

Dear :

In 1998, the community within the Rivanna watershed issued the State of the Basin Report. The report summarized two year's worth of data-gathering and thought by citizens about how best to protect the Rivanna from its greatest threats. The top recommendation was to create an oversight group comprised of the localities in the watershed focused solely on how to improve the health of the Rivanna watershed.

Aided significantly by your generosity, the recommendations of the State of the Basin Report are becoming a reality. On April 25, 2007, we had our inaugural meeting of the Rivanna River Basin Commission. The Commission—comprised primarily of local elected officials from the four localities that incorporate the vast majority of the watershed—has met regularly since that first meeting to hone in on the greatest threats to the watershed, with an eye toward developing solutions that will abate them.

With the assistance of a technical advisory committee, we have identified excessive sedimentation as an overriding threat to the continued health of the watershed. And as a preliminary matter, we have identified scouring streamflows and the streambank erosion they create as the major source of the sediment. These high-velocity streamflows result from the hardening of a Piedmont landscape that was formerly blanketed by forest. We are developing strategies that will try to arrest these unnatural flows by infiltrating rain into the ground rather than having it run with great force into our streams.

None of the work of the Commission would be possible without the kind of support you have provided. We are excited about our work, and we are grateful to you for your willingness to invest in the long-term health of the Rivanna watershed.

Sincerely,

Sally Thomas