

The History and The Vision



December 2018

South River Science Team Established 2001



STATE

FEDERAL

LOCAL

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

ACADEMIA

ADVISORY PANELISTS

DUPONT

VDEQ
VDGIF
VDH

EPA (Region III)
USFWS

Waynesboro

Friends of Shenandoah
Virginia Conservation
Council
Virginia Save Our Streams
Trout Unlimited
Shenandoah River Keeper
Chesapeake Bay
Foundation

William & Mary
James Madison
Virginia Tech
Delaware
Waterloo
Colorado State
Western Washington
Texas Tech

William Clements
David Hirschman
Ralph Turner
Mike Newman
Gary Bigham
Rob Mason
John Rudd

Engineers
Geologists
Risk Assessors

Inaugural Science Team Charter

February 14, 2001



Mission: Serve as a focal point for technical and scientific issues in support of steering committee

Objectives: Review data, trends, gaps; fate and transport issues, remediation, communications, ID and prioritize additional study areas; exposure issues; refine and develop conceptual models, develop plan to fill data gaps; explore watershed management options; fishery management options; monitor developments at other Hg sites; information transfer - expert lectures.

Charter Revisions



October 6, 2009

Mission - serve as a focal point for collecting and interpreting information to help mitigate legacy mercury contamination in the South River watershed.

Objectives - collect, analyze and interpret diverse environmental datasets; conduct outreach at the local and state levels; communicate findings to scientific and lay audiences; explore and prioritize remedial, restoration, and risk reduction options.

October 22, 2015

Mission - serve as a focal point for collecting and interpreting information to help mitigate legacy mercury contamination in the South River watershed.

Objectives - collect, analyze and interpret diverse environmental datasets; conduct outreach at the local and state levels; communicate findings to scientific and lay audiences; design, implement and monitor remedial, restoration, and risk reduction actions.

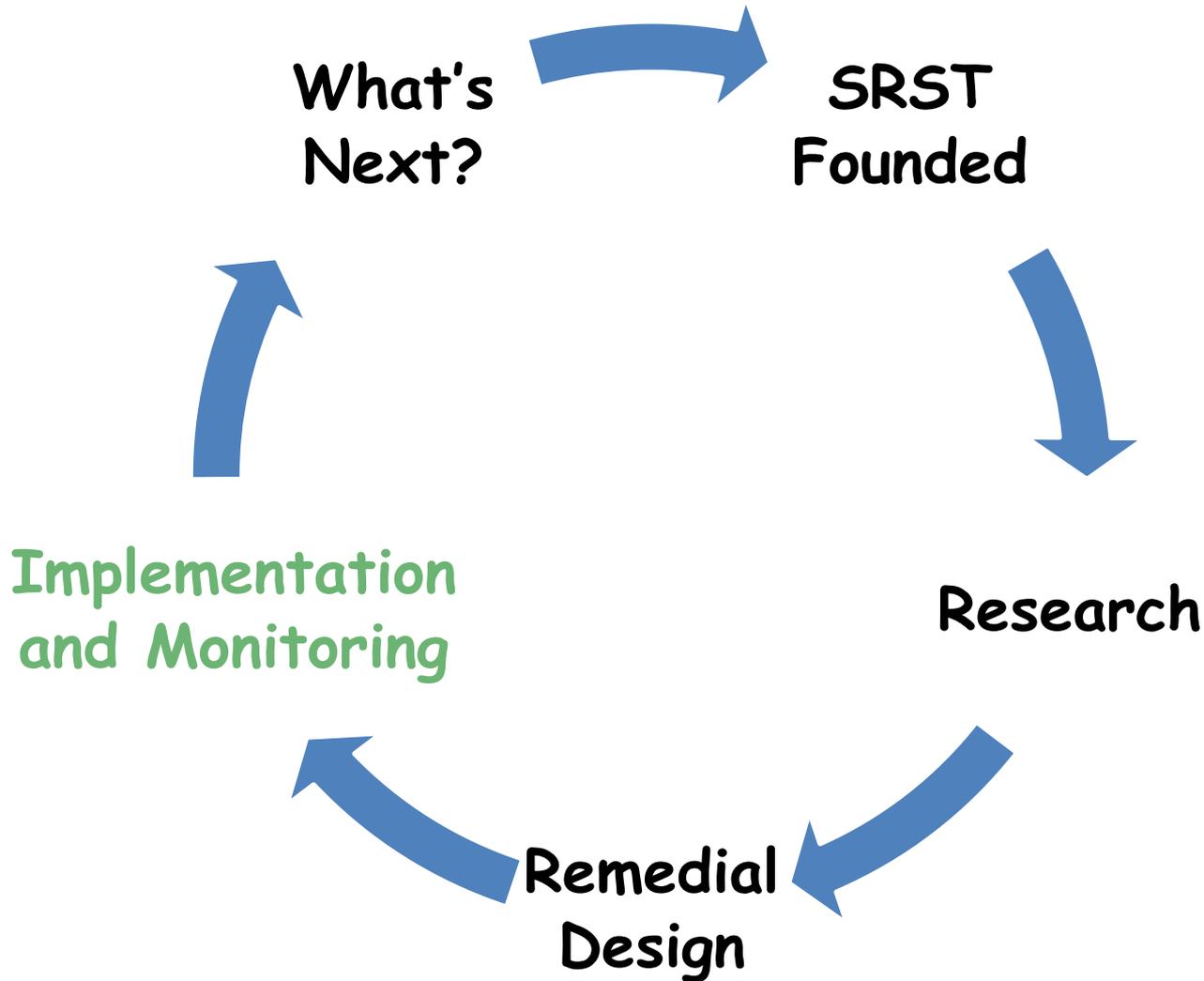
Accomplishments



- Established a culture of collaboration, mutual respect & transparency
- Significant contributions to Hg science through:
 - Over 50 publications in peer-reviewed journals
 - Over 75 Master's and Doctoral degrees completed
 - Presentation of SRST research at National and International Conferences
- Increased awareness of fish tissue consumption advisory

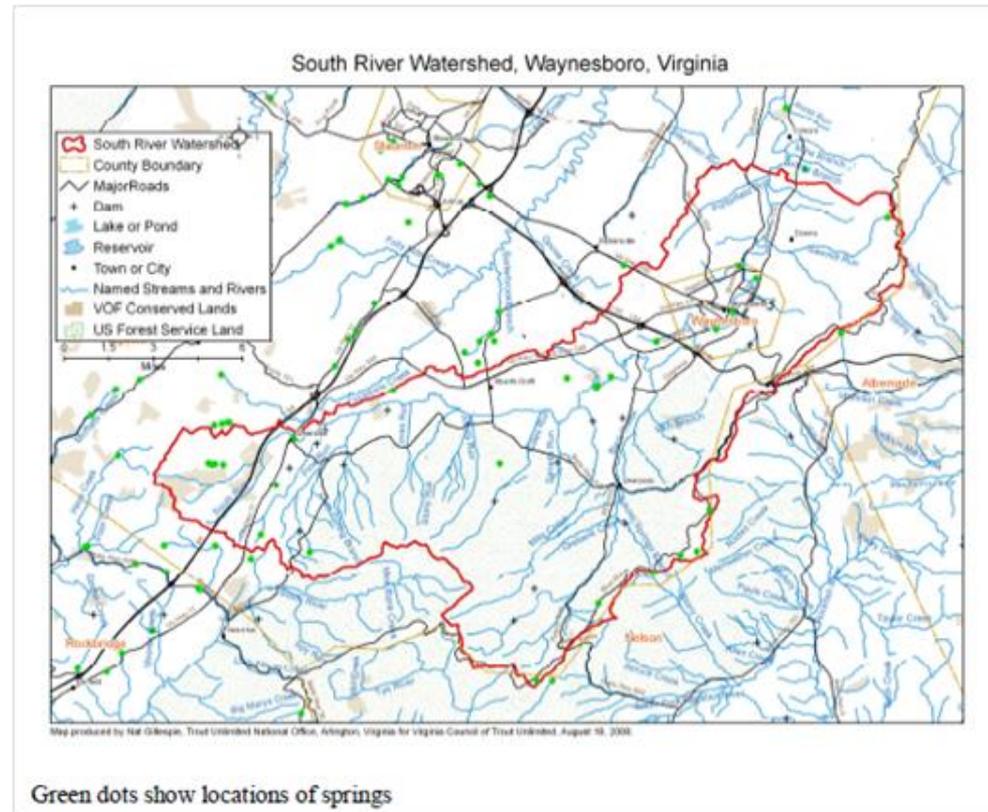
All of the above laid framework for an expedited decision making process!

South River Science Team Evolution



Transition to Watershed Focus??

- Much of the “Research” is finished
- Mercury is only part of the South River Story
- Other Stressors Important
 - Sedimentation
 - Nutrient Loading
 - Bacteria
 - Flooding



It Takes a Village...



Other Groups have explored establishing a “South River Watershed Organization”

- 2011 Upper South River Solutions
 - Waynesboro Downtown Development Inc.
 - UVA Institute for Environmental Negotiations
 - Trout Unlimited
 - Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Conducted interviews and held multiple meetings

South River Solutions

Draft Mission Statement



“To foster better stewardship and understanding of the Upper South River watershed resources; address natural and economic resource issues; and ensure sustainable watershed health, functions, and uses.

- **Water Quality:** *A watershed that contributes water of such quality that people can use it for consumption, recreation, work, as well as the support of terrestrial and aquatic life.*
- **Natural Resources:** *A balanced ecosystem that supports its component parts throughout the Upper South River Watershed including a varied habitat that thrives within the watershed.*
- **Use of Resources:** *Wise stewardship of the resources to maximize their renewal and strive to eliminate permanent loss.*
- **Land Use:** *Recognize that owners of property within the watershed have land use rights, as well as duty to protect the health of the ecosystem through the use of their land.*
- **Recreation:** *A watershed that provides compatible types of outdoor recreation consistent with experiences that foster an appreciation of the watersheds’ natural resources.*
- **Economics:** *A watershed that provides water quality and quantity sufficient to support a balanced economically viable and healthy community in which its citizens are proud to live, work, farm, and recreate.*
- **Education:** *An engaged populace that understands and appreciates the watershed ecosystem and works to promote sustainable watershed health.”*

South River Solutions

S.M.A.R.T. Goals - Path Forward



- Eighteen Goals established ranging from habitat preservation and water quality issues to tourism and industry jobs
- Process lost momentum and South River Watershed Group has never materialized
 - Goals & Next Steps too broad
 - Need to be more focused
 - Identify core goals and build incrementally over time

Transition SRST into Watershed Organization?



- Leverage experience and relationships of SRST to jumpstart a Watershed focused group
- Mercury would still be important issue, but other topics & stakeholders would be engaged.
- DuPont (Corteva) remain present and continue financial support to develop organization
- *Need for other Groups to provide ACTIVE participation*

Reached Out to Various Groups: November 2018



- Headwaters SWCD
- Central Shenandoah PDC
- Waynesboro staff
- TU
- RAP
- Virginia DEQ (Nesha McCrae)

General Notions



- Expand science: BMPs, buffers, reconnect floodplains, watershed permeability, fish kills, etc.
- Assist existing “conveners” of various efforts (e.g., CSPDC)
- Reach out to those not usually at the table; involve upstream landowners, find common ground
- Address issues for ag community: Chesapeake Bay implementation (fix bank erosion)
- Convene annual summit, like bike/walk summit in Harrisonburg
- Complement other efforts in Waynesboro: education, science, build civic capacity, tell story of remediation
- Help set priorities
- CO-BENEFITS

Questions

- Scale: whole watershed, combine with other groups (Friends of Middle River), or just river?
- Issues: narrow focus on water quality, or broaden to education, tourism, etc.
- How to incorporate into ongoing SRST efforts: monitoring, remediation
- Mainly coordination or also outreach/organizational?
- Timing