

# SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA LITTER TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

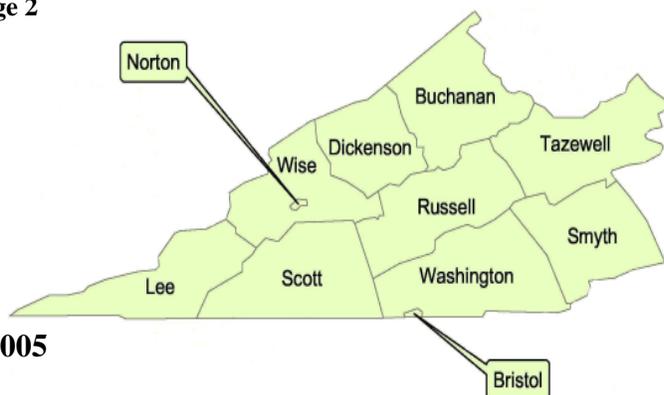


Pictured l-r front row: Greg Cross, Naomi Honaker, Blaine Delaney, Carol Doss, and Stephen Richardson. Back row l-r: Toby Edwards, Lester Turner, Claude Ray, Paul Harper, Bill Smith, Ray Couch and Jeremy Hurley. Not pictured: Pat Boardwine, Quinto Falgiani, Michele Knox, and Nykki Wyatt.

**Chair's Remarks:**

*“Chairing the Southwest Virginia Litter Task Force has been a rewarding experience. This current effort to address roadside trash began with the Southwest Virginia Litter Summit in 2004 and has continued through litter task force discussions resulting in this set of recommendations. The continued on Page 2*

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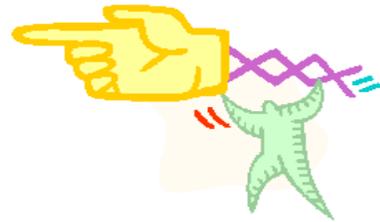
December 2005

**Chair’s Remarks continued:**

*process has built on the efforts of the many dedicated citizens who have fought the problem for years and has shown me that the people of Southwest Virginia are increasingly willing to address the problem of litter in our region. Task force members should be commended for their hard work, honesty and commitment to the project. These recommendations are the result of four well-attended meetings that featured open and honest discussions regarding ways to eliminate the trash and solid waste that diminishes the physical appearance and limits tourism development in these beautiful mountains. These recommendations should be considered tools that will hopefully prove useful to the governing bodies of the nine counties, two cities and the many towns that participated in the process.”*

*H William Smith*

# RECOMMENDATIONS



**Recommendations for local governments (counties and cities):**

- **Hire** a “Full-Time” Litter Control Officer
- **Complete Mapping** of the region’s Illegal Dumpsites (100% coverage)
- **Fully Implement** the Assign-A-Highway Program in this section of “Far” Southwest Virginia
- **Strengthen** local litter ordinances by comparing them to the Model Litter Ordinance
- **Conduct** a 2006 “training workshop” for litter coordinators & litter control officers on Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) grants, etc.
- **Seek** DEQ litter control funds for litter control programs by localities (towns too)
- **Review** model “ budget” for a litter control department
- **Arrange** a “meeting/workshop” between judges and litter control officers, etc.
- **Implement** “civil damages” ordinance
- **Amend** their solid waste management plans to include the identified illegal dumpsites

**Recommendations for the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable’s Tourism/Trash Team\*:**

- **Continue** dialogue with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) at regional and state levels
- **Study** illegal dump clean-up techniques
- **Work** with the Southwest Virginia delegation on appropriate legislative issues
- **Look** into establishing an “Environmental/Litter Court” with judicial system
- **Continue** dialogue with Soil & Water Conservation Districts on mapping dumpsites.
- **Establish** a Tourism & Trash Team-Awards Program for beautification efforts (litter, flower gardens, signage, etc.), see page six



\* **Note:** The Southwest Virginia Litter Task Force met four times between December 2004 and June 2005. At their last “official” meeting, task force members expressed a desire to continue meeting “informally” to discuss litter issues and solutions. They agreed at their June 9, 2005 meeting that interested members could join the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable’s Tourism/Trash Team to continue this regional dialogue.



# Regional Progress Report



The 2004 Southwest Virginia Litter Summit's goals are listed below in "green ink". Progress towards each of these ambitious goals is shown in "blue ink".

#1 – Local governments **establish a regional Task Force** to "seek solutions" for litter issues by October 1, 2004.

All eleven local governments appointed representatives to this regional, "ad hoc" task force. The Southwest Virginia Litter Task Force met 4 times on 12-9-04, 2-10-05, 4-14-05, and 6-9-05. This document contains their recommendations. This task force has disbanded.

#2 – Local governments implement the **Assign-A-Highway Program** throughout "far" Southwest Virginia by July 1, 2005.

As of December 2005, five of the nine counties have implemented the Assign-A-Highway Program. We understand that Tazewell County will become the sixth county to do so by early 2006.

#3 – Assist local governments in developing a "**timetable**" to clean up "their" **illegal dumpsites** through inclusion in their Solid Waste Management Plans by January 1, 2006.

This goal has not been addressed yet. The task force decided to wait till the mapping of the illegal dumpsites was completed for a majority of localities before working on this goal.

#4 – All **illegal dumpsites** should be **mapped** in Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Washington, Wise & Tazewell counties **using GIS technology** by January 1, 2006.

Dickenson County was the 1<sup>st</sup> local government to complete the mapping of their illegal dumpsites. We expect four or more additional local governments to complete their mapping by April 2006. This mapping effort is underway in most of the "targeted" localities.





# ASSIGN-A-HIGHWAY

Buchanan County started this innovative program!!! Following the 2004 Litter Summit, Dickenson, Russell, Lee and Wise counties have followed suit in implementing the Assign-A-Highway Program. The Upper Tennessee River Roundtable hired Steve Hamro, III in September 2005 as the 1st Assign-A-Highway Coordinator. Giles County began implementing the program in 2005. Tazewell County plans to implement this program in 2006.

**For further information about this program**

**please contact:**

**Steve Hamro, III**

**Assign-A-Highway Coordinator**

**Upper Tennessee River Roundtable**

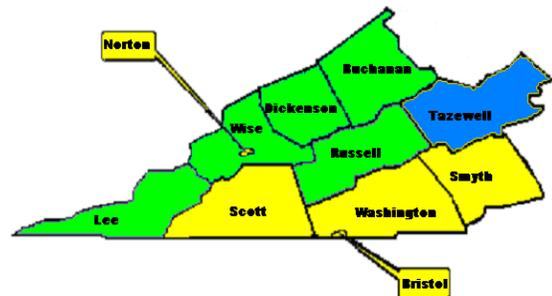
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- Implementing Program
- 2006 Implementation Scheduled
- Not Implementing Program

## HIRE A “FULL-TIME” LITTER CONTROL OFFICER

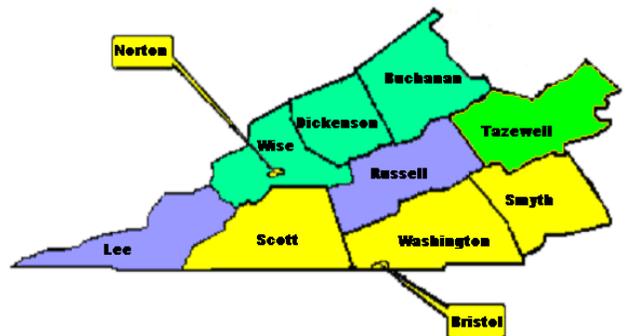
H William Smith, Task Force Chair, stated, *“The Assign-A-Highway Program cannot be properly implemented without a full-time litter control officer working for that locality.”*



**Pictured l-r: Pat Boardwine (Buchanan), Greg Cross (Wise) and Eugene Mullins (Dickenson). They all work full-time as litter control officers for their respective counties.**

- Full-Time Litter Control Officer
- Part-Time Litter Control Officer
- No Litter Control Officer

*This valuable position also enables local governments to deploy groundhog cameras for surveillance; seek civil damages against litterers; and utilize other law enforcement tools.”*



## Regional mapping efforts pass half-way mark!!!!

A thousand and counting, that's how many "illegal dumpsites" have been mapped by the end of 2005, along our winding, back roads of "far" Southwest Virginia. **A SPECIAL THANKS to the hard work and dedication of the region's soil and water conservation districts, litter control offices and community volunteers for locating these dumpsites with GPS technology!!!** GPS stands for global positioning system, which provides the exact coordinates specifying the site's latitude and longitude.

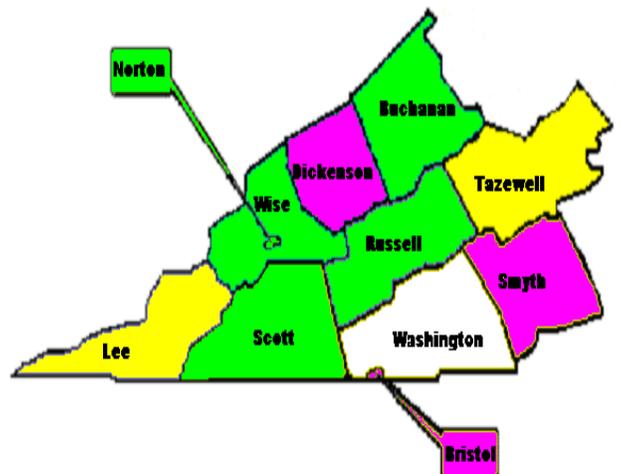


**"Volunteers" removing trash from loaded "sled" that is winched up the hill for those "over-the-bank" dumpsites.**

Dickenson County is the 1<sup>st</sup> county in our region, perhaps in the state as well, to map all of their known dumpsites. **Way to go Dickenson County!!!!** Once a locality's dumpsites have been mapped, the next step in the process is to amend their solid waste management plan to incorporate this new information and to estimate how many years it will take to clean them all up. Dickenson County is also aggressively cleaning up their dumpsites, with almost a 1/3 of them taken care of thus far!

<u>Locality</u>	<u>Dumpsites mapped</u>	<u>Dumpsites cleaned up</u>
Bristol, City of	NA*	NA
Buchanan County	132	10
<b>Dickenson County</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>71</b>
Lee County	76	11
Norton, City of	7	4
Russell County	188	12
Scott County	128	2
<b>Smyth County</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>
Tazewell County	35	0
Washington County	0	0
Wise County	<u>183</u>	<u>37</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>147</b>

*\*Bristol does not have any dumpsites.*



- Mapping COMPLETED!!!!!!
- Mapping nearing completion
- Mapping in progress
- Mapping not started

## Beautification and Community Improvement

The following quote comes from the Keep America Beautiful, Inc. website under their *Beautification and Community Improvement* page. “The more than 540 affiliates of Keep America Beautiful are improving the looks, vitality and economic integrity of their communities by beautifying their surroundings in ways that make a huge difference. Neighborhoods that are beautiful to look at are beautiful to live in, work in and visit.



Pruning and planting trees and flowers, landscaping, graffiti abatement, and cleanups are all beautification initiatives that have an immediate positive effect on how a neighborhood is perceived. People and businesses move in and stay in, and tourism flourishes.”



Beginning in 2007, the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable will begin an annual awards program recognizing local governments for making their part of the world more beautiful. The awards' criteria for this new regional competition will be rolled out at the 2006 Litter Summit (*slated for April 2006*). These criteria have not been developed yet; however, the following items will probably make up part of the scoring:

- Is the Assign-A-Highway Program implemented?
- Attractive Signage (community entrances)
- Community Involvement (active Master Gardeners' Program, Garden Clubs, etc.)
- Is there an active program to clean up their illegal dumpsites?
- Future planning towards more parks, greenways and trails.

County governments would be judged under one category, while the towns and cities would compete under a separate category.

Improving the quality-of-life for Southwest Virginians will not only benefit our local citizens, but it will also aid in attracting businesses to choose our region as the place they want to become part of rather than “settle” somewhere else.

**THIS REPORT CONTAINS THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA LITTER TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS.**



**For further information please utilize the following sources:**

[A Southwest Virginia Litter Task Force CD has been produced.](#) Some of the items on this CD are: the Talking Trash Publication for the 2004 Litter Summit; the Southwest Virginia Litter Task Force's Recommendations Report that you are looking at this moment; the Model Litter Ordinance; a Model Litter Control Department Budget; Wise County's Civil Damages Ordinance; information about the Environmental Court idea that started in Memphis/Shelby County, Tennessee; Assign-A-Highway Program guide; etc.

**Each county administrator and city manager for the targeted eleven localities received a copy of this CD; they are, counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington and Wise and the cities of Bristol and Norton.**

## Websites:

**Assign-A-Highway** <http://www.assignahighway.com>

**Black Diamond RC&D (litter link)** <http://www.blackdiamondrcd.org>

**Upper Tennessee River Roundtable** <http://www.upperriver.org/>

**Virginia Department of Environmental Quality** <http://www.deq.state.va.us/>



“Black Diamond Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) served as the *umbrella organization* of the “*ad hoc*” Southwest Virginia Litter Task Force. Black Diamond RC&D is a regional nonprofit serving Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott and Wise counties and the City of Norton. Our RC&D has a small staff of two people. We view ourselves as providing the “regional glue” to pull in partnering organizations, local governments and volunteers to make good things happen. Reducing litter in our beautiful mountains is just one example of a regional, multi-year RC&D effort. But we would be remiss to not point out that **MOST** of the credit goes to our many partners and volunteers who mapped the illegal dumpsites, expressed the new ideas, implemented the Assign-A-Highway Program and tirelessly wage the fight against litter day after day.”

**H William Smith**  
**RC&D Chair**

**Publication Design by Robin Smith, Secretary, Black Diamond RC&D**

**A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA LITTER TASK FORCE  
MEMBERS FOR THEIR TIME AND DEDICATION TO THIS PROJECT!!!!**

**Task Force Member**

Jeremy Hurley  
Pat Boardwine  
Lester Turner  
Claude Ray  
Michele Knox  
Naomi Honaker  
Paul Harper  
Nykki Wyatt  
Quinto Falgiani  
Stephen Richardson  
Ray Couch  
H William Smith; Task Force Chair  
Toby Edwards, Task Force Vice Chair  
Carol Doss, Advisor  
Blaine Delaney, Advisor

**Representing**

City of Bristol  
Buchanan County  
Dickenson County  
Lee County  
City of Norton  
Russell County  
Scott County  
Smyth County  
Tazewell County  
Washington County  
Wise County  
Black Diamond RC&D  
Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority  
Upper Tennessee River Roundtable  
Black Diamond RC&D/USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service



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*USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical assistance (staff, office, vehicle, etc.) to the Black Diamond RC&D. Our locally led 501-c-3 nonprofit seeks funding for projects from foundations, state and federal agencies, and corporations.*

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