

Our Mission: To enhance the water quality of the Cumberland River and its watersheds through education and by promoting

CUMBERLAND RIVER COMPACT

cooperation among citizens, businesses, and agencies in Kentucky and Tennessee.



Annual Report 2008-2009



From the Executive Director

It is my privilege to present to you the Annual Report for 2008-09. I want to sincerely thank you for being a part of our work by supporting the Compact. Inside you will find articles and stories about what we have done over the last year and what exciting projects are in store for the coming year.

We directly served over 8,000 individuals through programs and events during the year and have gotten the word out to many more through written and online communications about the importance of healthy streams, rivers, and lakes.

We have some great projects underway like installing 300 rain gardens and planting 10,000 trees in Nashville over the next 5 years, the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative where we are educating farmers about sustainable practices and helping them be implemented, coordinating the “greening” of several buildings at Ft. Campbell, and continuing to create two new watershed groups.

Whether we are getting our hands dirty planting trees, pulling trash out of a creek, or bringing people together to talk about their water issues; the Compact is focused on educating and fostering partnerships that enhance the quality and amount of water in Tennessee and Kentucky.

Thank you again for your support in enhancing water quality throughout the Cumberland River Basin!



Doug Hausken
Executive Director

Beyond Middle Tennessee – Outcomes for the Cumberland Basin

If you are reading this you have at least some interest in water; whether in the lakes and rivers flowing through your life for weekend fishing and boating, to power your business, or as a water source for your morning cup of joe. The Cumberland River Compact's mission tends to all those needs, often at a very direct local level through rain gardens and better building practices. Sometimes we take a broader approach, by taking our local solutions to others and harvesting what works in other areas to bring home to Tennessee and Kentucky.

This past year our Senior Research Consultant spoke to national and international audiences at the Groundwater Protection Council's Annual Conference and the first International Water Efficiency Conference. She took economic findings on water/energy-friendly building practices and collaborative methodologies that work for water quality here in

...this work can protect community water sources for business, *your evening meal*, and your child's ability to play in a healthy creek.

the Cumberland. What resulted were invitations to collaborate further – with Australians working on irrigation optimization, professionals from British Columbia working on community-level sustainable building, and U.S. firms wishing to collaborate on water/energy nexus work.

Although many of these offers take time to mature or match up with just the right project here at home, ultimately they come to bear fruit, such as the work with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) upgrading State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) grading structures and opportunities. After working with partners from World Wildlife Fund, the Tennessee Association of Utility Districts, the Tennessee County Commissioners Association, and American Rivers, we were able to work with the state to provide new opportunities for local communities which can offer protection for headwater streams and county/municipal water resources.

When applying for SRF funds, communities will now get higher grades on applications if they have riverside buffer zone ordinances in place and enforced, open space plans,

and/or nonpoint pollution projects in place. Further, in a TDEC SRF pilot watershed enhancement project, fee simple purchase of land and/or purchase of development rights as well as other nonpoint source pollution reduction Best Management Practices are eligible for funding as long as the loan recipient can justify that long-term positive impact to water quality will take place and sellers/landowners are participating on a voluntary basis.

Ultimately, this work can protect community water sources for business, *your evening meal*, and your child's ability to play in a healthy creek.



Downstream Watersheds Program

Drive down Interstate 24 East from Nashville to Route 55 or Route 56 and then east or west along US 70S, you enter the mostly rural area of the Collins River Watershed. The Watershed covers over 811 square miles including 1,003 miles of streams and 69 acres of lakes before emptying to the Caney Fork River near Rock Island State Park. On your drive through the Collins River Watershed, you will enjoy the scenic views of agricultural fields used for cattle grazing, grain production, and tobacco farming, but the most well-known agriculture practice is plant nurseries. There are also a number of recreational opportunities with numerous hiking trails, waterfalls, gorges, wildflowers, and scenic views; this Watershed attracts many outdoor enthusiasts. The region has strong development pressures on the headwaters that begin on the Cumberland Plateau. Without careful planning, protection, and education to enhance water quality, the Collins River Watershed could be threatened.

The McMinnville Breakfast Rotary Club's Friends of Our Rivers (FOR) program hopes to address legacy trash issues throughout the watershed. FOR envisions that every stream

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mile becomes adopted by area residents and organizations. In this past year, our Watersheds Program Director worked closely with the group providing programmatic assistance on the development of an adopt-a-waterway program, stream cleanups on the Barren Fork, and enhancements to a local park and library parking lot in downtown McMinnville.

The Watershed Program is now moving into our furthest western watershed, Lake Barkley. The watershed is mostly deciduous forest with many acres preserved at the state and federal level, The Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, Fort Campbell, Fort Donelson, and Barkley Wildlife Management Area. The Lake Barkley Watershed's eastern portion is dominated by agriculture production of row crops, swine, and dairy. The water quality challenges for this rural region are pathogens, habitat alterations, nutrients, and sedimentation. We are thankful for your support in this effort and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's 319h grant program. Our goal is to develop a watershed-based restoration plan and facilitate the formation of a local watershed group to implement the plan's strategies to improve the watershed.

Additional Watersheds Program Efforts

- Assisted many Cumberland Basin Council members in developing the 2009 Watershed Summit. Our Watershed Director managed the Watershed Associations track that educated workshop participants from six organizations on media communications for events and volunteer recruitment and management.
- Helped launch a rain barrel program for the Caney Fork Watershed Association.
- Assisted the development and implementation of Stones River Watershed Association's fundraising plan.

Transforming from gray pipes to green trees and bioswales not only works better but it saves money...

B *Transforming Gray to Green: Green Infrastructure That Is!*
Building Outside the Box (BOB) – Sustainable Building Program

Water pros call it “green infrastructure,” a term of art that tries to convey the infrastructure functions that our green space provides. What the term refers to is how the natural features of forested hillsides, urban trees, headwater streams, streambank vegetation, and grassy drainage ways serve our communities by slowing down rainfall runoff, recharging groundwater, cleaning water, improving air quality, preventing floods, and keeping water in the streams during times of drought. It also refers to engineered “green infrastructure,” such as pervious concrete surfaces that let rain filter into the ground, tree planters and rain gardens that capture and soak in rainwater, and cisterns and rain barrels that capture rainfall for flood prevention and water efficiency. Transforming from gray pipes to green trees and bioswales not only works better but it saves money too!

The BOB program highlights green infrastructure in action thanks to the work of our demonstration site partners:

- The Tennessee Concrete Association headquarters has transformed a large polluting asphalt expanse into a model urban retrofit site with pervious concrete parking, a 1,000 gallon rainwater harvesting cistern, and numerous tree and vegetable planters.
- Ft. Campbell is working with a BOB team of experts to upgrade their utility buildings to meet LEED Silver green building standards, with a focus on low impact development practices suitable to the extensive karst (sinkhole) topography in that region.
- Kevin Guenther, Design Resource, is slowly transforming his home office landscaping into a model for suburban permaculture with integrated vegetable gardens, flower gardens, fruit trees, composting, rainwater harvesting, and a greenroof.

2 *Local Officials Curriculum (LOC)*

2009 has been a phenomenal year! The LOC program has continued to reach out and educate our elected leaders on water resource policy. We collaborated with the Model Forestry Pilot Project and the City of Cookeville to provide innovative, water resource protection language to the City's Comprehensive plan. Tree preservation, natural resource protection, and riparian corridors for habitat conservation will help the city ensure their water resources reduce the impact to climate change and set them apart as an innovative community reaching for sustainability in the twenty first century.

Our LOC program partnered with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) on a public campaign to build public awareness about instream flow, including natural flow, water efficiency, and conservation. We took education to local communities and worked directly with utility districts struggling to meet water supply demands. We created a

We facilitated a session for state and local elected officials and water utility managers... State legislators, mayors, utility managers, and local watershed groups packed a downtown conference room...

successful public service announcement (PSA) campaign during the summer and provided other communities' access to these PSAs at no charge to them.

We facilitated a session for state and local elected officials and water utility managers on Managing Tennessee Waters. State legislators, mayors, utility managers, and local watershed groups packed a downtown conference room for education on public water supply policy, agency programs, and scientific research focused around water conservation and instream flow. In the coming years, we will continue to work with TWRA, local and state leaders, and utility districts to promote water conservation for preservation of our water resources.

The Community Partners program has continued to grow and we now have nine participating communities. Throughout the year, we have held numerous full and half-day educational sessions, stream clean-ups, and good housekeeping classes. On top of all of that, we spoke to nearly a thousand youths! We continue to work with our communities to provide timely

education and adapt to meet their specific needs.

Finally, the LOC program was awarded an innovative grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In October of 2009, the LOC program began work with partners and farmers on "Sustainable Management Strategies for Food Commodity and Minor Crop Farmers in Tennessee and Kentucky." This project will develop a holistic approach to sustainable farming for fruit, vegetable, and food commodity farmers. Nearly a half-dozen conventional and organic farmers have already asked to participate in the program. Watershed groups, University of Tennessee Extensions, Resource Conservation and Development Council, and third generation farmers are coming together to work with the Compact to spread and support sustainable agriculture. So be on the look-out in 2010 for updates and opportunities concerning food production and the Cumberland River Compact.

Connecting the Dots – an Example

The Murfreesboro Stormwater Department and Robert Haley have been long time supporters of the Cumberland River Compact and the LOC program. When Robert joined the program as a Community Partner, he gathered a team of Murfreesboro employees to help design an educational plan tailored to the city's needs. When we discussed public education and outreach, the Park's Department declared that it had all of its regulatory needs covered with all of the community recreation events they held throughout the year. A few weeks later Robert and the LOC Director talked about those events and his inability to "plug into" them. Parks was doing a great job but it was disconnected from the Stormwater Department. After some thought, we reengaged the Parks Department on their education and found a plethora of environmental and outdoor programs but none that specifically addressed Robert's stormwater needs. After working with Angela Jackson, Greenways Director,

...the Whitland Rain Garden...was the first of 300 rain gardens to improve the health of Nashville's small streams.

we developed a back pocket guide for recreation activities. We augmented current programs by adding small factoids that satisfied stormwater requirements and didn't add to the workload of the Parks employees. At the end of every day, a half-page sheet on the number of people and age range is filled out and quarterly reports are sent to Robert. At the end of the year, the Murfreesboro Stormwater Department had public education, outreach and participation numbers that were in the thousands!

It was a huge success and Robert is so happy with the results they will continue this process year after year. We saved Murfreesboro money, time, and connected the inter-departmental dots! It's the excitement of innovative solutions like these that keeps LOC and our Community Partners on the cutting edge of watershed services!

bridge where Carden Avenue terminates in Kingfisher Creek. This community focal point is where we chose to locate the rain garden to offer opportunities for public education and improvements to water quality.

"The Whitland Area Neighborhood Association is excited to be the first rain garden slated for Nashville neighborhoods. We look forward to improving the water quality of our local streams," says Chad Greer, President of the Neighborhood Association. "Since 1980, when the Whitland Area Neighborhood Association was founded, it has had annual projects to keep the stream clean." The rain garden has made a noticeable improvement in water quality by catching 5,000 gallons of water – the first flush during most storms – and providing the stormwater time to seep into the ground, thereby recharging ground water.

The neighborhood association has been an outstanding partner in this project and has set an example for other neighborhoods. This project, combined with ongoing stream stewardship, will have a great impact on water quality in Nashville.

- The Compact has begun an ambitious project to plant 10,000 trees and 300 rain gardens in Nashville in the next 5 years. It combines very concrete efforts to improve water quality using green infrastructure with a citywide civic effort to educate and involve all Nashvillians in water stewardship activities.
- The Whitland Rain Garden was planted in partnership with the Whitland Area Neighborhood Association, Gardens of Babylon, Metro Water, and the National Fish and Wildlife Federation.
- Over five hundred neighborhood associations and home owners associations across Nashville were invited to participate in 10,000 Neighborhood Trees which offers free trees for neighborhoods to plant on public/ common space. Each association was invited to choose 10 native species trees to plant in their neighborhood's public space. Through this project the Compact will see parks replenished with shade trees, street trees grace historic neighborhood sidewalks, and stream banks in housing developments replanted. These trees will improve air quality, reduce stormwater runoff, reduce the heat island effect, and beautify Nashville.

Project Blue Streams

The Whitland Area Neighborhood Association and Cumberland River Compact's Project Blue Streams invited the community of Nashville to pick up a shovel, rake, or hoe and help with the installation of a premier project in Nashville: the Whitland Rain Garden. This project was the first of 300 rain gardens to improve the health of Nashville's small streams.

The Compact became involved with the Whitland Area Neighborhood Association when the neighborhood discovered their beloved neighborhood stream was listed on Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's 303(D) list of impaired waters. The stream plays an integral role in neighborhood life: Fourth of July picnics, summer movie nights, and daily dog walks all occur near the pedestrian

- The Rain Barrel program continues to be wildly popular. This year the Compact distributed over 1,500 rain barrels. This has been a great partnership between the Cumberland River Compact, Coca Cola Enterprises, and the World Wildlife Fund. We are proud that the Nashville project serves as a model that is being replicated internationally.

There are many, many ways to become involved in the Compact's Project Blue Streams. Simply planting a tree in your yard and registering it with Project Blue Streams is the easiest. Planting a rain garden at your home, neighborhood, school, or church with our assistance is another great way to become involved. We can also help you find a group volunteer activity such as planting trees on public space. Check our website for more opportunities to improve the health of Nashville's small streams and the Cumberland River. Most importantly, become a member of the Cumberland River Compact today!

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*Stephanie Boyd –
Research Fellow*

A few months ago, I was a public health professional in Boston—technically still a graduate student, but done with classes and opting to work while choosing a dissertation topic. I became interested in researching environment and health in Nashville's Mill Creek watershed, and soon found myself talking with members of the Cumberland River Compact. They were friendly and helpful right away, and eventually we discovered that we shared complementary goals which might be better met by working together.

Once I moved here, I found their input on local watershed issues invaluable, and they have also helped me reach contacts among government agencies and nonprofits. This is a favor I hope to return by expanding contacts among “regular people” – a time-consuming endeavor in Mill Creek, which includes both urban areas, where over one third of residents are recent immigrants, and more rural areas, where people may feel that they share little in the way of environment or opinion with the first group. Identifying issues that engage both communities is a large part of the work I am doing, and recently, interest has been growing. Such as when an employee at an immigrant organization expressed interest in incorporating simple watershed concepts into English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, so that some of the area's newest residents can participate in this discussion. This is exciting, all the more so because I have the partnership of an established, respected voice on regional water issues, so that any data collected will have somewhere to go other than my school's dissertation archive. The Compact and I both benefit from our partnership, but the end result, I hope, will be for the benefit of the watershed and the community.



Catfish Rodeo and Water Festival

In our 7th year, this *free* family festival is all about connecting children to our local waters. The Cumberland River Compact and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency partner each June to offer Middle Tennessee youth the opportunity to fish for free. Over 500 people attended.

The day involved 2,000 pounds of catfish stocked in Lake Sevier at Shelby Park, educational booths and activities that involve fishing, scavenger hunts, boating and water education activities that all ages can enjoy.

We'd like to thank all of our partners—especially SunTrust Bank, but also Shelby Bottoms Nature Center and Nashville Public Television (NPT).





Dragon Boat & River Festival

The Dragon Boat and River Festival roared to life in August, 2007, and has grown bigger each year, with 5,000 in attendance this past August. This one-of-a-kind event brings awareness to the Cumberland River and promotes a healthy river ecosystem. Big thanks to our partner, Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association. And thank you to sponsors Ingram Barge and Gaylord Entertainment, and Bridgestone!







Catfish and Cocktails honoring Bill Forrester (far right), pictured Board Chairman Shirley Caldwell-Patterson (middle)



Montgomery County Rotary Park Stream Enhancement Project on Tree ID Day with the local Boy Scout's Adventure Team

T *he Year in Pictures* 2009



Shelby Bottoms Nature Center rain garden planting with volunteers from Ingram Materials





Collins River at the Bridgestone Training Facility in Morrison, Tennessee



Deliberation on identifying a subwatershed for future work by the Collins River Technical Advisory Committee



Senior Research Consultant Margo Farnsworth (3rd from the right) discusses stakeholder outreach to Chinese Soil & Water delegation



Whitland Neighborhood rain garden under construction with volunteers from the neighborhood



Wetland cleanup on the campus of Tennessee State University, pictured Executive Director Doug Hausken (right)



Tree planting at the Communications Workers Apartments in East Nashville



Tree planting by Lockeland Springs Neighborhood Association at Lockeland Elementary



Hundreds greet an ancient species as the Compact & TWRA release lake sturgeon last spring

Membership in the Cumberland River Compact

Founded in 1997, the Cumberland River Compact is a nonprofit organization with a mission to enhance the water quality of the Cumberland River and its tributaries through education and by promoting cooperation among citizens, businesses, and agencies in Kentucky and Tennessee. We believe that communities can have both a strong economy and a healthy environment. Our goal is to be a trusted source of information on water issues and to facilitate cooperation among all stakeholders to ensure that our rivers and streams continue to provide us with clean water, bountiful crops, healthy fisheries, and abundant recreational opportunities.

Support the Cumberland River Compact, fill in the form below and become a member today!

Mail to: P.O. Box 41721, Nashville, Tennessee 37204

Web site: www.cumberlandrivercompact.org

Yes, I want to help! Sign me up, my information is below.

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Our Mission: To enhance the water quality of the Cumberland River and its watersheds through education and by promoting cooperation among citizens, businesses, and agencies in Kentucky and Tennessee.



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