

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The Savage River Watershed Association (SRWA) will meet at Route 40 Elementary School on Thursday March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. for a presentation by Donnelle Keech of The Nature Conservancy. During her program “Better Roads, Cleaner Streams: A Win-Win for Streams and Communities”, Keech will explain how well-established management techniques for unpaved roads and stream crossings can reduce pollution and reduce long-term maintenance costs, while improving the condition of roads. The public is welcome to attend.

There are thousands of miles of unpaved, low volume roads throughout the Potomac River Basin. These roads are critical for forest management, recreation, and residential access, and are an important part of rural transportation infrastructure. Unfortunately, road managers and travelers alike often observe chronic maintenance challenges, such as bank erosion, ditch failure, rutting, or culverts that can’t handle storm flows. These challenges can reduce safety, increase expenses, and pollute streams with sediment and stormwater runoff.

The good news is that cleaner streams and better roads are possible. “These environmentally sensitive road maintenance practices are not rocket science, but there are challenges to consistently applying them on public and private roads to get the full benefits for streams and communities,” says Keech. “Watershed groups can play an important role.” Her presentation will also cover existing methods for assessing and measuring sediment pollution from unpaved roads.

Donnelle Keech grew up in Frederick, Maryland. She studied anthropology at New York University, and environmental science and applied ecology in Bloomington, Indiana. She returned to Maryland to work for The Nature Conservancy in December of 1996. After five years as Assistant Director of Stewardship, she became the first Allegany Forests Project Director in 2001. Donnelle lives in Cumberland, MD where she and her husband enjoy juggling two careers and parenting their two sons.

The SRWA is a group of local landowners and other citizens dedicated to preserving and enhancing the rural nature and natural resources of the Savage River watershed. Members assist interested landowners and public land managers with environmental stewardship efforts and educational outreach. Anyone who is concerned about the Savage River watershed is invited to join. SRWA meetings are generally held at Route 40 Elementary School on the third Thursday of odd numbered months, beginning at 7 p.m. The school is located at 17764 National Pike, a few miles west of Frostburg. For more information phone Kathy Koscianski, SRWA Director, at 301-689-7156 or visit the SRWA web site at [www.SavageRiverWatershed.org](http://www.SavageRiverWatershed.org) SRWA is a non profit charitable organization and donations may be sent to: Savage River Watershed Association, PO Box 355, Frostburg, MD 21532.