

FISHIN' POLE PACK & PADDLE

Float Fishermen of Virginia

Spring Issue 2009, No.7



image courtesy of morguefile.com

President's Paddle

Greetings Fellow Paddlers,

The season is off to a good start after a little rain; I hope the paddlers had a good time in Highland county. We Dickels had a good time on the Rockfish the first weekend in April; it was up around three feet. We even got some experience unwrapping a boat (*Don Leeger we need to talk to you*).

Ginnie had a great idea; she asked everyone one on the float to pickup at least two pieces of trash. I think we Dickels will adopt that as policy on all our floats. What about you?

As you have heard Bill and his crew got the railroad bill passed in the House of Delegates and is currently working on the state senate; help him out when he asks. I paddled that flat water below Balcony Falls last year in a head wind towing a tired paddler; it's true.

I am looking forward to the crustacean

event at R5 on the 24th and I hope to see a good turn out. Also, don't forget that the Memorial Day float is also there. We will have the state meeting there at 9:00 AM. One of the items that we are kicking around is how to answer the many requests for information about FFV and it's chapters. How do we funnel the request to the individual chapters? Who will handle the request at the

chapters? Think about it and bring some input to the meeting. We are also going to nail down the date for the Kid Float; I think they already have a location on the James at Warren. If you haven't heard, we take a large group of inner city kids down the river for a day. Last year we counted forty six boats on the river and it wasn't just float fishermen; there were outside volunteers. We need all your help; please join us.

After a "DRY" float you can expect the usual "Dickel Hospitality" at the campsite which happens to be our take out. We decided to have the campsite the take out to avoid traffic jams that we've had in the past.

Get your boats out of the garage and on the river!

See you at the meeting,

Don

2009 Dues are Due!

State Membership dues are \$20 per member and are payable to your chapter treasurer. Additional dues may be required by your local chapter.

Questions? Contact your chapter treasurer, Katherine Waller Boyd or Beth Willoughby.

The Next State Meeting will be held on

Date: Sunday, May 25th

Location: R5

Time: 9:00 a.m.

See you there!



In this Issue...

Kid Float Info	2
Conservation Notes	3
2009 Trip Schedule	4

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photo courtesy of Erica Sims

3RD ANNUAL KID FLOAT

The 3rd annual Kid Float is Scheduled for Saturday June 6, 2009. This is a combined effort between Charlottesville Parks and Recreation and Float Fishermen of Virginia. This event is replacing the VIP Float that we used to have. I realize this is very close to the Memorial Weekend, however, this is an extremely important function.

We will be taking approximately 40 inner city kids, from Charlottesville, down the James River. We will be putting in at Howardsville and taking out just below the Warren's Ferry Landing. We are arranging to camp at the Tapscott property, below Warren's Ferry. The kids will be bussed in from Charlottesville on Saturday morning and bussed back to Charlottesville after the float. We are in need of volunteers to take children down the river. The goal is to have enough volunteers that each child can be taken down the river with an experienced paddler. We DO NOT allow the kids to go down the river without an

adult paddler. Paddlers with their own boat or access to a boat are appreciated. We are also in need of extra life jackets and paddles. Charlottesville Parks and Recreation is able to provide most life jackets and several paddles.

Volunteers are asked to please arrive at the take out by 8:30 am to run shuttle to the put in or arrive at the put in by 9:30 am. The kids will arrive by 10:30 am. It takes about an hour to get all boats coordinated before the kids arrive. Lunches and drinks will be provided on the river. Please note that this is a **DRY** float; no alcohol allowed!! The past two years have been a huge success. I would like to have more FFV members participate.

Please mark this on your calendars!

If interested, please contact:

Erica Sims, SIMS@charlottesville.org

Ginnie Peck, ginnieffv@peoplepc.com

for volunteer information.

Thank You, Ginnie M. Peck

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• **Editor's Note**

• The opinions expressed in FPP&P are those of the author and not necessarily those of FFV
• or its members. Articles and material for publication may be submitted to the FPP&P editor.
• Preferred format: Email with attachments in Word, RTF, and/or JPEG. Dates for submitting
• material for publication: 5th of February, April, August and November. The Editor reserves
• the right to edit as needed. Comments, criticism and compliments are always welcome.
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Conservation Notes

River Access & the Railroads: The Next Step April 17, 2009

For decades Virginia's citizens have had access blocked to rivers, trails and other natural resources due to railroad tracks. In July 2004, a group of river activists, led by Friends of the Rivers of Virginia (FORVA), began an initiative to gain better cooperation from the railroads.

The initiative involved getting a bill in the Virginia legislature that would force the state and the railroads to develop a process to evaluate and address the need for more pedestrian crossings.

The poster-child example of the need for better access across railroad tracks in Virginia is the need for a safer, more user-friendly crossing on the James River below Balcony Falls, just upstream from the Cushaw Hydro Dam. This effort to gain access became known as the Cushaw Project.

At Cushaw, hundreds of boaters, fishermen and tubers take out every weekend in the spring, summer and fall, crossing the track at multiple locations. The tracks are owned by CSX, and CSX has not been cooperative.

Fast forward now to 2009, when FORVA got a bill in the legislature, HB2088, that would require several state agencies to work with the railroads to develop a process for gaining more pedestrian crossings. The bill would require the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) to develop a report on access and send it to the Virginia House and Senate by December 1, 2009.

The bill became law April 5, 2009.

The resource access coalition put together by FORVA now includes boaters,

fishermen, bicyclists, hikers and others. Coming tasks include tracking and providing input while the agencies are developing their report as well as providing a list of needed railroad crossings. To date the list includes twenty-four targeted locations.

The railroads have used several arguments to block consideration of any new crossings. The favorite argument is that they will be exposed to more liability with more crossings. This is utter nonsense since people are already using the crossings and Virginia law provides that landowners (like CSX) who grant permission to cross the tracks are thereby guaranteed immunity from liability.

Common sense tells you that one official crossing at Cushaw, for example, is safer and would reduce liability compared to the multiple unofficial crossings.

So we shall see if the railroads act in good faith once the process is in place to develop crossings.

If not, FORVA and friends have an even stronger bill ready to go to the legislature that, if passed, will be even tougher on the railroads. And we think we have the votes to get it passed.

*Bill Tanger
Conservation Chair*

HB2088 Activists ...Thanks to you all!

FORVA

Bill Tanger, Tom Miller, Delegate Watkins Abbitt, Juanita Callis, Bo Calvert, Gene Counts, Corbin Dixon, Karen Firehock, Steve Saylor, John Tippett, and Patrick Trout.

FORVA Others

Kimball Payne (*Lynchburg City Manager*), Joe Seiffert, Amherst County, Jeff Kelble, Brian Shepard, Delegate William Fralin, and Senator John Edwards.

EFV

Roanoke: Steve Cates, Bobby Combs, Jim Franklin, Ken Ingram, John Kepley, Mike Klaiber, Scott Martin, Mike Sawyer, Linda Van Luik, Pat Williams, Ray Williams, Jeff Wold, and Dave Perault.

Dickens: Don Sims, Calvin Wilkerson, and Bob Peck.

Scotts Creek: Rick Mattox

BRRR

Howard Kirkland and Danny Booker

Coastals

David Bernard

VBF

Bud Vye, Champe Burnley, Barbara Duerk, Kyle Inman, Allen Muchnick, et al.



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Directions to R5:



image courtesy of Wendy Jones

From Charlottesville:

Take US 29 North to Culpeper. Just before Remington, take Bus. 29/15, (see below)

From Fredericksburg:

Take US 17 West toward Warrenton. At Bealeton LEFT on SR 28 to US 29/15. Turn LEFT on US 29/15(South) past Remington. Turn LEFT after crossing Rappahannock River onto Bus. 29/15, (see below)

From Warrenton:

US 29 South toward Charlottesville. Turn LEFT after crossing Rappahannock River onto Bus. 29/15, (see below)

From Bus. 29/15:

Turn RIGHT on SR 673(<.25 mile).

Turn LEFT into the campground, < .5 mile after railroad crossing.

March 14 & 15

Highland County Maple Syrup Festival / Back Creek Weekend
 Location: Douthat State Park
 Contact Scott Creekers for information

April 11

Dickel Spring Fling
 Location: Rockfish /James Rivers
 Contact Dickels for information

April 25

Cajun Weekend
 Location:R5 / Rappahannock River
 Contact Randy Carters for information

May 2

Appomattox River Clean Up
 Contact Jae Graves, Bill Britten for more information

May 22-26

Memorial Day Weekend
 State Meeting at 9:00 AM
 Location:R5 / Rappahannock River
 Dinner: Randy Carters/Scotts Creekers
 **River tax will be collected

June 6th

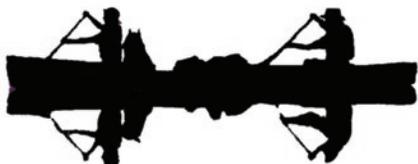
Kids' Float/Summer Float
 Location: James River
 Contact: Erica Sims, Ginnie Peck for more information

September 4-7

Labor Day Weekend
 State Meeting at 9:00 AM
 Location: Solitude on the James
 Dinner: Roanoke/Dickels
 **River tax will be collected

December 5

State Annual Planning Meeting
 State Meeting at 11:00 AM
 Please check our website for details and directions to these trips.



2009 FFV State Calendar