



Safe Water Fish Smart, Eat Smart

By Matt Butler & Matthew Starr

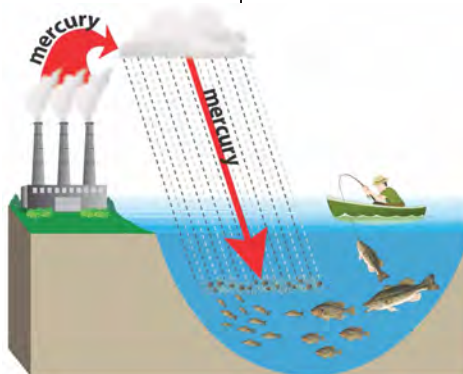
Seafood is an important part of any diet. Fish and shellfish are a great source of protein and nutrients, and are low in saturated fat. A well-balanced diet that includes seafood can be good for heart health, growth, and development. Some fish, however, may contain chemicals that could lead to health problems.

When contaminant levels are high enough to be unsafe, consumption advisories may recommend people limit or avoid eating certain species caught in certain places. Some seafood can also have bacteria or viruses that cause illness if eaten. These risks are often managed by limiting or preventing the harvesting of shellfish from contaminated waters, as we have recently seen here in Eastern NC.

A fish consumption advisory is a recommendation to limit or avoid eating certain species of fish or shellfish, caught from specific water bodies or types of water bodies, because of chemical or bacterial contamination. Advisories are usually issued for the general public, but at times are issued for specific groups of people at high risk such as children, pregnant or nursing women, the elderly, or individuals that consume large amounts of seafood.

The majority of the fish consumption advisories in the U.S.A. are due to contamination by five chemicals: mercury, PCBs, chlordane, dioxins, and DDT. These particular chemicals are found in higher

concentrations in fish tissue than in the water because of bioaccumulation. Simply stated, larger species, or ones at the top of the food chain, have higher concentrations of harmful chemicals than the smaller animals they eat, and they cannot rid it from their bodies.



In North Carolina, there are two chemicals that are of most concern, Mercury and PCBs. These chemicals stay in the environment for many years and can build up in larger fish such as largemouth bass and catfish. PCBs have been shown to cause cancer and mercury can harm the brain and kidneys. Children, born or in the womb, are at higher risk because their bodies are still developing and are smaller.

Another subset of the population at greater risk is subsistence fishermen. These individuals fish to feed their families. As such, they tend to consume larger amounts of fish and have a higher exposure to the harmful chemicals. This population also tends to be in a lower socioeconomic level and have less access to healthcare to combat any ill effects.

Fish consumption advisories in North Carolina are issued by the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch of the N.C. Division of Public Health. Individuals can access the website and find fish consumption advisories for the state and for their local water bodies.

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Greetings from Leadership



Happy 2nd Anniversary!

by Harrison Marks

April 1, 2017 marks the second anniversary of Sound Rivers' creation which occurred by bringing together two extraordinary organizations, the Neuse Riverkeeper Foundation and the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation. These two organizations fought for clean water along the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico for more than 35 years. Combining into one organization has allowed us to share expertise and created a stronger voice to protect your rivers. Your continuing support over the past two years has been essential!

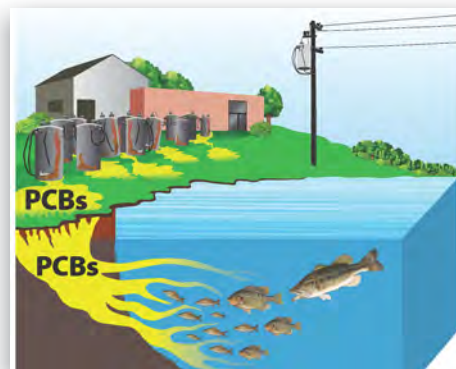
During these past two years our state and national governments changed administrations, and eastern North Carolina was devastated by our second 500-year flood in two decades. We are pleased to already be experiencing a more open Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) under the new Secretary, Michael Regan, and a renewed commitment to the DEQ's mission of protecting our natural resources. This change at the state level comes at a fortuitous time as the Trump administration has made clear through an Executive Order, speeches and a proposed cut of almost a third of the EPA budget, that the EPA will not serve as an effective backstop in the event North Carolina regulators fail to act.

Hurricane Matthew had a significant effect on many parts of our region. Your Riverkeepers were instrumental in uncovering and documenting serious pollution events caused by the flood, and are actively working with others to take steps now that will mitigate the damage from future catastrophic events. The Upper Neuse Riverkeeper, Matthew Starr, is our registered lobbyist who is working hard to influence legislation that affects our rivers. We will continue to call on you when needed because your voice can make all the difference!

This April, in recognition of the second anniversary of our merger, **generous supporters have agreed to match all gifts this month up to a total of \$10,000.** That means your support of Sound Rivers will be doubled, so there has never been a better time to renew your membership, increase your donation, or make a special contribution to keep your Riverkeepers on land, in the water and in the air, working with the community to stop pollution.

Our region's waterways have shaped our rich history and culture; we're working every day to ensure their healthy future. Sound Rivers is committed to making progress and improving water quality, and none of us are willing to return to a time of unregulated pollution and no accountability for polluters. But we can't do it without you and there is no better time than April to show your support. You can give online at soundrivers.org, or call 252-637-7972, or send your check to PO Box 15451, New Bern, NC 28561.

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Sound Rivers staff have identified issues with the fish advisory process in North Carolina. Various state agencies, federal agencies, and universities have different language on their websites. There are different definitions for a portion size or meal equivalent. The information is web-based and typically only in english, meaning this valuable information is not readily accessible to the most vulnerable populations. Additionally, it is difficult to find consistent fish consumption advisory information online. Lastly, North Carolina's fish consumption advisories web page does not include photos of the fish affected (link to the web-page can be found on soundrivers.org). In North Carolina there can be many names for the same fish; having a photo of the affected species will help ensure individuals are correctly educated.

The staff at Sound Rivers is working with the UNC Institute for the Environment and other local partners to address these concerns. Through grant funding and continued membership support, we will help to bridge the gap to bring consistent, accessible, and digestible information on fish consumption to all of the population in our river basins. As always, we continue our commitment to eliminate the very sources of pollution that poison our fish and seafood.

Research Spotlight

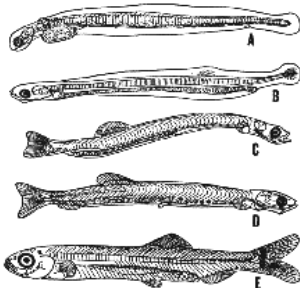
Sound Rivers Goes Fishing this Spring

The river herring fishery is one of the oldest fisheries in North America, dating back 350 years in some portions of the country. In North Carolina there are two species, Alewife and Blueback Herring, that are grouped together and collectively called river herring. These two species are managed and studied together. Declining catches of river herring began in 1960 because of commercial importance that resulted in over-fishing. In response to the decline, river herring have been classified as a Species of Concern by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Species of Concern designation by NOAA prompted enactment of river herring moratoriums in four states with North Carolina occurring in 2007.

North Carolina has many rivers and streams that serve as important fishing and spawning habitats for river herring. Historically, river herring were found in high abundance in the Tar-Pamlico and Chowan Rivers. Reproductive failure, overharvesting, pollution and habitat loss throughout their range, including North Carolina, has contributed to the loss of abundance in our rivers. The continuing decline in the river herring population warrants the need for the current moratorium and efforts aimed at conservation, sustainability and population rebuilding.

To help study and effect change on the river herring population in North Carolina, Sound Rivers has partnered with East Carolina University to sample and study larval river herring in the Chowan and Tar-Pamlico

Rivers. We were successful in applying for a Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) grant in 2014 and began the second year of field sampling in March 2017. In 2016, our sampling confirmed the presence of river herring in the Tar-Pamlico River, in some instances for the first time in decades. Our staff and an ECU Ph.D student will spend two days a week for twelve weeks during March-May in the field, sampling for larval river herring and the food they eat. The goal of this research is to address the functionality and suitability of the Chowan and Tar-Pamlico Rivers as spawning and nursery habitats for river herring. This research project is examining the



factors that affect larval rearing habitat and what influence these have on river herring. In short, we are assessing if and how many baby river herring there are and how nutritious the food is that they are eating.

This research will be vitally important for fisheries management in North Carolina. Water quality plays an important role in what food is available for larval river herring. By studying larval abundance, water quality and food availability, we will give fisheries managers a more complete picture of the system. Sound Rivers is excited to be on the forefront of this important research into a valuable North Carolina species, and for the opportunity to partner with East Carolina University. If you have any questions about this project or other ongoing research, please email Matt Butler at matt@soundrivers.org.



Sound Rivers Project Manager, Matt Butler, deploys a net used for catching larval fish, looking on is Riverkeeper Travis Graves

Upcoming Events *Visit soundrivers.org for more info*

Saturday, April 8, 2017 - NC Science Fair
10am-4pm, NC Estuarium, Washington NC

Wednesday, April 19, 2017 - Sound Rivers Annual Mtg
11:15am -2760 W. Arlington Blvd, Greenville, NC

Saturday, April 22, 2017-Spring River Cleanups
See page 8 for volunteer opportunities.

Saturday, April 22, 2017 - March for Science
10am - Raleigh and Washington, NC

Saturday, April 29, 2017 - Kids River Fest
10am-2pm, River Park North, Greenville, NC

Advocacy Updates

Atlantic Coast Pipeline to Cross Sensitive Streams

By Heather Deck, Pamlico-Tar Riverkeeper

The proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) is an interstate natural gas transmission pipeline in Virginia and North Carolina. If constructed, the ACP will be owned, constructed and maintained by the Atlantic company, which is a partnership of Dominion Power, Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas and Southern Company Gas. The ACP is currently proposed to cross 343 bodies of water in North Carolina, including the Neuse and Tar Rivers, Swift Creek (an outstanding resource water), Fishing Creek, and Little River, to name a few.

Sound Rivers' three Riverkeepers have participated in public hearings and submitted written comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the lead permitting agency. We note that the draft Environmental Impact Statement clearly lacks sufficient information to adequately assess and understand the true short and long-term negative impacts the construction and maintenance of this pipeline will have on our water supply resources. In addition, the Tar River and Little River in the Neuse watershed house numerous state and federally protected, threatened and endangered species.

The pipeline will impact our water supplies in the following ways:

- ~ 68 million metric tonnes of climate pollution annually, equivalent to the pollution created from 20 coal plants or 14 million vehicles emissions
- ~ Encourage more fracking, resulting in greater environmental destruction in the eastern U.S.A.
- ~ Environmental Justice violations; Census data shows a higher percentage of low-income and minority residents live near the proposed route
- ~ Close to 600 acres of wetlands will be destroyed leading to greater water pollution, more flooding, and loss of wildlife habitat
- ~ The pipeline would burrow beneath six major rivers, 34 water bodies in total, including under waterways that are the drinking water sources for hundreds of thousands of people
- ~ Construction requires withdrawing millions of gallons of water from the Roanoke, Tar, Cape Fear & Neuse rivers

Industrial Animal Operations Remain in the Spotlight

By Travis Graves, Lower Neuse Riverkeeper

There have been numerous new developments regarding Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in North Carolina, many of which revolve around Gov. Cooper's new administration. On January 27, NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Secretary Michael Regan publically responded to a letter from the Environmental Protection Agency's External Civil Rights Compliance Office about the federal agency's investigation over concerns that NC has not done enough to protect minorities and less served communities from the effects of hog farms. Secretary Regan said, "...we take seriously our legal and moral obligation to protect the environment as well as the health and well-being of all North Carolina residents." This is a refreshing change as Gov. McCrory's administration asked that the civil rights complaint be dismissed, and Sam Hayes, former general counsel for DEQ, called the complaint "specious" and a "tactical collateral attack."

On March 8, at a meeting of the Environmental Management Commission's water quality committee, NC's Division of Water Resources published a report on the nutrient output from industrial poultry facilities. Although data is lacking due to limited permitting, DWR calculated the amount of nutrients produced by poultry CAFOs and evaluated trends on county and river basin levels. The report concluded waste from industrial poultry facilities is a significant source of unregulated nutrient pollution in coastal rivers.



Numerous poultry operations were flooded in the wake of Hurricane Matthew. Sound Rivers supports a buyout program for these facilities

On March 13, Sound Rivers and partnering conservation groups filed a motion in federal court seeking to require the industrial hog operation, Murphy-Brown, to comply with a 2006 agreement to clean up its groundwater pollution at several hog facilities in eastern North Carolina.

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Advocacy Updates

Blounts Creek Update

The legal battle to protect Blounts Creek has new life after a Superior Court decision in late February. Carteret County Superior Court Judge Douglas Parsons denied a motion to dismiss by Martin Marietta Materials. Pamlico-Tar Riverkeeper, Heather Deck, stated, “Martin Marietta’s goal with this hearing was to dismiss this important case on a technicality rather than have a trial on the merits of the case. Fortunately, the law was on our side, again, and the case to protect Blounts Creek moves forward.”

Sound Rivers and partners began the challenge of a permit to Martin Marietta in 2013. In order to develop a 649-acre open pit mine outside Vanceboro in Beaufort County, N.C., Martin Marietta plans to discharge up to 12 million gallons per day of ground and mining wastewater into Blounts Creek headwaters, a popular fishing destination and tributary to the Pamlico River.



Blounts Creek is a popular recreational destination

In December 2016, Sound Rivers and the NC Coastal Federation, represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC), appealed a decision by Administrative Law Judge Phil Berger, Jr. that would have allowed the company to move forward on plans to discharge to Blounts Creek.

This appeal was filed in Carteret County Superior Court on behalf of Sound Rivers and the NC Coastal Federation. North Carolina law requires that notice of the appeal filing be served to all parties within 10 days. SELC complied with this law, including serving the notice twice to Martin Marietta Materials due to a change of address by the company that was not supplied to SELC. However, the January snowstorm and resulting State of Emergency delayed mail service, causing the notification to be after the 10-day deadline. Martin Marietta attempted to use the snowstorm and mail service delay for the basis of a dismissal. Their motion was denied.

In a press statement issued after the ruling, Heather Deck stated, “It is our hope that Martin Marietta Materials will stop using legal stall tactics and instead focus on

reasonable solutions that protect Blounts Creek, do not harm local citizens, comply with the law, and accomplish their business goals.”

The case will now move to trial sometime later this summer. During the February proceedings, Judge Parsons, after an apparent challenge by Martin Marietta Materials, recused himself from the case. A new judge will be selected to hear the case moving forward.

CAFOs - Continued from Page 4

Under the 2006 agreement, an independent groundwater expert identified 11 facilities in the Neuse, Lumber, and the Cape Fear River basins with demonstrated threats to groundwater. Prior to the 2006 agreement with Sound Rivers and Waterkeeper Alliance, Murphy-Brown (a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, Inc) faced four different legal challenges relating to Clean Water Act violations from its massive industrial hog facilities. The motion filed on March 13th by the Southern Environmental Law Center, on behalf of Waterkeeper Alliance and Sound Rivers, alleges that Murphy-Brown has failed to comply with a central component of the agreement — to remedy demonstrated groundwater hazards at its hog facilities in eastern North Carolina. “Based on the company’s own records, an independent expert has determined that 11 of Murphy Brown’s facilities are endangering our groundwater in three of North Carolina’s river basins,” said Geoff Gisler, Senior Attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center. “We’re asking the court to require the corporation to make good on its promises and to clean up its animal factories.”

Sound Rivers’ staff continue to monitor the effects of CAFOs in the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico basins, and to advocate for the implementation of improved animal waste management practices. Until the industry replaces the antiquated lagoon and sprayfield method of managing the millions of gallons of hog waste in the eastern coastal plain, swine CAFOs will continue to have negative impacts on our water quality.

Sound Rivers would like to acknowledge the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the Eddie and Jo Allison Smith Family Foundation for their continued support of Sound Rivers and our mission to protect the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico Rivers

Member Minute

Neuse River Paddle Scheduled for April



We always enjoy hearing about people exploring our waterways here at Sound Rivers. Bill Hines, a longtime Sound Rivers volunteer, will be leading a paddling trip down the Neuse River this month – but not just any paddling trip. This excursion will last seven days – from April 9th to April 15th – and will cover approximately 190 miles of the Neuse, from Raleigh to New Bern.

Bill, a retired Ohio native who now calls Oriental home, has years of experience paddling on long trips, from weekends to multiple days. With three years of this particular trip under his belt, Bill knows how to tweak the route. The first year, the group began at Falls Lake Dam, but soon realized having to get out of the water and carry their kayaks around Milburnie Dam was an impediment for many. Now the trip begins at Anderson Point, allowing them to stay on the water the entire way.

Bill said of the trip, “Each year is very different because water levels can change. The first year we went out and water levels were very high; we moved right along.” If the water levels are low it can create challenges. Bill’s group will camp during their week-long paddle, using camping platforms, public parks, or private campsites along the river.

Bill is looking forward to exploring the Neuse again this year. In many places the river is only 70-80 feet wide, and seems almost an entirely different waterway from the mile-wide expanse of blue you see from the bridges of New Bern. Bill says what he loves about the trip is how peaceful the river is – for almost sixty miles of his route there are no houses or buildings along the Neuse. “Each time we’re out for a full day you see so much of the river and get immersed in it. You see how much of the Neuse has really nothing on it, it’s very relaxing,” he says.

Volunteer Spotlight: Kelsey Curtis

By Heather Deck, Pamlico-Tar Riverkeeper



Kelsey Curtis’ love of water began at a very early age. The Tar-Pamlico River has always been a part of her life. Kelsey describes her family as “a water-loving family of boat builders, Navy veterans, sailors, and captains.” She tells stories of her “water” life, living her early years in

Washington and since then in Greenville. Kelsey grew up spending time on the Tar River and Pamlico Sound on her family’s motor boat and kayak. She remembers summer days filled with tubing, fishing, and picnic lunches on sandbars. Kelsey’s fond memories include crabbing in the Pamlico River, stopping at Washington’s waterfront for ice cream (at the old Pamlico Provisions) and paddling around Greenville on the Tar.

After graduating from ECU with a degree in health and fitness, Kelsey began her working and volunteering career in healthcare, a passion rooted in a family history of multiple sclerosis. Over time her other passion grew; “helping nature, wildlife, our environment, and especially the overlooked and underserved Tar River”. As owner of Knee Deep Adventures in Greenville, Kelsey promotes new, healthy outdoor activities and also spends a good portion of her time giving back. She has been a regular volunteer for Sound Rivers for many years; assisting with river cleanups, educational events and just picking up trash on her own.

Over the years, Kelsey realized volunteering is what really helps get things done. One of her favorite quotes hails from Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

And now, she gives back to the waterway that has impacted her life in so many positive ways. One piece of trash at a time, one opportunity to bring a beginner kayaker to the Tar River, one more conversation on the value of conservation; these are all steps closer to improving the health, well-being and perception of the River and its people.

Interested in volunteering? Check out the opportunities on Page 7-8 or email volunteer@soundrivers.org!

Riffles & Runs

2017 Riverkeeper Cup Cleanup!

Join Sound Rivers volunteers on Saturday, April 22nd (Earth Day) to clean the Tar-Pamlico River! Last year Franklin County won the RIVERKEEPER® Cup Cleanup Challenge, but in 2017 it's anyone's game!

Saturday, April 22nd, 2017 - 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Washington**: Havens Gardens Boat Ramp

Greenville: Town Commons Boat Ramp

Tarboro: Shiloh Landing

Rocky Mount: Battle Park Boat Ramp

Land cleanups will also be conducted.

** The Washington cleanup is co-sponsored by the Arts of the Pamlico. We will be taking some of the "best" trash and turning it into art! As an added bonus, 10% off coupons available for all participants from Backwater Jacks!



Other Earth Day Cleanups

Neuse River Cleanup

April 22nd - New Bern

Meet at 9am at Lawson Creek Park to pick up bags and gloves, then take to the water or land to start your cleanup!

Trent River Cleanup

April 22nd - Pollocksville

Meet at 9am at the Pollocksville Wildlife Ramp, bring a kayak or paddleboard. (There is an opportunity for a land-based project.) Call Tamra Church with any questions - 252-224-0258.

Why I Give, with Dr. Alan Craig

by Corinne Everett Belch, Director of Development



I recently had a conversation with Sound Rivers supporter Dr. Alan Craig. Alan generously donated the proceeds from the sale of a car to our organization and the NC Coastal Land Trust. His \$15,500 donation will help Sound Rivers purchase a new truck to replace one of our aging vehicles.

When asked why he gives to Sound Rivers, Alan said, "The Neuse and Tar-Pamlico Rivers belong to me and all others in Eastern NC. The rivers will be here forever, but if we don't take care of them we'll be in trouble." Alan mentioned he is particularly concerned about the industrial hog operations in Eastern NC and the threat this industry poses to clean water. "I applaud Sound Rivers in filing a lawsuit against the industrial hog operator Murphy-Brown to compel them to comply with their agreement, now 11 years old, to address their ground and surface water contamination," he said. "I have no desire to have 'hog water' for my use, who does?" Alan continued, "Sound Rivers' work to monitor this region's waterways and work with the community to identify and eliminate problems is sorely needed. The environment is the most important thing we can preserve, and that's what you do."

Thank you to Alan, and all our supporters, for helping us continue our work to preserve and protect the health and beauty of our watersheds!

Riffles & Runs



It is no secret that clean water protections have been under assault in North Carolina for a number of years. Now at the federal level, we see an administration that will champion similar rollbacks to federal laws that protect our rivers, creeks, and streams. Powerful corporate interests use well-connected lobbyists to track bills and influence politicians; citizens must do the same in order to protect and strengthen our rights.

That's why we're launching Fishing for Facts, a bi-weekly roundup of current attacks on America's and North Carolina's clean water protections. Every other week, we'll post a straightforward, up-to-date list of bills and policies that threaten your right to clean water, and include simple instructions on how to take action. For those that like to dive in deeper, we will include links for more information on the bills. Check out our first edition at www.soundrivers.org/fishingforfacts.



Water Trail Stewards

The Water Trail Steward is responsible for managing and completing monthly inspections and required maintenance of at least 1 camping platform. The steward reports directly to the Water Trail Steward Manager. Time commitment ~5-15 hrs/month

Tiny Tornado Tops Taste 2017!

The 14th Annual Taste of Coastal Carolina presented the unique cuisine of 20 area restaurants, all in friendly competition for our coveted Peppermill Trophy. The 2017 event was a great success, and Sound Rivers would like to thank everyone who attended or helped make it happen!

**1st Place -
The Tiny Tornado**
2nd Place - Bay Leaf
3rd Place - The Flame
**Best Presentation -
The Flame**

We could not put on this wonderful event without the support of our area restaurants, so a huge thank you to: A Pinch of Love Catering, Bay Leaf, Bear City Fudge, Christoph's on the Water, Cow Café, The Flame

Catering & Banquet Center, Funky Fresh Food Truck, Kitchen on the Trent, Kreative Cakez, LaCasetta, LIVE @ The City Laundry, Sea Glass Café, Soo's Chocolate & Bakery, Sugarplum Bakery, Sweet Peas Café, TaTa's Takeout Café, Tiny Tornado Food Truck, Trent River Coffee, Veg2Bowl, and The Village Butcher!



Clockwise from top left – Tiny Tornado owner Beckie Harmon; La Casetta serves up delicious food; The Flame's amazing offerings won them 3rd place and Best Presentation; RIVERKEEPERS Travis Graves and Heather Deck

Thank you also to our wonderful sponsors: Grady-White Boats, Northwest Creek Marina, US Foods, Beasley Broadcasting, Coastal Carolina Health Care, Nicholas C. Sparks, Fisher Fuel Markets, Andy Davidson in memory of Dr. & Mrs. Alan Davidson, and Boats Unlimited!

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to our wonderful volunteers! Without their ideas, energy, and good old fashioned hard work, none of this would be possible. Special thanks to the 2017 Taste Steering Committee: Natalie Baggett, Lynne Davenport, Cathy Robinson-Gill, Daphne Sherring, Sherrie Starr, Holly Willis and Lauren Wargo!

Event Spotlight



When: Saturday, April 29, 10am – 2pm
Where: River Park North, 1000 Mumford Rd,
Greenville, NC 27834
Cost: Free!

Come out and enjoy the Spring! Our popular Kids' River Fest returns to Greenville River Park North on April 29, 2017 from 10am to 2pm. Sound Rivers is dedicated to protecting the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico Rivers, and we host Kids' River Fest as an opportunity for our community's youth to explore and play in their watershed.

In 2016 over 1500 people attended Kids' Riverfest, spending the day learning about our environment through hands on activities as well as shows and musical performances. We hope to see you there for a day of free fun and learning!



Kids River Fest Volunteers Needed

Join SRI staff on Saturday, April 29th in Greenville for an exciting day for kids of all ages. Help is needed at all booths, including art, kayaking, fishing, check-in, etc. 2 hour shifts available

EPA Update

EPA Addresses Algal Blooms

For the first time, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed human health criteria for exposures to toxins associated with harmful algal blooms. There are numerous types of algae that grow naturally in the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico Rivers and Creeks. Some algae prefer freshwater, some prefer saltier conditions. All can cause problems when conditions are right and they grow out of control (bloom). There are certain types of algae, categorized as harmful algal blooms (HABs), that can release toxins and pose a public health hazard.

Exposure to algal toxins has the potential to affect human health, property values, quality of life, and, in some cases, the viability of resource-dependent businesses. Currently, harmful algal blooms are a rare occurrence, but science predicts that these events will increase in frequency due to the effects of climate change. The proposed EPA criteria will, hopefully, push states like North Carolina to implement more frequent and rigorous testing of algal blooms and create a standard public notification process and response when HABs are occurring, something that is currently lacking.

For these reasons, Sound Rivers joined a number of North Carolina organizations to encourage the EPA to move expeditiously and finalize the proposed criteria.



A harmful algal bloom was widespread in the Pamlico River and tributaries the summer of 2016

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