



Voices for the Harpeth

Issue No. 6, Spring 2006

www.harpethriver.org

Harpeth Protections Maintained

HRWA rallies local & statewide support to avoid exemption to Scenic Rivers Act

by Dorene Bolze and Pam Davee



With the growth in the Bellevue area of Davidson County around the Harpeth River, the large McCrory Lane quarry property that sits along the river and borders Highway 70 near the Cheatham County line has been proposed to be used as a construction and demolition landfill, with residential development and recreational facilities to be built after the landfill was filled. However, the Harpeth River in Davidson County is a state-designated Scenic River, and under the Scenic Rivers Act, landfills are prohibited within two miles on either side of the Harpeth in Davidson and Williamson County. Thus, in this state legislative session, investors proposed a bill to exempt the McCrory Lane quarry, which lies about 500 feet from the scenic Harpeth, from the landfill prohibition in the State Scenic Rivers Act.

On March 30, Representative Gary Moore, Senator Joe Haynes and Senator Douglas Henry co-hosted a public meeting at Bellevue Middle School to enable investors to describe the landfill proposal, for HRWA to present concerns, and for the public to ask questions. The state legislators sponsoring the bills and Senator Henry were concerned about the precedent of granting an exemption for a specific landfill that would encourage future similar exemptions for landfills along scenic rivers. Over 300 citizens attended, with many voicing objections to undermining the Scenic Rivers Act. The McCrory Lane landfill proposal generated extensive media attention with all the network television stations, Nashville Public Radio, and many newspapers covering the public meeting.

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HRWA opposed the bills because of our extreme concern that granting specific exemptions would have significant state-wide ramifications. The State Scenic Rivers Act prohibits landfills "to protect Class II (scenic) rivers from possible pollution due to the proximity of landfills for the disposal of solid or hazardous wastes." The Act prohibits landfills within two miles on either side of these Class II scenic rivers and in the upstream adjacent county of the scenic river section. Tennessee Conservation Voters, Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association, Tennessee Clean Water Network, World Wildlife Fund, TN Trails Association and several others organizations opposed the bills and provided a strong voice for the Act and the state's 13 scenic rivers as a backdrop to the widespread local concern for the scenic Harpeth in Bellevue.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) also opposed the amendment to the bill. Dana Coleman, TDEC's communications director, reinforced the department's position with a simple statement at the public meeting: "The Department of Environment and Conservation feels the proposed bill does not state an adequate rationale for changing the law." Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell also was not supportive of any change to the State Scenic Rivers Act to accommodate new landfills in Davidson County. This position was important since actions in Metro last year with regard to initiating the process to consider approving the landfill had given the impression that Metro supported the proposal to site a landfill in the zone prohibited by the state statute. HRWA is currently working with the Metro Solid Waste Board and staff to incorporate the Scenic Rivers Act landfill prohibition zone along the Harpeth in Davidson County into the new Metro Solid Waste Management Plan to avoid any such confusion in the future.

In addition to the potential weakening of the State Scenic Rivers Act, water pollution from siting a construction debris landfill so close to the Harpeth and rivers in general is a serious concern. Construction and demolition (C&D) landfills tend to be considered less risky because they are supposed to handle fairly inert materials such as dry wall, bricks, masonry and wood products. However, there has been growing recognition nationwide that many materials from construction and demolition sites contain hazardous materials such as adhesives,

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Our Annual Fund Helps Protect Our Wonderful Corner of the World



by Dorene Bolze,
Executive Director

As many of you know, the Harpeth River watershed is truly a unique place to live, work, and play. We reside in one of the most aesthetically beautiful and biologically diverse watersheds in the entire world! We have the privilege not only to experience the magnificence around us, but to share that magnificence with others, particularly our children and grandchildren.

As a member of our organization, you are also fortunate to be a part of a “culture” of individuals connected to something that transcends self-interest and you understand that it is a responsibility and privilege to give back to that community. In other words, you are a part of our organiza-

tion’s past and present and, most importantly, you get to take ownership of its future. Part of the privilege of sharing in our culture is to be asked to give your support so that this organization can flourish: for the good of the river and the land it flows through, the good of the environment, and the good of our children and future generations.

Moreover, because HRWA has a long and successful track record we have been able to secure a number of state and federal grants which enable us to leverage your generous individual contributions, so when you give to HRWA your dollars go a long way to protect and restore the Harpeth.

The beauty of the Harpeth that you see every day driving or walking through the watershed is protected in large part because of giving — the volunteers who continually give of their time to clean and restore our precious river resources; the scientific experts who share their time and energies to protect our wildlife habitats; the landowners who steward the land that protects the Harpeth; the community leaders who collaborate with us to draft important regulations that protect water quality; the generous people that give of themselves to share our story with others in countless classrooms and community settings across our area; and those that give of themselves financially because they have a heart for our mission and a desire to share in our success.

We are now in full swing with the 2006 Annual Fund/Membership campaign where we are providing you with an opportunity to renew your membership or become a member of this exciting organization. Our goal for 2006 is to raise \$100,000 and nearly \$65,000 of that has already been pledged. One of our new approaches this year, in addition to combining our membership drive with our annual fund campaign, is to provide you with the opportunity to participate in one of our vital program areas — you can choose to specifically support the restoration, wildlife protection, policy, or education and outreach areas of the organization. These program areas are described in the box at right.

By joining or renewing your membership today, the Harpeth River Watershed Association will be able to continue improving the health and vitality of one of the most important watersheds in the country. Please consider making us one of your family’s charitable priorities for 2006. I invite you to look at our annual fund campaign as an opportunity to share the gift which you have been given — the story, the life, and the history of our beautiful corner of the world. ■

Program Areas

You may specify any of the four program areas for your contribution or “HRWA’s Choice,” which allows us to use the funds where they are most needed at the time.



PROTECTING THE BALANCE with the River Restoration Program

...cleaning up river pollution, stabilizing eroding riverbanks, and rebuilding streamside natural areas to prevent further erosion caused by damaging stormwater run-off from developed areas.

PRESERVING THE ECOSYSTEM with the Wildlife Protection Program



...safeguarding dozens of unique species by identifying pollution sources and protecting the water quality of the river.



PROMOTING SMART SOLUTIONS with the Policy & Planning Program

...working with local governments and state-wide agencies to craft ordinances and regulations that protect water quality and engaging in watershed planning to direct growth and identify needed undeveloped areas in order to protect the river and provide communities with clean water.

PROVIDING EXPERTISE & INFORMATION with the Education & Outreach Program



...teaching local leaders, land owners and farmers how they can make their park spaces, homes, farms and yards more “river-friendly” and helping children learn valuable science skills in the field.

The Harpeth — it flows through our lives. We all live downstream.

✓ Yes, I want to support and join the efforts of others with the Harpeth River Watershed Association. Please send me the Harpeth River color map and free TN river poster of my choice: small stream, stream, or river ecosystem.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Day _____ Evening _____

Email: _____

Sponsorship Levels & Incentives:

- Membership**, \$1-99, decal & poster
- Bullfrog**, \$100-249, t-shirt or cap, and decal/poster
- Tippecanoe Darter**, \$500-999, t-shirt, cap, and decal/poster
- Box Turtle**, \$1,000-2,499, t-shirt, cap, and decal/poster
- River Otter**, \$2,500-4,999, t-shirt, cap, and decal/poster
- Blue Heron**, \$5,000 and up, t-shirt, cap, and decal/poster
- Tippecanoe Darter**, \$500-999, t-shirt, cap, and decal/poster

Program Areas:

You may indicate one or more areas to benefit from your contribution.

- River Restoration
- Wildlife Protection
- Policy & Planning
- Education & Outreach
- HRWA's Choice

Volunteer Interests:

- River studies & restoration projects
- Education projects
- Helping in the office
- Other _____
- Special events
- Recreation events

Payment Options:

- My check is enclosed (payable to **HRWA**).
- Please charge my credit card:
 - Visa** **Mastercard**
- Card # _____
- Expiration Date ____/____

Return this form and your contribution to: **Harpeth River Watershed Association, P.O. Box 1127, Franklin, TN 37065**. For more information, call (615) 790-9767 or visit www.harpethriver.org.

HRWA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and contributions are tax-deductible.

Estate Planning:

- Please send information about including HRWA in my will.

State Scenic Rivers Act, continued from page 1

paint, cement, asphalt, oil, grease, lubricants, batteries, appliances, and other chemicals that are in carpet and treated wood. Though C&D landfills are not legally supposed to take hazardous or household waste, landfills have been subject to great abuse, such as illegal dumping that causes contamination of groundwater and presents health risks.

HRWA had major concerns with the possibility of groundwater contamination and then pollution to the river if the McCrory Lane quarry were to be used as a construction debris landfill. The quarry has water in it and lies next to the Harpeth in limestone (karst) rock that is notorious for complex surface and groundwater connections. HRWA met with the investors and went on-site several times with the engineers that began hydrological studies. We explained that we do not support the use of areas located close to the Harpeth River for landfill operations because of the risk of water contamination. The issue of possible surface water contamination and health risks was raised by Bill Zimmerman, General Manager from the Second South Cheatham Utility District, at the public meeting because the proposed landfill was just 14 miles upstream — and therefore within the 15-mile upstream critical zone — for the intake of the drinking water plant that services 8000 people in Cheatham County.

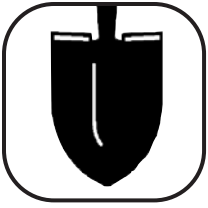
As a result of the effort of many people in Bellevue and Cheatham County to contact their legislators and the press, distribute fliers, and garner over 100 signatures on petitions from adjacent residential areas in opposition to the bills, on April 10 both the House and the Senate versions of the bill were withdrawn. This particular landfill exemption proposal has helped remind state legislators that there is widespread

support for our scenic rivers and the Scenic Rivers Act. *The Tennessean* editorial on April 19 expressed strong support for the Scenic Rivers Act and recognized Rep. Gary Moore's leadership. HRWA would also like to recognize Senator Henry for his leadership as a champion of the original Scenic Rivers Act and in maintaining the Harpeth River's scenic river designation in Davidson County.

A significant result of the public meeting was the public's rally behind the Harpeth River. In addition to being a drinking water source, the Harpeth is one of the most archeologically and historically significant rivers in Tennessee. It is also an extremely popular recreational river for residents of Williamson, Davidson, Cheatham and Dickson counties who canoe and fish along it through Davidson County and just downstream from the proposed landfill in the Narrows.

The landfill proposal was also right in the heart of the newly reorganized Harpeth River State Park which encompasses 50 miles of the mainstem connecting a number of properties, including the new Hidden Lake State Park right across the street from the McCrory Lane quarry.

HRWA is exploring other options for the inactive McCrory Lane quarry site since it is a large property along the last non-residentially developed bend on the Harpeth River from where Sneed Road crosses the river in Williamson County until the Harpeth flows into the Narrows in Cheatham County. With Hidden Lake State Park (a former quarry) across the street from the quarry property, there is the potential for this entire bend in the Harpeth to be maintained for recreational, scenic, and natural values that would be available for the enjoyment of all Tennesseans. For more information on this issue, please visit our website, www.harpethriver.org. ■



VOLUNTEER RIVER RESTORATION CORPS PROJECT UPDATE: *Scouts Rescue Streambanks*

by Robert Karesh, Watershed Protection Director

The Volunteer River Restoration Corps (VRRRC) has been very busy working throughout the Harpeth River and Duck River watersheds in an effort to improve the quality of the river system through a combination of cooperative restoration and education. In other words, it's a team effort! Here are some of our recent projects:

Little Harpeth River, Concord Park in Brentwood

November 6th and 19th, 2005, HRWA staff worked with Scout masters, Scouts and other volunteers to continue stream bank stabilization efforts on a section of the Little Harpeth River in Brentwood's Concord Park. The objective of the project was to install jute-covered cedar revetments — cut cedar trees wrapped in jute fabric which are staked down along eroding sections of streambank. The cedar branches slow water flow and capture sediment. This technique protects existing trees from dislodging and encourages new vegetation for long-term stabilization. In all, fifteen revetments were installed and numerous native trees, shrubs and grasses planted. The area treated was approximately seventy-five linear feet.

Head of River Spring in Eagleville

March 18th, 2006, we got our feet wet again, working with Scout masters, Scouts and other volunteers at the Head of River Spring, a site on the Harpeth River in Eagleville in Rutherford County. In total, twelve revetments and two coir logs (the latter are "logs" of interwoven fibers wrapped around by biodegradable netting) were installed, and native cane was planted for long term stabilization of the streambank. The area treated was approximately sixty linear feet.



The volunteer crew at Piney River on April 1st.

Piney River

April 1st, 2006, HRWA staff could be found along the Piney River, with an enthusiastic crew of Scouts and other volunteers, installing 1300+ plants in an area where streambanks had been eroding. Live stakes were installed from the water's edge up about 10 feet to the top of the streambank. Seedlings were planted from the top edge of the streambank out to a distance of about 25 feet. The scouts installed just over 500 plants per hour, possibly a new VRRRC record! ■

Joining the VRRRC is your chance to get out into the watershed, see problems first-hand, and be part of the solution. Everyone is welcome. If you are interested in helping the VRRRC, call (615) 790-9767, email us at hrwa@harpethriver.org, or visit www.harpethriver.org.

Visual Stream Assessment at Five Mile Creek Watershed

With a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "Applying an Integrated Watershed Approach to Meet Water Quality Criteria in the Harpeth River," HRWA is exploring how local stormwater and land-use planning ordinances can be designed so that the river meets water quality and drinking water standards despite the pressures of development.

In October 2005, HRWA began the water quality assessment component of the project in the Five Mile Creek watershed in the Goose Creek/I-65 corridor south of Franklin. The watershed encompasses approximately 10 square miles of mixed land use including urban, residential and agricultural activities. Five Mile Creek is also listed on the state of Tennessee's 303(d) List, which is a compilation of the streams and lakes that are "water quality limited" or impaired.

Assessments made to date have identified several consistent water quality issues including inadequate stream riparian buffer (i.e. vegetation zones on streambanks), agricultural and residential stream encroachment, severe bank erosion and cattle access. Using the data collected, HRWA will develop a stormwater and land-use plan for the area including best management practices (BMPs) for maintaining stream health and water quality that can be incorporated into the development planned for this high growth area.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**May is
American
Wetlands
Month**



**RIVER
RESTORATION
OPPORTUNITIES**

MAY 6
River Clean Up, Franklin, TN
9 am to 1:30 pm

MAY 13
MTSU Stream Clean-up
8:30 to 11:30am
followed by a picnic lunch,
11:30 am to 1 pm,
at Ashton Park Pavilion
*(For this event, please contact Mark
Rogers at 615-403-2124.)*

JUNE 24
Duck River Clean-up
Shelbyville, Columbia, Centerville, TN
9:30 am to 1 pm

AUGUST 26
Streambank stabilization and
re-vegetation at River Park,
Brentwood, TN
8:30 am to 4 pm

AUGUST 26
Streambank stabilization and
re-vegetation at Concord Creek,
Eagleville, TN
9:30 to 4 pm

SEPTEMBER 2
Streambank stabilization and
re-vegetation at River Park,
Brentwood, TN
8:30 am to 4 pm



**EDUCATION
AND OUTREACH
OPPORTUNITIES**

MAY 13
Mother's Day Hike at
Hidden Lake State Park, TN
Led by Park Ranger Jane Polansky
10 am to Noon

JUNE 18
Father's Day Canoe Float at
Narrows of the Harpeth, TN
Led by Park Ranger Jane Polansky
1 to 5 pm

AUGUST 21
Duck River school water quality
sampling begins

NOVEMBER 3
Duck River school water quality
sampling ends

Stay Up-to-Date:
Visit www.harpethriver.org
for details on upcoming events, or
e-mail juliahalford@harpethriver.org
to sign up for our monthly
e-mail newsletter.

Get Your Feet Wet!

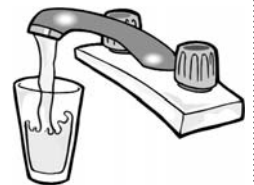
School groups, scouts, property owners, HRWA and Tennessee Scenic River Association members, and other river-lovers are joining the Volunter River Restoration Corps (VRRRC). It's a great way to give something back to the rivers we all enjoy.

Joining the VRRRC is a chance to get out into the watershed, see problems first-hand, and be part of the solution. Everyone is welcome. Bring your shovels and buckets, your church group, scout troop, classroom or neighborhood organization, and come on out to the river! We'll show you what to do.

Call HRWA at (615) 790-9767 for more information. ■

FUN FACTS FOR NATIONAL DRINKING WATER WEEK, MAY 1-7 FROM THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, WWW.NSF.ORG

- There is the same amount of water on Earth as there was when the Earth was formed. The water from your faucet could contain molecules that dinosaurs drank.
- Water regulates the Earth's temperature. It also regulates the temperature of the human body, carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, cushions joints, protects organs and tissues, and removes wastes.
- The human brain is 75% water; a living tree is also 75% water.
- Although the average person can live for about one month without food, we can only survive about a week without water.
- What we do to the environment affects the quality of our drinking water. What we pour on the ground will end up in our water; what we spray into the air will also end up in our water.
- The average total home water use for each person in the U.S. is about 50 gallons per day. ■



Look Inside:

- ◆ **See what a difference we can make by working together** — Concerned citizens, environmental and conservation groups, and state agencies worked together to prevent weakening of Tennessee's Scenic River Act (pg. 1).
- ◆ **Show your support of HRWA's work and you'll help ensure the health of the Harpeth for generations to come** — contribute to HRWA's 2006 Annual Fund campaign (pg. 3).
- ◆ **Dig in** — The Volunteer River Restoration Corps, with the help of Boy Scout troops and others, is working on streambank restoration projects throughout the watershed. Get some friends together and join us (pg. 4).
- ◆ **Learn about the impact of land use planning on water quality and stormwater issues** — With an EPA grant, HRWA technical staff are measuring the effects of development on the Five Mile Creek area south of Franklin and creating plans to protect the watershed (pg. 4).
- ◆ **Get active** — Check out the HRWA Events Calendar for upcoming hikes, canoe trips, river restoration projects, and more (pg. 5).

The Team at HRWA Headquarters



FRONT ROW:

Jill Wussow, Program and Restoration Assistant
Robert Karesh, Watershed Protection Director
Julia Halford, Events and Membership Manager

BACK ROW:

Melissa Buchanan, Part-time Outreach Coordinator – Eagleville
Pam Davee, Director of Development and Policy Specialist
Dorie Bolze, Executive Director
John McFadden, Director of Science and Restoration Programs

NOT PICTURED:

Shelly Case, Business Manager
Gwendolyn Blanton, Part-time Environmental Specialist



HARPETH RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 1127
FRANKLIN, TN 37065
WWW.HARPETHRIVER.ORG

*Check out our website for past issues
of the newsletter and a wealth
of river-friendly resources
for home, farm, and garden.*

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