



The South River Current

Promoting interest and collaboration for watershed stewardship



River Restoration

Doom has finally befallen Doooms Dam! In fact, most evidence of the long-time obstruction has been cleared away, eroded banks nearby have been restored, and a new boat access and parking are nearly ready for visitors. The dam was breached long ago, but until recently the area was clogged with branches and debris and canoe and kayak passage was dangerous. The National Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Trustees, Augusta County, the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), and Resource Environmental Solutions have been working together with funding from the NRDA DuPont Settlement to transform this area into a destination for boaters and anglers alike. Once public access is available, be sure to add this spot to your “must see” list.

November 2021 Volume 2 Issue 11



Photo Courtesy of Louise Finger, VA DWR

Did You Know?

- Virginia DWR and the Shenandoah Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited have been active in expanding fisheries and removing dams since the 1980s.
- Measuring about 7 inches long, the **male chub fish** (native to the South River) carries over 7,000 stones, each as large as his head, as far as 25 yards to his nest site. Chub nests can be up to 2 feet tall and 3 feet long and are built in as little as a day.
- 11% of the South River Watershed is developed, 54% is forested, 35% is farmland, and less than 1% is wetlands or open water.

Connections

In 1930, a man named E.M. Quillen purchased Titus Nurseries. He renamed the business Waynesboro Nurseries and developed a thriving company rooted in the rich soils of the Shenandoah Valley. In the 1940s, Waynesboro Nurseries ran a catalogue business and then managed two retail stores near Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway into the 1960s. Today the company grows, sells, and ships quality nursery stock to landscape contractors and garden centers throughout the Mid-Atlantic. The nursery is over 1,200 acres and fishing permit holders can access [four locations](#) on the property along the South River that are stocked with trout. Anglers can enjoy fishing in the cold springs in Lyndhurst once they obtain a free permit through the DWR.



Take a Walk Back

Have you been to Grand Caverns? A 25-minute drive north of Waynesboro will lead you there to see one of the oldest natural landmarks in the Watershed. The caverns were discovered in 1804 by Bernard (Barnette) Weyer while retrieving one of his hunting traps. Two years later, Weyer’s Cave opened for tours, and people have been touring it ever since. In fact, Grand Caverns is the oldest, continuously operating show cave in the U.S. During the Civil War, soldiers from both armies visited Grand Caverns, and over 200 of them signed the walls inside. Since then, the cave has changed hands and names a few times. The official name, Grand Caverns, was dubbed in 1926, and the caverns were declared a National Natural Landmark in 1973. The Town of Grottoes now owns and maintains the caverns and the large surrounding parkland. Today you can take a 97-second virtual tour [here](#) or book a tour to see the stalagmites and stalactites in person. After exploring underground, explore above ground on various trails in the park. For a seasonal experience, attend one of the “Caroling in the Caverns” fundraisers held some Saturdays in December. Click [here](#) for more information.



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