical and cultural significance and wildlife."

Can we believe them? Can we afford to believe them?

Not surprisingly, Dominion reports its errors, missed deadlines, violations, fines, lawsuits and accidents only when pressed and often very late, according to facts published in *The Recorder*, as well as various FERC documents and other sources.

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SPECIAL ISSUES REPORT: Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Among the frightening accidents in Dominion's recent past are a ruptured 8-inch pipe that caused a 10-foot crater in New Franklin, Ohio, on July 22, 2013; evacuation of 170 people at Spring Lakes Campground the same year due to a 200 gallon leak of an "oily" substance into the lake; and an explosion and resulting fire at the Blue Racer plant in Natruim, West Virginia, which required the evacuation of 25 neighbors on September 21, 2013. In addition, Dominion was recently fined \$365,000 for emitting ammonia at their Cove Point LNG facility back in 2013.

To date, Dominion has not operated anything like a 42-inch pipeline. The industry has operated those massive pipelines, though, and the record is poor—more than 1,200 reportable incidents.

What can CRPA members do to help?

I've laid out my concerns about the pipeline coming this way, right toward the Cowpasture watershed. In my opinion, there's no clear energy demand for the ACP, the anticipated economic benefits are unlikely to be realized, the costs to taxpayers haven't been adequately calculated, and the environmental risks are way too high. Throw in the likely damage to our fragile karst topography, potential violations of landowner conservation easements, the government's ability to trample over our property rights using Eminent Domain, and the list of concerns just keeps getting longer.

If you support the CRPA's initiatives (see sidebar) to push back against FERC's policies and directives that will allow Dominion's ACP to cross through our Watershed, then please make a contribution to help us win the fight. Let's make sure that "Something wicked this way comes" stays a line in a Shakespearean drama and never describes the pipeline's appearance here.



Richard Brooks,
drabrooks@gmail.com

What Dominion and the ACP hope to get away with must be challenged. Their proposed "best practices" have in some cases, never been practiced. There is no precedent for building a 42-inch pipeline across terrain like ours. Not only has it never been done successfully, IT HAS NEVER BEEN DONE. PERIOD.

No single strategy is likely to stop Dominion and the ACP. Instead, it will take a myriad of coordinated efforts by public agencies, private groups, and individual citizens sympathetic to this cause.

CRPA's efforts to stop the pipeline (or, at a minimum, to limit its harm) focus on these four initiatives:

1. Protecting our watershed from pipeline-caused erosion and sedimentation.
2. Protecting our fragile karst geography.
3. Protecting our precious water quality.
4. Defending landowner property rights.

Of these initiatives, the fourth—landowner property rights—is currently in the spotlight for its potential to become a major obstacle to pipeline construction. Property rights took center stage at the November 12 pipeline summit hosted in Natural Bridge, and there's much work to be done.

To show our support, the CRPA plans to intensify its focus on landowner property rights, especially, but not limited to, land protected by conservation easements. We need to demand that the Virginia Outdoors Foundation and other agencies protect our rights and not give or trade them away. We need to demand that federal and state governments honor our country's fundamental building blocks, namely, individual property rights. We need to demand that eminent domain be used exclusively for public good, not for the benefit of a corporation's private gain.

Our organization's mission is "to preserve the natural condition and beauty of the Cowpasture River and its tributaries for present and future generations." We can only achieve this through direct action by our members and support for our partner organizations.

All of this carries a cost in both dollars and in time. If you would like to help, please make a contribution to our general fund and/or contact me to get involved.

In Memoriam

Remembering **Peggy Paxton**

by Her Family & Friends

The following obituary was published by Nicely Funeral Home at www.nicelyfuneralhome.com

Peggy Sue (Wolfe) Paxton of 3206 Longdale Furnace Road, Clifton Forge died Saturday, December 10, 2016 at her residence. She was born in Paducah, Kentucky a daughter of the late James J. Wolfe and Ophelia McKnight Wolfe. She was a retired secretary. Peggy was a graduate of Bethel College in Hopkinsville, Kentucky and had a business career with various organizations, including Veterans Affairs Coordinator at the University of Kentucky. She worked to support her husband Fred while he was pursuing a degree. Peggy and Fred lived in a number of states and communities following his career, and she was active in various local service organizations wherever they lived. Locally, Peggy was Docent at the Alleghany Highlands Arts and Crafts Center and had served as President of the Clifton Forge Women's Club. She was a person of strong faith and upon retiring to Virginia was active in the Troutville Baptist Church as well as the Clifton Forge Baptist Church. She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Frederick B. Paxton of Clifton Forge; a daughter Sue Clarice Paxton Davidson and her husband Paul of Richmond, and grandson Allan Frederick Davidson of Richmond.

Fred shared the following concerning Peggy:

Dear Family and Friends; I am sad to write that my beloved wife Peggy, of more then 63 years, has passed on to Eternity, after battling cancer for nearly three years, and one month in Hospice care. Daughter Sue and I are grateful that we were by her bedside, here at home, for the final days.

Peggy was strong in her Faith and did not complain, but was positive with all of us even saying, "God will take care of me." Your thoughts and prayers during this time have been truly appreciated. Blessings to you all.

She never did like to have attention directed to her and specially stated that she did not want any photos or even her age in the obit. She loved our place, *Camp Sunny Jym*, on the Cowpasture River near Sharon, it having been in the family since 1933, and was a gracious host to church, friends and family members (there) on many occasions.

Such occasions included for example, some years back, when I was the CRPA President. CRPA was pursuing a TIER III ranking for the river, and work sessions were held at our place. That effort mostly failed but it brought attention and publicity to the CRPA and the determination to protect the river, like never before. I regret that we have not been active, like in the past, while dealing with her illness for nearly three years.

Our Sympathies & Thoughts Go To Peggy's Family & Friends At This Time of Loss

Thank You To Our Loyal Watershed Members

The Membership Committee of the CRPA Board of Directors decided at the fall quarterly meeting to change the newsletter donor listing format for this year. Rather than in each issue, a collective listing of donor recognitions will appear in the fall issue annually.

This new approach does make additional newsletter space available for articles, photos, and related content. Please let us know what you'd like to see in future issues of *The River Runs*, and do continue to send us your contemporary and historic photos of the Cowpasture River.

Thank You!

Picture of a Healthy Watershed

The pristine, tumbling waters of Blue Suck Branch flow through the USFS Longdale Recreation Area into Simpson Creek, and from there into the Cowpasture River downstream of Sharon, in the eastern arm of Alleghany County.

Riparian buffer areas (streamside forests) are the most effective means of protecting tributary streams of the Cowpasture River and ensuring good water quality within our watershed. The more extensive these stream buffering forests are, the better our water quality is. The approximately 300,000-acre watershed of the Cowpasture River Valley is comprised primarily of public lands where forests are managed for multiple values, with watershed protection being a top priority.

Photo by Mike Hayslett





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