

September 16, 2010

The Downstream Project's mission is to promote natural resource conservation, particularly water quality, by stimulating awareness, action, and alliances through visual arts and technology. I think you'll find that we've adhered to this mission in our latest video project, [Streamside Livestock Exclusion: Everybody Wins!](#)

One of the biggest concerns of our region is the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay. We all have heard about the various problems of our watersheds and that excluding livestock from streams and rivers would really help solve some of the pollution problems. Unrestricted livestock access to the Bay's tributaries is a significant source of pathogens and nutrient and sediment loadings. Livestock exclusion certainly won't solve all of our water quality problems because the recent growth in human population and the concurrent explosion of impervious surfaces are equally detrimental to water quality. The facts indicate, though, that with streamside livestock exclusion "the farmers win, the cattle win, the streams win, and the Bay wins."

We will, in the future, be focusing on other, equally important, strategies to help reduce pollution, but we decided to start here because the issues and programs that surround livestock exclusion seem varied and confusing. We felt we could help others make sense of some of these mixed messages by sorting out the facts and sharing them on our Web site, thedownstreamproject.org. We have produced and posted a [short video presentation](#), as well as links to in-depth interviews and some online educational, planning, and funding resources. We hope that you find this site valuable and we encourage you to promote it by forwarding this letter to your friends, neighbors, constituents, and other concerned organizations.

The Downstream Project would like to thank the following people for their significant contributions to watershed conservation and to the production of this new resource: Robert Whitescarver and Mike Phillips of the Natural Resources Conservation Service; Charles Lunsford, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation; Libby Norris, Chesapeake Bay Foundation; Scott Nordstrom, DVM; and Virginia farmers Bob Threewits (Rockingham County) and Jack Schutte (Clarke County).

I think livestock exclusion is a natural starting point to improve the water quality of our local watersheds, and further downstream...the Chesapeake Bay. I hope you all agree!

Sincerely, George L. Ohrstrom, II Founder, The Downstream Project