



PISCIVOROUS MAMMAL SURVEY UPDATE

**Expert Panel Meeting; October 5-6, 2010
Session: Research Projects and Field
Study Updates**

Ceil Mancini

Study Objectives



- Better understand otter and mink use along the South River and South Fork Shenandoah River
- Gather additional data regarding potential exposure of mink and otter to mercury through consumption of prey

Piscivorous Mammal Survey

Two Study Components

1. Field Survey

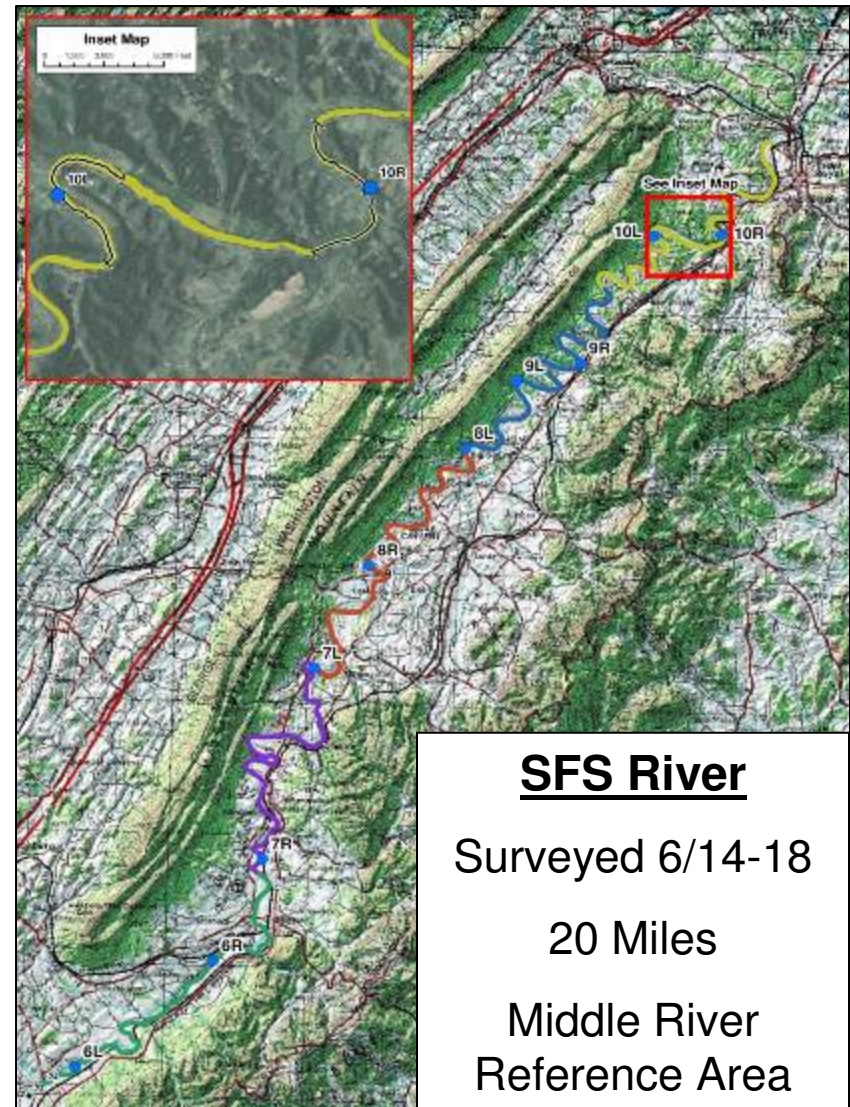
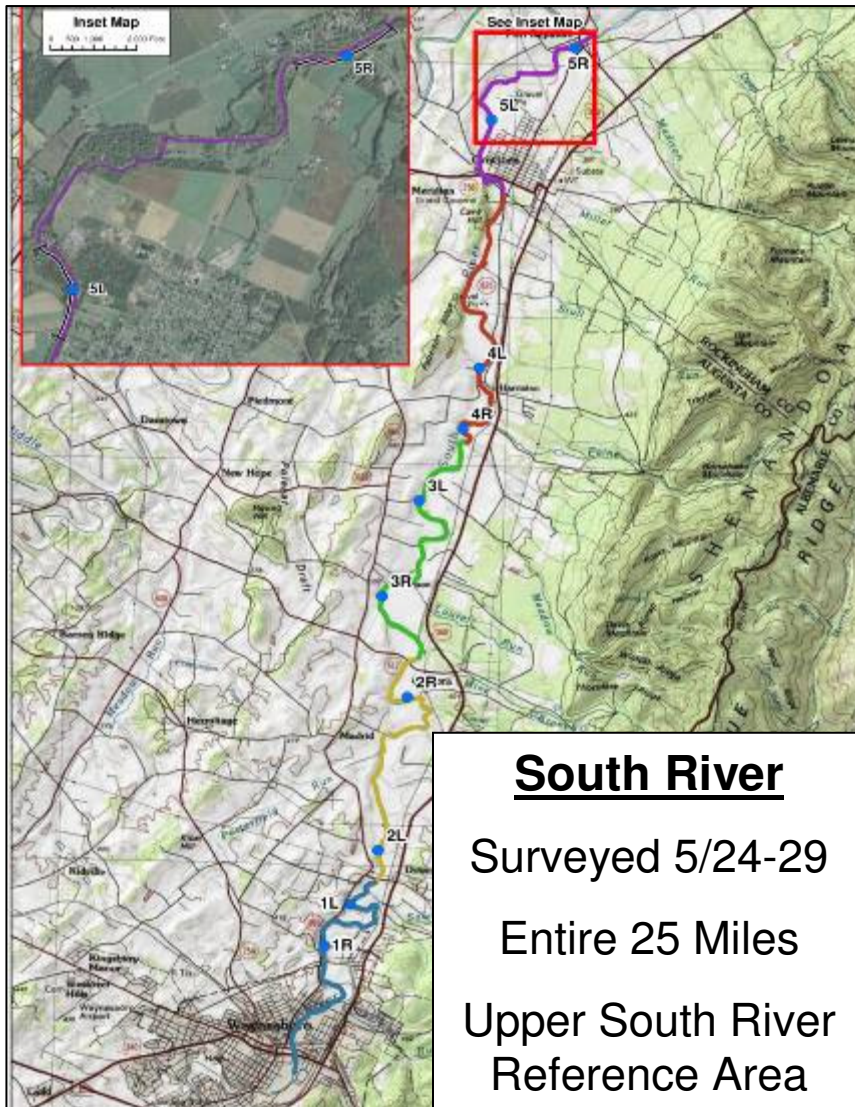
- Relative abundance
- Habitat associations
- Identification of high use areas

2. Passive Field Techniques

- Confirm active use by otter/mink
- Determine dietary preferences
- Passive Hair Collection



Otter and Mink Canoe Survey



Camera Survey

- Implemented summer 2010
- Field camera (same as used for wren study)
- RRM 2.5 (mink observed) and RRM 3.5
- Cameras were deployed for >30 days
- Periodic camera adjustments were made to increase chances of observation



Preliminary Findings



South River

- 1 mink, 2nd possible mink
- Camera survey – no otter or mink sighted

Upper South River Reference Area

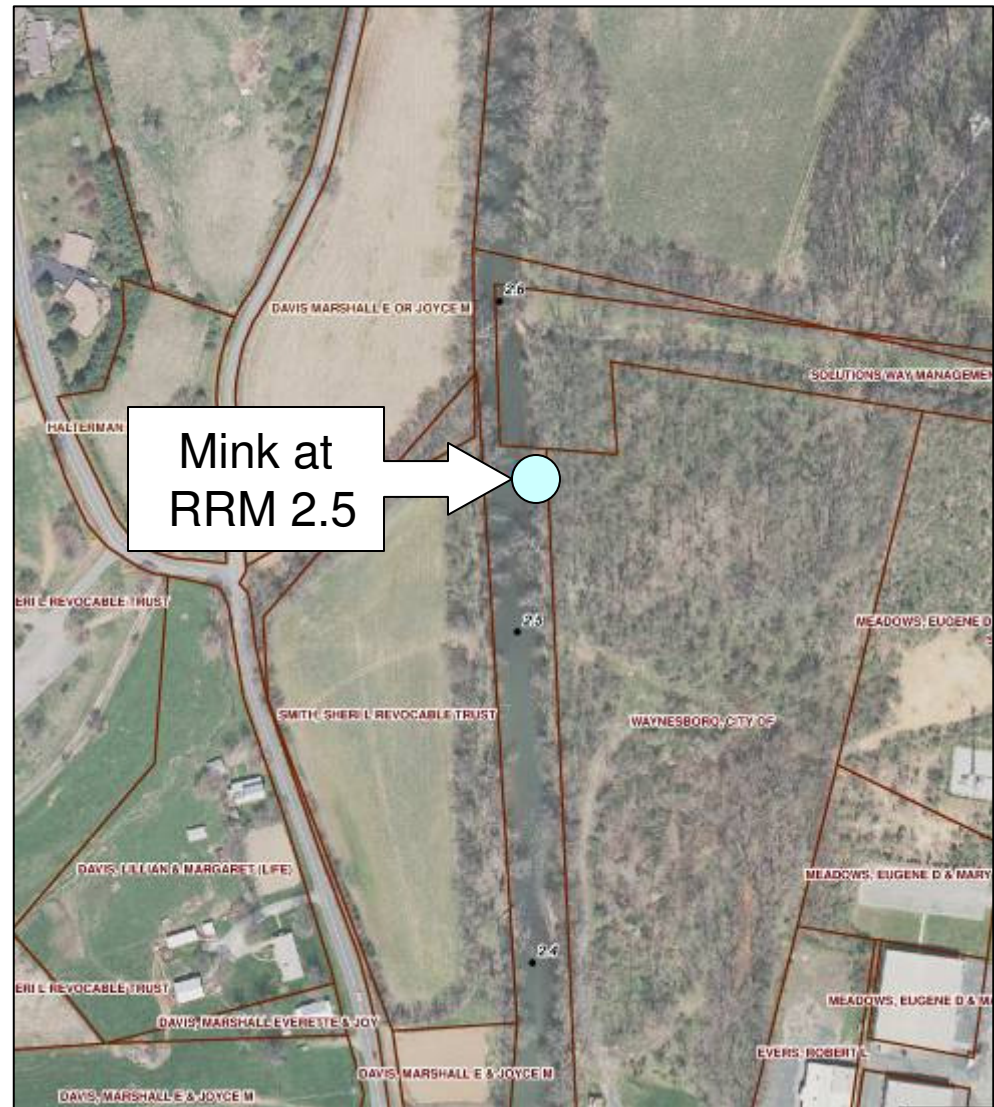
- 2 mink

SFS River

- 1 otter family

Middle River Reference Area

- No sightings



Path Forward

- The South River and South Fork Shenandoah waterways support some mink; otter appear to be less abundant
- Fall survey is up-coming

