



Summer  
2005

# Etowah

## Reducing Pollution One Project at a Time

In the past few months, the Upper Etowah River Alliance has completed several projects aimed at reducing nonpoint source pollution in the watershed.

Two projects in Cherokee County involved repairing leaking septic systems. Failing septic systems can contribute to rising amounts of fecal coliform bacteria in the Etowah watershed. Already, several streams listed on the Georgia Impaired Stream list, are listed for fecal coliform. Now, thanks to the Alliance, two of these sources have been stopped.



In Dawson County, the problems also involved fecal bacteria, but rather than human waste, they were from animal waste. One cattle farm and one goat farm needed help with their pastures to reduce the pollution sneaking into nearby streams.

Another project in Dawson County adds beauty as well as reduces pollution. At Black's Mill Elementary School, the Alliance will be installing a raingarden on the inside of the walking track to help filter rain water. This is part of a larger drainage project the county just completed designed to eliminate puddles that formed on the playground and hung around for days. When fully complete the raingarden will not only clean the water, it will serve as a hands-on teaching area for the school's students.

All of these projects are paid for using grant money from the federal 319 grant the Alliance manages. This grant, a part of the Clean Water Act, seeks to reduce nonpoint source pollution in the Upper Etowah Watershed.

As these projects demonstrate, this kind of pollution comes from a variety of sources – septic systems, animal operations or stormwater – and must be addressed with creative solutions. The Alliance, in partnership with other organizations, hopes projects like these will bring these solutions to the Etowah Watershed.

For more information on other 319 projects completed by the Alliance, visit us at [www.etowahriver.org](http://www.etowahriver.org).

M  
e  
a  
n  
d  
r  
i  
s  
s

## Cherokee County Teacher Workshop

It was the teachers' turn to go to school.

In partnership with Cherokee County Schools, the Upper Etowah River Alliance hosted a workshop for the county's 6<sup>th</sup> grade science teachers in August.

In addition to updates on curriculum issues, the workshop included a demonstration on a portable planetarium called Star Lab. The teachers also got to play students while learning Project Wet activities designed to help teach about acidity, as well scientific method.

Another session gave the teachers the chance to learn more about a new piece of scientific equipment at their disposal. The Probeware lets students measure water and soil temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen and conductivity. They can then download their finding to a computer, so they can chart their studies. The equipment is simple enough for students to use it, but sophisticated enough to let them do fun scientific studies.

The Probeware was donated to the Cherokee County schools by the Cherokee County Engineering Department.

Finally, the teachers got demonstrations of presentations available to them from Alliance and the Recycling Center. Enviro-Scape and Build A River are two hands-on presentations that help students understand a little more about stormwater and nonpoint source pollution.

At the end of the day, the teachers went away a bit tired, loaded with new resources and excited about bringing scientific knowledge to their students.



*Lori Forrester, an Alliance Adopt A Stream coordinator, leads Cherokee County teachers through an activity about calculating acidity.*

### **Celebrate Etowah Kicks off Watershed Wide Celebration**

For the second year, Celebrate Etowah is bringing the Etowah to the people.

The organization, made up of representatives of various conservation groups, has published a calendar of events that lists many of the events which celebrate the beauty and wonder of the Etowah Watershed.

Designed to help people learn more about the watershed, the events include river cleanups, canoe trips, informative presentations and fun hikes. The Celebrate Etowah groups hopes to motivate the community to be good stewards of the basin.

So, look for the green 2005 Celebrate Etowah Calendars all around the watershed!

### **A publication of the Upper Etowah River Alliance**

This newsletter was financed in part through a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency under the Provisions of Section 319 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended.