



# The South River Current

Promoting interest and collaboration for watershed stewardship



## River Restoration

March 2021 Volume 2 Issue 3

The South River mercury remediation projects completed by Corteva included more than just shoring up the riverbanks. Corteva worked alongside the City of Waynesboro to make the riverbanks safe, fun, and more accessible for residents and visitors alike, integrating river access and recreational elements into the restoration designs. The six-year project included the creation of construction access roads that the City plans to turn into paved Greenway trails along the river in downtown Waynesboro; river access stairways in Constitution Park and North Park, and a canoe/kayak launch, riverside walking path, and pavement for a new basketball court in North Park.

The City plans to expand the Greenway by connecting the existing trail at the railroad bridge in the historic Port Republic neighborhood to North Park and, ultimately, all the way to Basic Park. These expansions will allow a critical regional connection between downtown and the Crozet Tunnel Trail by way of the Jones Hollow Trail. Check out more greenway details and plans [here](#).

### Did You Know?

- The Blue Ridge Tunnel is 4,264 feet long.
- Located at Mile 862 going north-bound, Waynesboro is located four miles off of the Appalachian Trail and serves as an essential resupply point for hikers.
- A thru-hiker can take five to seven months to complete the entire Appalachian Trail. According to [appalachiantrail.org](http://appalachiantrail.org), more than 20,000 hikers have completed the route since 1936.

### Connections

You may be familiar with the concept of guardian angels or perhaps you've crossed paths



Picture credit [here](#).

with the famous Hells Angels, but are you acquainted with Trail Angels? If you decide to tackle a large portion or all of the nearly 2,200 miles of the Appalachian Trail and become a "thru-hiker," you might want to take note! Community volunteers known as "Trail Angels" offer weary hikers rides between Rockfish Gap and the City of Waynesboro so that hikers can enjoy a bit of rest and refreshment. If you find yourself there and in need of a respite, look near the trailhead for a list of names and phone numbers. Of course, during COVID-19, rider and driver should prioritize safety and use discretion. To read more about these area volunteers, click [here](#).



### Take a Walk Back

The Blue Ridge Tunnel, also known as the Crozet Tunnel, named after its designer Claudius Crozet, was part of a pivotal change in Virginia commerce and transportation in the mid-1800s. Crozet suggested that the state of Virginia invest in building railroad tunnels rather than continue repairing and constructing canals to carry goods. The state agreed, and Crozet was hired in 1849 to build the Blue Ridge Tunnel—a project he anticipated would take about four years. Completion was prolonged as the laborers struggled to break the surprisingly hard rock. They finally broke through in 1856, after seven years of hard labor. It took another 16 months to finish the interior of the tunnel and Crozet himself moved on before its completion in April 1858.

Fast forward to 2012, when the Claudius Crozet Blue Ridge Tunnel Foundation was established to support the restoration, reuse, and historical interpretation of the tunnel. The goal of the Foundation's members, who include public officials from the counties of Nelson, Albemarle, and Augusta and the City of Waynesboro, was to



Photo courtesy of [JACK LOONEY PHOTOGRAPHY](#)

bring an abandoned and increasingly vandalized resource back to life for a new generation. They have done just that—access trails and new trailheads on both sides of the Blue Ridge Mountains invite hikers, walkers, bicyclists, and other visitors to explore this once forgotten gem. Guidance for planning a visit is available [here](#).



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)