



ROCKBRIDGE CONSERVATION:

A YEAR IN REVIEW AND WHAT'S NEXT

AUGUST 2025

WASTE PREVENTION

Protecting our natural environment by modeling waste reduction.

Waste Reduction: New partnership at every Lime Kiln concert - ONE concert produced 9 bags of aluminum cans that are given to Ruritans for Ronald McDonald House and money for scholarships, plastic film goes to Grace Episcopal for their TREX bench project, and bags of plastic bottles and cardboard went to the county recycle station. Our first time volunteers at the Freedom Food Fest collected 7 heavy bags of paper plates and food waste, which went to a local farmer's compost pile, plastic film to Grace Episcopal, aluminum cans to Ruritans, and plastic bottles and cardboard to the county recycle station. Our volunteers at the Rockbridge Area Health Center Bull & Oyster Fest, with 900 attendees, reduced waste by about 90%, as well as significantly reduced waste at the Balloons Over Rockbridge with 8,000 attendees. The Effinger Ice Cream Dinner is also happy to have our help for the second year in a row.

REFILL ROCKBRIDGE: Toss the plastic habit and get daily cleaning and personal care products in refillable glass containers at www.refillrenew.com/s/shop. This is a partnership with the Staunton Refill Renew store. For help with ordering, email Annette Green at annettezg@hotmail.com or go to the Lexington Farmers' Mkt on the 2nd & 4th Wed. from 10-12.

Caught Green Handed: Awards feature local businesses, organizations, institutions, and individuals who have taken significant steps to become more energy efficient, reduce waste, or otherwise improve the environmental well-being of the Rockbridge community. Any community member can submit a suggestion for a possible recipient.

Waste Reduction Consulting Service: Consultation Service to help other interested organizations find ways to reduce their waste.

Recycling Container Loan Program: Recycling containers available to borrow for community, organization and private events for free.

Food Recovery Projects: Two neighborhood projects to reduce landfill methane by collecting compost and returning nutrients to local farmland. Partnering with Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners in creating a community compost bin in Glasgow.

"Ocean Protector Program": In partnership with Boxerwood, students learned about the connection between litter and harm to wildlife from Sandy the Sea Turtle resulting in pledges from 470 3rd & 5th graders to help keep our community litter-free.

Annual Community Clean-Up: Approximately 500 residents picking up 10-15 tons of litter in the county each March.

To get involved please contact:

melody.tennant@rockbridgeconservation.org

TRAILS & LAND STEWARDSHIP

Maintaining trails and promoting best land management practices!

Uncas Trail: Continued maintenance and invasive removal to improve the environmental health and availability of the trail.

Sunnyside Preserve: Continued improvements to the property by installing five blue bird nesting houses, and cleaning up existing property line fences, with help from Kendal Maintenance Department who generously mow the meadow path which leads to Boxerwood. An informational kiosk will be installed in the future with maps and information on the history and management of the property.

To get involved please contact:

chris.wise@rockbridgeconservation.org

WATERSHED

Hands-on fieldwork and water-related problems in local waterways!

Maury River Alliance (MRA): Ensuring responsible water management practices, promoting public awareness, and engaging with relevant stakeholders to foster the vitality and safety of the Maury by focusing on the regulatory, political, and governmental dimensions to improve resource-management practices.

Friends of Woods Creek (FoWC): Restoring and protecting Woods Creek and trail with Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners to remove invasives and raise awareness of the watershed.

Septic and Well Assistance Program (SWAP): Managing a \$300,000+ VDH grant, to help eligible local families improve septic and water facilities. Helping spread the word, applications from residents, and bids from contractors are encouraged!

PFAS: Raising awareness of “forever chemicals” by working with local researchers from Virginia Tech, W&L, VMI and UVA as well as other Counties and States with similar concerns.

Water Monitoring: Active water monitoring of micro-invertebrates in the Rockbridge Waterways and reporting findings to Izaak Walton League/Save our Streams and to River Trends/Alliance for the Bay. Working with impaired streams using chemical-biological testing in cooperation with the Chesapeake Bay Alliance made a significant advance in testing for E. coli bacteria. Rockbridge Water Monitors will be the first group in the state to try out CBA's new method. Training available!

Interested in working on watershed projects?

Contact Joe DiNardo, joe.dinardo@rockbridgeconservation.org or
Joan DiNardo, joan.dinardo@rockbridgeconservation.org

LAND USE PLANNING

Zoning, comprehensive planning, and green infrastructure planning!

Comprehensive Planning: RC Signed on to SELC's Comments on Proposed 2026 Nationwide Permits, which impact the Clean Water Act.

Logging: Ongoing monitoring of changing legislation regarding logging in nearby national forests.

Wildlife Corridor: Ongoing monitoring on State Wildlife Corridor Action Plan

Data Centers: Researching data center impacts on similar municipalities in preparation for submitting findings and considerations to local governments.

To get involved contact:

info@rockbridgeconservation.org.

ENERGY & CLIMATE

Taking action to reduce the energy footprint and increase climate resilience of our community!

Residential Solar: Adding solar power panels to local Habitat for Humanity houses.

Solar Consultation: Connecting residents and businesses with information about going solar.

Commercial-Scale Solar: Advising the County on best practices for siting, construction, and operation of commercial-scale solar arrays.

Carbon Sequestration: Researching techniques for increasing carbon in agricultural soils as a means of reducing atmospheric CO₂.

Electric Vehicles: Raising awareness of EVs and increasing the number of public charging stations.

To get involved contact:

bob.biersack@rockbridgeconservation.org

Volunteer Opportunities and Learn More at
www.rockbridgeconservation.org

