Maggie Valley Sanitary District
Conservation Efforts of Water Supply Watersheds

Maggie Valley Sanitary District was established in 1973, originally serving 800 customers. Today the District operates 3,800 service connections that serve approximately 9,500 customers. Their surface water comes from Campbell Creek and Jonathan Creek Watersheds. These two watersheds cover 13,890 acres above their respective intakes. The watersheds border the Great Smoky Mtn. National Park to the North, both Jackson and Swain Counties to the West, and Mt. Lyn Lowry to the South. The district watershed is classified by the State of North Carolina as WS-III.

For nearly 20 years Maggie Valley Sanitary District (MVSD) and its District Manager, along with at least six other partner organizations including the National Park Service, The Conservation Fund, Conservation Trust for North Carolina, Mainspring Conservation Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy have been involved in conservation efforts to establish Waterrock Knob to secure the largest stretch of undeveloped land adjacent to America's most visited unit of the National Park System. The Balsam Range Project includes the protection of over 3,000 acres of working forestland along the headwaters of Campbell Creek and Jonathon Creek in the Plott Balsam Mountains, which supply water to MVSDs drinking water intake. They are some of the last privately-owned water supply watersheds in western North Carolina. MVSD is currently able to waive the filtration of water pulled from Campbell Creek and Jonathan Creek due to its high quality and clarity. Protection of the Phase 1 Tracts of this Project will help maintain high water quality and cost savings to the District's customers in addition to its benefit to water quality.

The proper management and protection of these two important water supply watersheds will serve an important role in producing reliable and high-quality water to the water supply for MVSD. The positive legacy that results from growing and managing forested watersheds, through which precipitation travels and becomes drinking water, not only sets the course for sustaining the next generation of forest, but also for sustaining water quality and availability for the next generations of residents. Healthy forests and stream buffers protect water quality by absorbing excess nutrients, helping to control soil erosion, and creating an abundant and diverse native aquatic life consisting of amphibians, fish and beneficial insects.

In addition to MVSDs diligence and foresight in going above and beyond what was required of them as a water system, and working to protect their water quality and quantity into perpetuity, they have taken a proactive role in sharing their accomplishments with other water systems and have been very open and transparent in talking about obstacles and accomplishments along their route to meet their objectives. Ideally, some of their experiences may be used as a model to other water systems that may have similar goals or aspirations.