



Fall 2023 Newsletter

Sleepy Creek Watershed Association Receives WV Watershed Network 2023 Restoration Award



Chuck Marsh, President of Sleepy Creek Watershed Association, receives the 2023 Restoration Award from Alana Hartman, WV Department of Environmental Protection's Potomac Basin Coordinator, at the September 30, 2023, WV Watershed Symposium held at the Canaan Valley Resort & Conference Center. The award recognized the 8 years of work the association did in securing funding and working with landowners, contractors, and volunteers, the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District, the Morgan County Planning Commission, the WV Conservation Agency, the WV Department

Of Environmental Protection, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Chesapeake Bay Program to accomplish design and implementation of a 612-foot streambank restoration. The result of their work stopped annual erosion of 813 tons of sediment and related pounds of nutrients into the creek and the downstream Potomac and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

Annual Membership Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, December 6, 2023

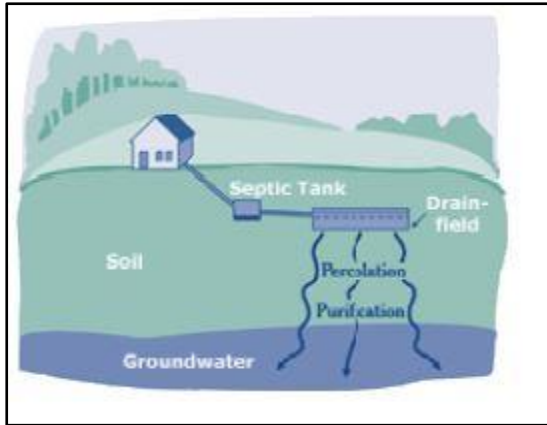
Our Annual Membership meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at the Morgan County Board of Education Office, 247 Harrison Avenue, Berkeley Springs, WV. All are invited to attend. This year's agenda will include an update of the association's finances, review of this year's accomplishments, outlook for next year's upcoming activities and opportunities, and election of the Association's Board of Directors. The meeting will conclude with a presentation by Dr. Nathaniel Hitt, United States Geological Survey, Kearneysville, WV, entitled 'Risks and Resiliencies for WV fishes with Climate Change.' Refreshments will be provided.

Association Board of Directors Volunteers Sought

The bylaws of our not-for-profit corporation allow for a maximum of 10 directors and no fewer than 3, with individual terms of office for two years, with no term limits. The current board has five members and we are seeking additional volunteers to increase this number and expand board member experience. The board generally meets one time a month at the convenience of its members. If you are

interested in exploring the option of joining our board, please contact Chuck Marsh at (304)-258-2605 or via email at marshbc@aol.com. He will provide you more information about the board and its responsibilities.

Financial Assistance Continues to be Available for Septic Pumping



Septic pumping reimbursement for 50% of the cost of pumping (up to \$150) is available to homeowners in the Sleepy Creek Watershed. Reimbursement is only available if your application is approved by the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District before you arrange for pumping. For your convenience we have attached an application at the end of this newsletter. Completion instructions are included on the form. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Erin Krieger at (304) 767-4829 or email her at ekrieger@wvca.us.

Opportunity to Purchase Low Cost Trees and Shrubs for Individual Planting

For the past several years our association has teamed with the Cacapon Institute to provide SCWA members two opportunities each year to purchase 4-6 foot potted trees and shrubs for planting on member properties at generally one-half the retail cost. Last year, for example, 18 participants purchased 119 trees from a shopping list of 72 available WV native species! If you are interested in adding environmentally beneficial and beautification tree cover to your home property, be on the lookout for our email announcement in the late January or early February timeframe for Spring 2024 purchasing. Purchase selections and ordering details will be provided by us and the Cacapon Institute at that time.

Opportunity to Increase Riparian Buffer and Tree Canopy in the Watershed

In addition to the foregoing tree purchase opportunity, our association also has the opportunity to provide owners of large lots planting of free trees funded by the Chesapeake Bay Program. This program's goal is to plant riparian buffer trees along Sleepy Creek and its tributaries to stabilize stream bank frontage and absorb rainfall runoff. Trees may also be planted on larger open spaces away from creeks to provide the same rainfall runoff absorption benefit. In addition to no cost to the property owners, Sleepy Creek Watershed Association, in partnership with the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District, will assist in developing a planting plan for chosen tree species and provide volunteer labor to help plant the trees. If either of these opportunities interests you, please contact Kristen Bisom at 681-247-3011 or via email at kbisom@wvca.us for further information.

Funding Requests for Major Streambank Restorations in Progress

The association has been working with local and state agency partners to secure funding for the design and implementation of potential stream bank restorations on the main stem and middle fork of Sleepy Creek. One project was submitted to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation that administers the award of Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Small Watershed Grants in April 2023. Potential grant award for our submission and others for this funding opportunity has been delayed until at least January 2024 because of on-going federal political/financial issues. A second proposal for a funding award by the Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund is currently being developed and will be submitted around the end of November 2023. We'll let you know as decisions progress.

Parting Thoughts

In closing, I want to thank all who had voiced concern or provided other support to the community and the Cacapon Resort and State Park Foundation in defeating the proposed campground and expansion of activities at the park. I was pleased, too, to bring in the West Virginia Rivers Coalition and the national Choose Clean Water Coalition to express their thoughts and opposition as well. These participants were happy it all worked out as well.

As usual, we have an active slate of challenges on-going and coming up for next year. We'll be back to talk more about them in the spring. In the meantime, please consider coming to our Membership Meeting on December 6th and volunteering to join the Board of Directors. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season and winter.

Chuck Marsh, President