



# The South River Current

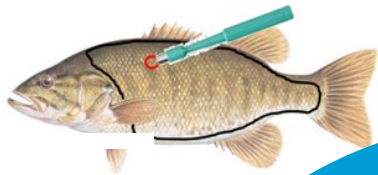
Promoting interest and collaboration for watershed stewardship



## River Restoration

October 2021 Volume 2 Issue 10

Following the scientific method that we all learned in grade school—observe, research, hypothesize, test, analyze, and draw conclusions—the South River Science Team has spent countless hours studying how to reduce mercury levels in South River fish. This same goal will determine, at least in part, the success of re-designing and remediating specific riverbanks. In recent years, the team found a way to test mercury levels in fish tissue without killing the fish. Just like a dermatologist performs a punch biopsy of skin, the team performs punch biopsies on fish to collect fish tissue samples. The



process has proven both accurate and efficient. The impact of the modified riverbanks on the health of area fish may take several years to see, so the fish consumption advisory is still in effect. Keep that in mind next time you decide to cast your line!

### Did You Know?

- The South River is home to warm-water fish like Large-mouth Bass, Catfish, Sunfish, and Crappies. These fish are hardy throughout most of the U.S. and can survive winters in the north.
- Beginning above Lyndhurst and through Waynesboro, large springs cool the river, creating a home for cold-water fish like Rainbow Trout.
- Baker Spring in Waynesboro is one of the largest cold-water springs in Virginia.
- About 2,000 people attend Riverfest every year (excluding 2020 and 2021). See below for more information about the festival.

### Connections

In these stressful times, it is vital for our health to find ways to relax and refocus. If you have never felt the satisfaction of being outside for an afternoon of fishing, this might be just the time. The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources has developed a list of the top reasons to go fishing. Here are some highlights (click [here](#) for the whole list):

- Enjoy Health Benefits—Being outside and being active are proven benefits to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- Contribute to Conservation—Purchasing a fishing license helps fund education and preservation programs.
- Relieve Stress—Anglers describe the experience as freeing and stress relieving.
- Practice Social Bonding—Sharing a fishing experience strengthens friend and familial bonds.
- Support Wildlife and Fisheries Management—Fishing brings attention to the importance of a healthy fish population.
- Recreate—Fishing is fun!



## Take a Walk Back

More than 20 years ago, Riverfest started as a simple idea: get Waynesboro residents excited about the South River again. Riverfest, held each year in Downtown Waynesboro, is a local festival hosted by a registered nonprofit organization of the same name dedicated to environmental conservation and watershed stewardship in the Shenandoah River Basin. The event draws attention to the positive changes occurring in and along the South River in Waynesboro and surrounding communities. Throughout the years, this free event has grown to be one of the largest festivals in Waynesboro as more programs, activities, and exhibits have been added. Board members were forced to cancel the event in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, but plans are underway to restart



Isabel Trella-Luedtke: Overall Winner 2020 Riverfest Poster Contest



the festivities in the spring of 2022. The river is transforming into a tranquil destination where residents can relax, recreate, and enjoy the area's natural beauty. Don't miss out on all the action. Check [here](#) in the coming months for more information.



The Current is a publication of the South River Science Team ([www.southernriverstewardship.org](http://www.southernriverstewardship.org)). To be added or deleted from our distribution list, contact KB at [kbaldino@writingunlimitedllc.com](mailto:kbaldino@writingunlimitedllc.com)