

HAMPTON ROADS
WATER EFFICIENCY TEAM

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008
July 1, 2006-June 31, 2008

HR WET

HAMPTON ROADS WATER EFFICIENCY TEAM WATER CONSERVATION EDUCATION INITIATIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hampton Roads Water Efficiency Team (HR WET), an education committee of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), is comprised of local government staff members who are committed to regional water efficiency education. Through the Team's focus and dedication, along with assistance and contributions from the HRPDC staff, successful programs promoting efficient water use continue throughout the region.

The mission of HR WET is to develop and implement a regional approach to promoting efficient water use throughout Hampton Roads. HR WET established the following goals:

- ❖ Raise public awareness of the region's water supplies.
- ❖ Reduce per capita water consumption by increasing the number of people using water more wisely.

To achieve these goals, HR WET conducts a comprehensive education program involving media relations, advertising, demonstrations and exhibits at festivals, and educational resources, which include video, brochures and an informative website. Media contracts with WVEC Channel-13, WHRO, CW Channel-27, Metro Networks, and Cox Media were secured for fiscal year 2007 and again in FY 2008, except that WHRO was discontinued.

HR WET was invited to participate in many regional events. During the first part of 2006, members participated in the Flower Show at the new Virginia Beach Convention Center where they received an honorable mention for their educational display. In the spring of 2007 and 2008, members staffed the trailer at McDonald's Garden Center events, various home & garden shows, and other community events. Participating in events allowed Team members to distribute educational materials and speak directly with the public on the issues regarding water efficiency and conservation.

HR WET continues to be a regional partner in joint environmental education programming with members of HR CLEAN and HR STORM, also referred to as HR³. HR CLEAN is the regional committee dedicated to litter reduction and recycling. HR STORM is dedicated to public education to improve natural water quality. In FY 2008, HR³ also partnered with the newly formed HR FOG. FOG stands for fats, oils, and grease. The HR FOG regional committee works to prevent sanitary sewer overflows and backups caused by fats, oils, and grease improperly entering the sanitary sewer system through drains and grease traps.

HR WET partnered with HR STORM to develop a joint tip sheet for *The Virginian-Pilot's* Homearama program guide for the fall 2006. HR WET chose not to advertise in this publication in 2007. In FY 2007, HR³ revised their one-page tip sheet for inclusion in the WVEC Channel-13 *Hurricane Guide* in 2007 and 2008.

HR WET also participated in the creation of the Newspapers in Education *We All Live on the Waters* newspaper which was distributed to Hampton Roads 3rd grade students. The piece was partially funded by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay License Plate Fund. Close to 25,000 Hampton Roads 3rd graders were reached through this effort. HR CLEAN, HR STORM, and HR FOG participated in the creation of this publication. While many pre-developed supplements are available to the schools, *We All Live on the Water* enabled the committees to educate regional youth about local watershed information. This initiative included a Teacher's Guide which incorporates additional activities correlated to the Standards of Learning requirements developed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

Through the mini-grant program, HR³ awarded a combined \$6,714 to schools and youth groups working on projects related to the missions and goals of HR CLEAN, HR STORM and HR WET. Through participation in the HR³ Mini-Grant program, over 7,000 Hampton Roads youth were reached.

FAST POINTS

- **Television, cable, and radio spot contracts were secured for Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008.**
- **New *Water - Use it Wisely* Landscaping Guide is received for distribution. Nearly 40,000 copies were distributed or downloaded.**
- **Members appeared on WVEC Channel-13 *Dialogue* segment to discuss HR WET.**
- **The website remains active and items are downloaded frequently.**
- **The HR WET trailer visits regional events, both free and ticketed.**
- **HR WET members participated in the Joint Regional HR³ meeting in Chesapeake in fall 2006.**
- **HR WET celebrates 14 years of success.**

MEDIA

The HRPDC, on behalf of HR WET, continues to contract with Cox Media for cable advertising. With this provider, HR WET ads appear on channels with high viewership such as the Weather Channel, ESPN2, and national news carriers like CNBC and MSNBC, as well as niche channels such as Home and Garden Television (HGTV). Contracts with WVEC Channel-13 were also renewed based on the proposals presented at Media Day 2006. WVEC will continue to air the HR WET ***Water - Use it Wisely*** tips during peak viewing times such as during "The View," "Oprah," and "Jeopardy."

In FY 2007 a new contract was finalized with WHRO Channel-15 based on the proposal presented at Media Day 2006. However, in FY 2008, the committee decided not to continue advertising on WHRO. In both fiscal years, HR WET worked with Metro Traffic. Tips and spots were aired during different drive times, reminding citizens about the need for water conservation and more. Live messages are announced to listeners through the various Metro Radio Stations, giving a stronger impact to the message. These spots, along with the television ads, provide yet another reinforcement of the HR WET **Water - Use It Wisely** tagline, *“There are a number of ways to save water, and they all start with you.”*

Through the various stations in Hampton Roads airing Metro Traffic announcements, HR WET sponsored spots gaining the attention of the listening audience. The messages of HR WET continue to be aired during peak drive times throughout Hampton Roads. The simple messages remind citizens about the need for water efficiency and conservation. In FY 2007 the stations of Metro Networks were as follows:

WAFX – FM	WLQM – FM	WROX – FM
WFMI – FM	WLRT – AM	WTAR – AM
WGH – FM	WNIS – AM	WVKL – FM
WGLP – AM	WNOR – FM	WWDE – FM
WHRO – FM	WNVZ – FM	WWHV – FM
WHRV – FM	WPTE – FM	WXGM – FM
WJOI – AM	WPYA – FM	

After a successful FY 2007 with Metro Traffic, HR WET decided to continue advertising with them in FY 2008, even though several stations stopped airing Metro Traffic.

FY 2007 Media Breakdown:

MEDIA	CONTRACT	SCHEDULE
WVEC Channel-13	\$ 24,500	11/20/06 – 12/25/06 4/2/07 – 5/21/07
COX Media	\$ 10,000	12/4/06 – 12/31/06 4/2/07 – 4/29/07
The CW Channel- 27	\$ 4,000	10/30/06 – 11/5/06 4/9/07 – 4/22/07
WHRO Channel-15	\$ 5,000	10/30/06 – 11/19/06 4/9/07 – 4/22/07
Metro Radio	\$ 15,000	10/30/06 – 11/5/06 4/16/07 – 5/6/07
TOTAL	\$ 58,500	

FY 2008 Media Breakdown:

MEDIA	CONTRACT	SCHEDULE
WVEC Channel-13	\$ 16,334	11/20/07 – 12/25/07 4/7/08 – 4/20/08
COX Media	\$ 10,000	11/26/07 – 12/23/07 4/28/08 – 6/01/08
The CW Channel- 27	\$ 5,000	10/23/07 – 11/2/07 4/7/08 – 4/20/08
Metro Networks	\$ 16,650	10/22/07 – 10/28/07 4/7/08 – 4/12/08 4/21/08 – 4/27/08 5/10/08 – 5/16/08
TOTAL	\$ 47,984	

WEBSITE: WWW.HRWET.ORG

The HR WET website is enhanced and updated frequently with information received from members and gathered by staff. From the website, users are able to download the new landscape guide, apply for an HR³ Mini-Grant, email local representatives, and learn water conservation techniques. The HRPDC uses the program Webtrends to track website activity. The following information was gathered for FY 2007 and FY 2008:

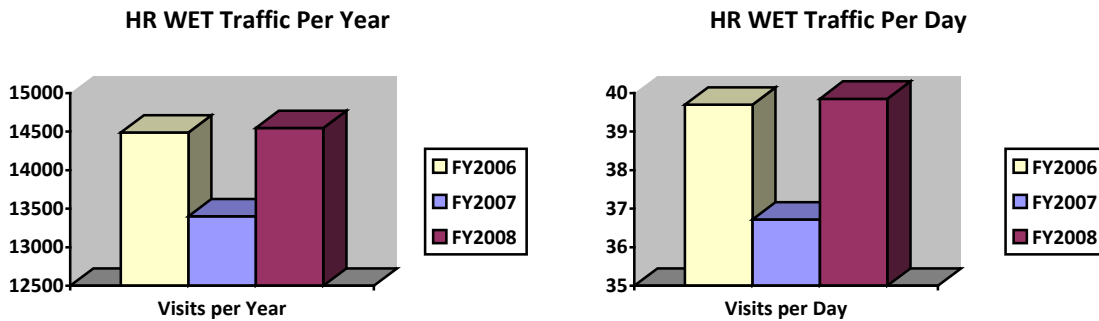
Webtrends FOR FY 2007 & 2008

❖ Number of Visits - 14,546

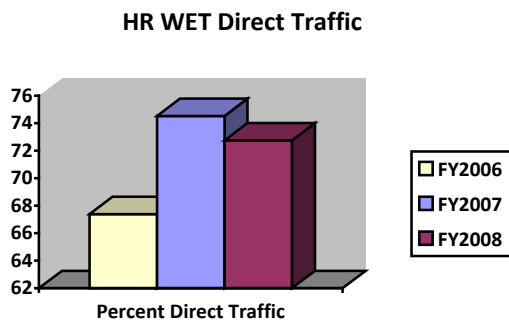


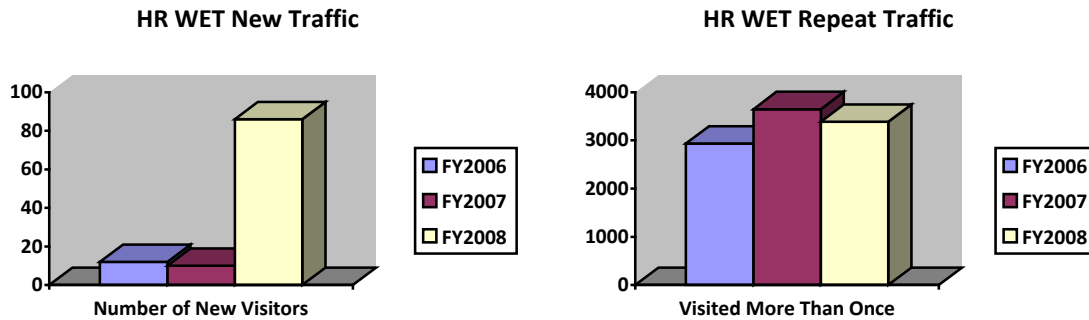
- ❖ Average Number of Visits Per Day – 39.9
- ❖ Direct Traffic – 72.8%
- ❖ Traffic from Media Contract Websites (CW, WVEC, Cox, WHRO, WTKR) – 0.51%
- ❖ Visitors from USA – 89.15%

The **number of visits** represents the number of times the site was visited by individual users. If an individual visited six times in the fiscal year, and clicked on ten pages each time, the number of visits counted would be six. Visits by non-humans (spiders, web crawlers, bots, etc.) were removed from the total number of visits. In previous years, visits by web crawlers were included, inflating the total number of visits per year. While total site usage appears to have dropped from previously reported numbers because of the difference in reporting, it actually increased. HRWET.org had 1,144 more visits in FY 2008 than in FY 2007, or approximately three additional visits per day.



The **direct traffic** represents traffic to the website in which the visitor typed the domain name directly into their browser, or the visitor bookmarked the site. The percentage of direct traffic has steadily increased over the past three years indicating that a greater percentage of visitors know the HR WET web address. That seems to indicate that education and marketing efforts have been effective since the number of new visitors also increased significantly in FY 2008. It could also be an indication of a higher number of repeat visitors, which indicates that individuals liked the site enough to return.





The spike in **new visitors** in FY 2008 occurred in April through June, but the main influx began in late May and continued to the end of June. The figures from the **direct traffic** could indicate that users are receiving the website address from promotional items or media spots. However, the ad campaigns through WVEC and CW27 ended in April and Metro Networks traffic reports ran in April and early May. Cox ads began in late April and ran through June 1. While the advertising may have had a delayed impact on site traffic, it seems more likely that the increase came mainly from the distribution of promotional items and participation in public events. The NIE *We All Live on the Water* tab was delivered to schools in late-April 2008, but mainly in mid-May. Within internal mail systems, teachers and students may not have received or used them until late-May. Additionally, HR WET promotional items were distributed at Boy Scout and Girl Scout events, at Clean the Bay Day events, through Lynnhaven River NOW, and at the Green Alternatives Store in Norfolk during the time period of the new visitor spike. The trailer also participated in several Earth Day events, Drinking Water Week, the Chesapeake Jubilee, Relay for Life in Virginia Beach, and Smithfield Olden Days during this time period. It is likely that the increase in new visitors was a result of these efforts and not advertising.



The HR WET *Waterwise Landscape & Watering Guide* continues to be the most frequently downloaded item. In FY 2008 it was downloaded 8,770 times. Since it was posted, it has been **downloaded nearly 20,000 times**. The annual report and the mini-grant application are also popular. Each was downloaded 400-500 times.

TOPICAL CAMPAIGNS

HR WET educates local citizens on the need for water efficiency using a variety of topical campaigns.

- **Promotional Items** - HR WET focused on the development and distribution of new educational tools such as the landscape guide, which is tailored to Hampton Roads and discusses a variety of topics including mulching, native plants, and other water uses. A 6” ruler that allows citizens to measure the size of a leak and determine how many gallons of water the leak is wasting was developed in FY 2008. The Team also redesigned the Water – Use it Wisely sponge. It now comes in the shape of a water drop to add another visual reminder to conserve water. Magnets and post-it notes with the WUIW logo were added to the Team’s educational give away

supply. In FY 2007 Team members developed a new dry-erase board with a few of the popular campaign tips and images.

The Water-Wise Landscaping and Watering Guide was very popular. In FY 2008, HR WET began encouraging garden centers to link to the booklet. The website traffic generated by the garden centers includes residents highly interested in outdoor water conservation.

Along with the member communities' individual events, HRPDC staff also provides information to those who call directly. Staff distributed materials such as the HR WET brochures, flower seeds, and rain gauges to representatives from the Elizabeth River Project, the Virginia Beach Flower and Garden Symposium, Lynnhaven River Now, Bank of America, Hampton Roads schools, and Virginia Tech training seminars. The following chart displays a breakdown of the number of each item distributed by the HRPDC staff. Items distributed through the HR WET trailer are not included.

ITEM	FY 2007	FY 2008
Bags	0	545
Dye Tabs	0	2,700
FAB	3,335	6,653
Hose Nozzles	0	84
Mini-Grant Bucks	180	500
Protect Water Brochure	0	520
Rain Gauges	600	975
Shower Timers	370	865
This Kid Saves Water Stickers	2,050	686
Toothbrushes	0	1,130
Toothpaste Rollers	0	810
WUIW Brochures	920	770
WUIW Clings	0	872
WUIW Landscape Guide	2,744	1,157
WUIW Magnets	0	840
WUIW Memo Boards	300	531
WUIW Notepads	100	688
WUIW Pencils	320	2,995
WUIW Rulers	0	615
WUIW Sponges	0	1,425
WUIW Stickers	0	1,250
WUIW Tattoos	0	1,260
TOTAL	10,919	27,871
Items with a 0 were new purchases in FY 2008 or were not tracked in previous years.		

- **Mobile Educational Unit** – The FY 2007 fiscal year started with the HR WET trailer attending the Hampton Bay Days festival in downtown Hampton during the first weekend of September. Volunteers from the City of Newport News Waterworks division were available to talk with passersby interested in water conservation techniques. Following the event, the trailer was taken to Harwood’s Mill Water Treatment Facility where it will be hosted for the next two years by the city of Newport News.



The HR WET Trailer at the PHBA Home & Garden Show

The HR WET Team attended many events with the HR WET trailer. Attendance numbers were not available for many events, but in FY 2008 the **Chesapeake Jubilee reported 56,000 attendees and Smithfield’s Olden Days reported 7,000 attendees.** HR WET attended the McDonald’s Garden Center spring events. Outdoor 2007 and Outdoor 2008 were held in Hampton and the Good Living Show was held in Virginia Beach. At both shows the trailer was located in the flow of passersby giving ample opportunity to share the educational resources and tools to promote water efficiency. Over the last few years February cold weather has minimized attendance at the Virginia Beach location. Unfortunately, when the event was moved to March in 2007, it was unsuccessful because of rain, snow and cold wind. Adequate staffing continues to be a challenge; so many future events will be re-evaluated.

Below is a list of events that the HR WET trailer attended:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sept. 8-10, 2006	Hampton Bay Days	Hampton
Nov. 17-19, 2006	TBA – Home & Flower Show	Virginia Beach Convention Center
Feb. 2-4, 2007	PHBA - Home & Garden Show	Hampton Convention Center
Mar. 2-4, 2007	Outdoor 2007	McDonald’s Nursery, HA
March 16-18, 2007	Good Living Show	McDonald’s Nursery, VB
April 20, 2007	Earth Day	Legacy Hall, JCC
April 27-29, 2007	History Fest	Oceanfront, VB
May 6, 2007	Earth Day	Mt. Trashmore Park, VB
May 17-20, 2007	Chesapeake Jubilee	Chesapeake City Park
June 2-3, 2007	Relay for Life	Dam Neck, VB
June 6, 2007	Employee Safety Day	City of Norfolk
Sept. 7-9, 2007	Hampton Bay Days	Hampton

September 22, 2007	Estuaries Day	York River State Park, Williamsburg
February 8-10, 2008	Home and Garden Show (PHBA)	Hampton Convention Center
March 7-9, 2008	Cox Media Food & Flower Show	McDonald's Nursery, Hampton
March 29-30, 2008	Daffodil Festival	Gloucester
April 26, 2008	Earth Day Celebration	Christopher Newport University
May 4, 2008	Earth Day Celebration	Virginia Beach
May 7, 2008	Drinking Water Week	Newport News/Hampton
May 15-18, 2008	Chesapeake Jubilee	Chesapeake
June 7-8, 2008	Relay for Life	Virginia Beach
June 27-28, 2008	Olden Days	Smithfield

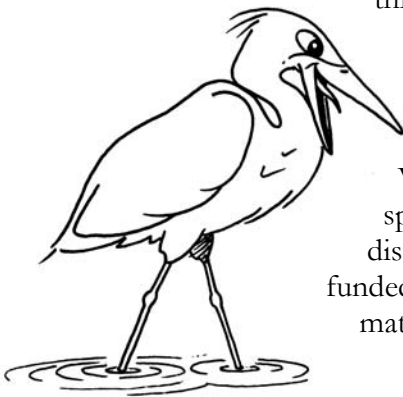
HR³ PARTNERSHIPS



HR WET continues to be an active partner with HR CLEAN and HR STORM, two additional environmental education committees of the HRPDC. Combined, these three form what is referred to as HR³.

By combining messages, the three are able to save resources by pooling funding for a larger media impact.

- **Newspapers in Education (NIE)** – NIE is a nationally recognized educational program that brings the newspaper into the classroom. The local newspapers work with various Hampton Roads school systems in the distribution of a tabloid-style newsprint document. While many pre-developed pieces are available to the schools, HR³ and HR FOG sought this opportunity to educate the region's 3rd graders on a local level.



The HR³ piece entitled *We All Live on the Water* was distributed in the spring of 2008 to all public school 3rd grade classes. The committees used this initiative to incorporate the watershed and water quality SOL requirements developed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) along with region specific information. A teacher guide was also developed and distributed. The FY 2008 tab, *We All Live on the Water*, was partially funded through a grant by the Chesapeake Bay License Plate Fund and matched with local government contributions and HRPDC staff time.

Through contracts between the papers and the HRPDC, 25,000 NIE tabs were distributed during the course of the year for \$19,315.96.

- **Promotional and Exhibit Materials** – Staff at the HRPDC, as well as local representatives, distribute promotional items for various events and meetings. In FY 2007, HR WET partnered with HR STORM to provide a joint tip page for the Homearama circular that was included in *The Virginian-Pilot* newspaper. Homearama was held in Suffolk during the last few weeks of September. The full color ad featured a dog chasing water from a sprinkler with the heading, “Practice proper yard behavior.” Various tips relating to proper water conservation and pollution prevention were displayed. Members of both committees worked diligently and cooperatively to finalize the ad developed by Virginia Beach’s HR STORM committee member Monica Stone. The ad was not run in the FY 2008 circular.



- **Public Affairs Programming** –

- **Dialogue** – WVEC Channel 13, as part of its FY 2007 media contract with HR³, scheduled a taping of the half-hour community show *Dialogue* that was originally aired on the morning of August 27th. Two members of HR WET participated in an interview and introduced the new landscape guide. Each committee participated in a one-on-one interview style format with the show’s host for a brief discussion on related topics. The show aired on the morning of August 27, 2006 and has run several times since then.
- **Joy in Our Town** – In FY 2008, WTBN Channel 21, contacted the HRPDC to find community resources to discuss on their community service program, *Joy in Our Town*. HRPDC staff represented HR WET in the 15 minute segment and discussed practical ways for viewers to conserve water.

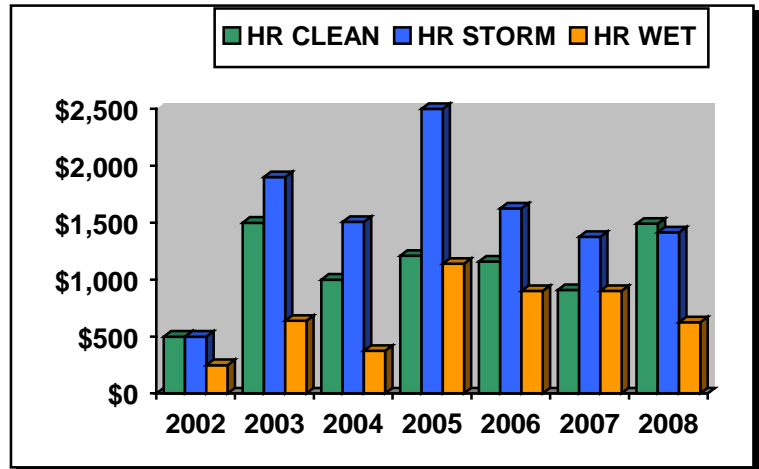
- **Print Ads** - A one-page tip sheet, which combines the messages of the committees, is used in a variety of regional publications such as the WVEC Channel-13 Hurricane Guide, which was distributed to the public at local Dodge automobile dealers through representatives of HR³, and made available on the WVEC Channel-13 website.

- **Mini-Grant Program** - With the HR³ Mini-Grant Program, schools and youth groups are eligible to receive \$250 toward environmental projects that meet the goals of HR CLEAN, HR STORM, and HR WET. In hopes of gaining more applicants, the HR³ mini-grant revision subcommittee met monthly to review the application process. The revisions included changes to the application layout, the information requested, and the forms necessary for the program. The subcommittee was comprised of representatives from each committee and staff to review the program and act as a liaison to the committees. Representatives



communicated with their respective committees on the progress and completion of the revisions. From the direction of the subcommittee and approval of HR³, the application and websites were updated and the marketing materials revised.

- Projects:** Over the course of the past two fiscal years, HR WET awarded six mini-grants that totaled \$1,526 and reached about 1000 children. Several times, the committees jointly funded grant projects. HR WET and HR CLEAN awarded the Mt. Zion Elementary School in Suffolk \$250 to start a recycling program, install a rain barrel, and beautify the building entrance. The 4H/Junior Master Gardeners of York



County received a joint award with HR STORM for development of a learning rain garden. HR WET contributed \$526 of the \$776 award. A third joint award was given to Kings Fork High School in Suffolk again in partnership with HR STORM for an outdoor learning classroom for \$125. Southwestern Elementary in Chesapeake was awarded \$250 to install a rain barrel and recover an aging school garden. Great Bridge Primary School in Chesapeake received \$250 to install a rain barrel that will be used to water their nearby garden. Oakland Elementary School in Suffolk received \$250 toward a courtyard restoration and learning garden project. While only a handful of students will be involved in the garden’s development, the entire school of 500 students will have the opportunity to experience the new learning resource. At the time this report was written half of the summary reports had been received and two of the projects will not be completed until November 2008.

- Mini-Grant Awards:** Included in the revisions to the application, HR³ introduced a new regional award. Each year at the annual HRAEE (Hampton Roads Alliance for Environmental Education) conference, HR³ will announce a winner of the Project of the Year award selected from awarded mini-grants that completed a project summary form. This program was developed to offer additional incentive to report project outcomes to committees. The awards program will be initiated at the 2008 Hampton Roads Alliance of Environmental Educators (HRAEE) conference to give the applicants a chance to apply and complete their projects.

HR³ members continue to distribute the marketing materials on the availability of funds. New joint educational opportunities are explored regularly.

INITIATIVES

HRAEE (Hampton Roads Alliance for Environmental Education) - The 2006 annual HRAEE conference was held at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens in late August. HR CLEAN continues to be a



partner with this regional networking alliance. A handful of members also received recognition and awards for local events/programs from HRAEE. One in particular was the City of Virginia Beach Clean City Community Commission for their partnerships in regards to the regional Earth Day celebration held annually at Mt. Trashmore Park. During the HRAEE conference, staff was invited to present regional partnership procedures to the attendees. Members continue to participate

in the HRAEE events and networking opportunities. The 2007 conference was a walking conference with stops on the American Rover, at Nauticus, and at Hanbury Evans architectural firm which has meeting space and a green roof. The 2008 conference will be held at the Virginia Aquarium during the month of September. Members continue to participate in HRAEE events and networking opportunities.



CONCLUSION

Fiscal Year 2007 was the final year of participation for one of the founding members. Peg Nelson, formerly of the City of Norfolk, ended her career with the City at the end of the fiscal year. Peg was a founding member of the Team and a long-time advocate of water conservation and water quality. Members recognized her contributions to the Team and to the regional educational initiatives with a farewell dinner and resolution. The resolution of her efforts was later incorporated into the minutes of the Directors of Utilities Committee's June 2007 meeting. HR WET members pictured below: Jerry Hoddinott (Chesapeake), Peg Nelson, and Lee Ann Hartmann (Newport News).



In FY 2008, HR WET celebrated its 14th anniversary. The members of HR WET remain committed to reaching its goals. HR WET is focused on the education of all local citizens, including youth and businesses, on the need for water efficiency and conservation. HR WET continues to develop and provide the region of Hampton Roads with programs promoting efficient water use and ways to reduce the per capita water consumption by teaching people how to use water more wisely.

