

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Taking responsibility for river stewardship

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

There's a game I do with students, it's called Common Water. People stand in a circle around a bucket of clean water. The people are a community, the bucket their common source of water. Each person assumes the role of part of the community – a farm, a town center, a housing development. Each person has a sponge and is given 30 seconds to use that sponge to get water from the bucket and put it in a cup at their feet, representing their use of the water. However, each sponge is laced with food coloring, and with each dip, the water gets dirtier, reflecting the fertilizer runoff, erosion, and other pollutants that enter our streams and lakes.

For kids, the game demonstrates that we all rely on our lakes and streams for water and what we do with that water affects other users. Even those who take their water from wells and whose waste goes into a septic tank can impact other water users as poorly managed septic systems can cause contamination problems, and water can be pulled from aquifers faster than it can be replenished. Hand in hand with the fact that we share our sources of water goes the notion that we have a shared responsibility to be good stewards of that water to ensure we don't infringe on other's access to clean water.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peebles.