



July 2003

Dear Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Citizen Monitors
And Watershed Coordinators:



Greetings and Salutations! Here is your Citizen Monitoring Summer Newsletter.

We hope this letter finds all of you well. Last year this time we were experiencing a very hot and very dry season. This year we really came out from the drought and what a difference it has made in the water levels of our streams and rivers. Many of you have experienced flooding conditions. Here in Richmond the James River looks completely different than last year. We know rocks and limbs are under there somewhere, but we can't see them. Please be safe if you venture into the water for fun and recreation.

Here are some updates and up coming events:

James River Sojourn 2003

The Alliance's second annual James River Sojourn, "Gathering Momentum", scheduled for June 22-29 promised to be a successful event. Unfortunately, the Alliance decided to cancel the weeklong paddling and camping trip due to extreme high water levels.



We felt the flood stage of the James River was too great a risk to safely run the trip with a group of paddlers of varying skill levels. Even seasoned paddlers and professional outfitters were staying off the River. The Alliance strives to make environmental education and experience accessible to as many citizens as possible. One way of achieving this is to organize events that can include a wide range of ages, experience levels, and interests. In the right conditions the Sojourn is an excellent example of that ethic, and we expect it to continue to be so next year. The route will be as close to the same as this year's as possible- From James River State Park in Buckingham County to West View Landing in Goochland County. It is a truly beautiful stretch of the River. Paddling the James this way gives you an intimate appreciation for the River's beauty and history. Please consider joining us for one day or for up to the whole week next June for an experience of a lifetime.

MONITORING NEWS

The Great North American Secchi Dip-In
Gathering its 10th Year of Data
June 28 to July 13, 2003
<http://dipin.kent.edu>



What is the Dip-In? (From the project's website)

The Dip-In is a volunteer monitoring event that provides a national perspective of water quality. It gives a comprehensive glimpse at transparency at volunteer-monitored sites across the United States, Canada and the rest of the world. Scientists and volunteers can get a sense of how transparency varies according to water type, regional geology and land use. More importantly, these annual Dip-In snapshots can be put together to form a changing picture of transparency over time.

How to participate?

Using either your Secchi disk or transparency tube take a transparency reading on the day you normally monitor. If your normal monitoring day is not within the project date or if you have to skip your monitoring event, please try and get out sometime between June 28 and July 13.

Three ways to submit your data:

- 1) You can enter your data directly on the project website <http://dipin.kent.edu>. Use the ID # 218 to identify your data as part of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Monitoring Program. This way you look at past year's events and compare the transparency of your water with other waterways through the Nation.
- 2) You can use the Secchi Dip-in form included with this Newsletter, fill in it and send it to the Kent State address on the outside of the form.
- 3) You can fill-out your Alliance datasheet as normal and make sure the data is entered promptly so we can download the data from our website and send it in.

2003 Citizens for Water Quality Summit

July 26, 2003, Charlottesville, Virginia

University of Virginia, Clark Hall

Registration 9am -10am, Summit 10am - 4pm

Who should attend: Anyone interested in preserving and enhancing the water resources in Virginia.

Topics to be discussed:

Watershed Management Planning
Developing a Monitoring Plan
Getting Involved in Water Quality Permits
Capacity Building- getting your message out!

See <http://www.vasos.org/cwq2003summit.htm> for the Full Agenda.

Box lunches will be available for \$8.00. Registration is required in advance. A registration form is included with this Newsletter.

Citizens for Water Quality is a statewide consortium of citizen groups, agency representatives, businesses, and individuals interested in preserving and enhancing the water resources in Virginia. We advocate for clean water in all regions of the state, from the estuaries and inlets of the Chesapeake to the mountain streams of the Appalachian range, in a manner that includes all parties interested in clean water.



Announcing.....

2003 Citizens for Water Quality Outstanding Citizen Activist Award

Awards will be presented on July 26th for three categories:

1. Outstanding Organization
2. Individual contributing to statewide water quality issues
3. Individual contribution to their own organization

To get a nomination form go to the Alliance's calendar of events <http://www.alliancechesbay.org/events.cfm> or visit VA Save our Streams website <http://www.vasos.org/cwqaward> . Nominations due by July 15th. Print and send, or email the form to:

Jay Gilliam
7598 North Lee Highway
Raphine, VA 24472
jay@vasos.org

National Water Monitoring Day- October 18, 2003



International
Water Association

<http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org>

America's Clean Water Foundation (ACWF) launched this event on October 18, 2002 as an important part of the **Year of Clean Water**, celebrating the 30th anniversary of the United States Clean Water Act. The purpose of this event was to introduce people to the issues facing them in their local watersheds, highlight the important role that water quality monitoring plays in defining and addressing those issues and to provide a snap-shot of water quality across the United States. Last year over 75,000 people across the United States took part in National Water Monitoring Day 2002. It was quickly apparent that the event should not be limited to American participation alone.

For this reason, America's Clean Water Foundation and the International Water Association are inviting citizens and organizations from around the globe to share in the experience of water quality monitoring on **World Water Monitoring Day 2003**. World Water Monitoring Day serves as a global educational platform for watershed leaders, educators and trained volunteers to help those who are less experienced better understand how the actions of individuals in a watershed can impact many others.

Established volunteer monitoring organizations and government monitors use their existing protocols, equipment, and monitoring methods to contribute comprehensive data to the national database maintained by ACWF.

From September 18 to October 18 2003, citizens throughout the world community will have an opportunity to monitor the quality of their local watersheds and enter the results of their efforts into an international database. Then, on October 18, we will celebrate World Water Monitoring Day together.

To find out more and see photos of last event at Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond visit <http://va.water.usgs.gov/wqday/vawqd.htm>. (Verbiage from the website)



Be on the lookout for a Richmond event to celebrate World Water Monitoring Day 2003. We will send you reminders and let you know how to participate.

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has released the 2002 305 (b) Water Quality Assessment Report and the 2002 303 (d) Impaired Waters, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Priority List. These and many other resources are posted on their website. The DEQ website is very user friendly for information searches. To see DEQ monitoring sites near you and to look at water quality conditions all over Virginia, visit <http://www.deq.state.va.us/water> .





Did You Know?

Phytoplankton in the **dinoflagellate** species can generate population explosions when habitat conditions (i.e., light, temperature, nutrients, turbulence, predator levels, etc.) are ideal. High-density blooms of dinoflagellates such as *Prorocentrum minimum* may cause water to become discolored into a reddish-brown and form **Mahogany tides**. When the cells are dense it forms a blanket effect throughout the water column, blocking light from the organisms on the water's floor where many aquatic organisms live. Mahogany tides are usually associated with elevated nutrient levels from urban and rural sources and are a cool weather species, so tend to be most prolific in spring in areas of mid-salinity waters.

Often when the coloring is first apparent there may be high dissolved oxygen readings because the phytoplankton is reproducing quickly, and its byproduct of reproduction is oxygen. However, when the populations start to die off they consume oxygen in their decomposition. Thus the over-all effect of a mahogany tide may severely reduce the amount of oxygen available to living resources at localized bloom sites

Mahogany tides can change the food web in a habitat. Mahogany tide kills organisms that cannot move out from under its light-smothering blanket. Such organisms as invertebrates like shellfish and underwater grasses causing loss of habitat. In turn, forcing fish to leave the area because of habitat and protection loss, low oxygen or irritation. *P. minimum* is not toxic to humans.

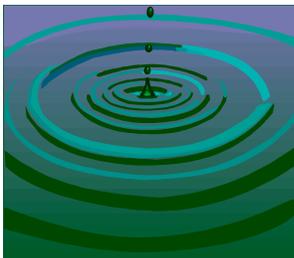
From the Maryland DNR and Maryland Coastal Bays Program websites.

MORE MONITORING NEWS



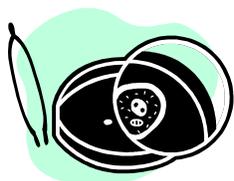
QA/QC

Thank you to all of you who participated in our QA/QC Sessions this spring! We had good turnouts in Richmond and Isle of Wight. Make-up QA/QC Sessions are being planned for those who were unable to make them in the spring. We are trying to hold one near the areas you live to reduce the amount of driving you have to do. We will do the best we can to accommodate as many of you as possible. Remember to keep track of your mileage to and from the Session because it is tax-deductible for volunteer work. We will contact you soon about the Make-up QA/QC in your area in late summer or fall.



Approximately 100 sites and 110 monitors are currently active in the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Monitoring Program. Since the beginning of 2003 we have been busy training 38 new volunteers on the Alliance water quality protocols. Many of our new volunteers are associated with organizations that sought to expand their programs with water quality monitoring components. The Alliance serves as trainer and technical support to these programs so they are able to collect data on their streams, rivers, and lakes. **Welcome New Monitors:**

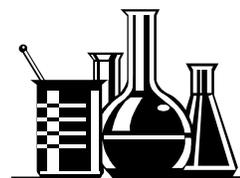
- Mechumps Creek Monitoring Program, Hanover-Caroline Soil and Water Conservation District
- Elizabeth River Project, Portsmouth, VA
- Tri-County/City Soil and Water District (Making a Positive Difference in Our Backyard Project) Stafford, VA
- Hoffler Creek Wildlife Foundation, Portsmouth, VA
- Totesky Creek Monitors, Richmond Co, VA



The Department of Environmental Quality Citizen Monitoring Program has approved the Coliscan Easygel™ method the Alliance uses for monitoring for E. coli bacteria. E. coli data collected will be used for *screening purposes*. Screening purposes means that the data won't be used towards listing a stream segment as impaired (303 d) or unimpaired lists (see page 4).

Presently the bacteria monitoring data collected by Alliance volunteers will be used to indicate problems of high bacteria levels that may warrant more monitoring.

Chemicals and Supplies: If you need new chemicals to refresh your kits. Please let your Watershed Coordinator or us know. You can contact us for supplies at jblackburn@acb-online.org or (804) 775-0951 and fax at (804) 775-0954.



For Upcoming events visit our website at www.alliancechesbay.org.

Another Welcome!

The Virginia staff at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay welcomes the new James Riverkeeper to the James River Association. Chuck Frederickson will be conducting water quality monitoring in his boat as he helps to serve as the eyes and the ears of the conservation and stewarding community of the James River and its tributaries. We look forward to working with you in the future. To read more about Chuck and Riverkeeper Programs visit JRA's website at <http://www.jamesriverassociation.org/home.html>.

Please keep us informed of any address or email changes. Don't hesitate to call or email us with any questions you may have or just to keep in touch! Thank you for all your hard work and effort in citizen monitoring- you make this program a success!

Sincerely,

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cc: Joyce Brooks - VA DEQ
Fran Geissler - VA DCR
Recently inactive volunteer monitors