

CHARTIERS CREEK

WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Spring, 2006

Vol. 4, #2

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CALENDAR

APRIL

8 — Workshop: Managing Agricultural Lands for wildlife; Chartiers Twp. Municipal Bldg.

12 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7 pm.

29 — Wetlands Walk in North Franklin Township wetlands, near Washington Crown Center. See article this page.

MAY

6 — Rain Barrel Workshop

10 — ChCWA regular meeting, 7:30 pm.

JUNE

10 — Chartiers Creek Sojourn

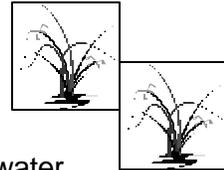
14 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm.

ChCWA regular monthly meetings: 1st Wed., 7 p.m., (7:30 pm May-Sept.) Cooper-Hinds Building, Meadowlands.

ANOTHER SPRING OUTING SCHEDULED FOR THE NORTH FRANKLIN WETLANDS ON SATURDAY, APRIL 29

For the third year in a row, the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association will repeat its very successful Wetlands Walk through the wetlands in North Franklin Township. Once again, the walk will be led by botanist Dr. Thomas Hart, who formerly taught at Washington and Jefferson College.

Last year a press release for American Wetlands Month (May) said, "Wetlands are not wastelands at all; they are natural wonderlands." They provide habitat for many plants and animals, provide temporary storage for excess stormwater runoff, and keep pollutants out of streams.



To find out more about the role of wetlands, join us in the parking lot at Washington Crown Center at 10 a.m. behind Sears, near Franklin Farms Road. From there, we will travel by bus to the site.

Please call secretary Joan Jessen (724-941-9370) or Susie Carmichael, WCCD Watershed Specialist (724-222-3060x117) to register. There is no charge, but we

DOMINION GRANT FOR ChCWA

The Chartiers Creek Watershed Association has again been awarded a Dominion Foundation Mini-grant for the coming year.

The grant will help to defray the costs of publishing the Association's newsletter and maintaining its website, www.upperchartierscreek.org.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE CANONSBURG LAKE PROJECT

The restoration of Canonsburg Lake received some welcome help recently.

At the urging of the Save Canonsburg Lake Committee, Congressman Tim Murphy was able to secure initial funding of \$250,000.00 for the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) to study Canonsburg Lake's conditions—the first step in restoring the lake's habitat. The Washington County Watershed Alliance and the PA Fish & Boat Commission have submitted letters of intent to the COE, requesting acceptance into the Section 206 program.

Projects under this program must show a strong environmental benefit and demonstrate improvements to the ecosystem. They are not for the kind of construction project usually associated with Army Corps of Engineers.

Corps personnel visited the lake and consulted with members of the steering committee in February.

COE's first step was to develop a preliminary restoration plan proposal for restoring the ecosystem of Canonsburg Lake. The plan is to restore the aquatic environment and provide wetland diversity. It will also provide a valuable

wildlife refuge in what is essentially an urban and suburban setting. The COE is recommending dredging in a portion of the area that is largely silted in, as the sediment is suffocating benthic organisms and have ruined most of the fish nesting and spawning habitat.

The proposal is intended to increase aquatic habitat quality, enrich wildlife migration corridors, and create opportunities for improved regional wildlife habitat.

When the proposal is approved, COE will begin a more detailed analysis (a feasibility study) that will determine the best measures to use and what the costs will be. All of this will take the better part of a year.

Meanwhile, work on the Master Site Plan for Canonsburg Lake continues, as consultant Mark Fickley refines the earlier proposals. A third Public Meeting will be held either May or June of this year. Debra Valentino is leading both efforts.

Still to be determined is the route of the Southern Beltway, and what that will mean for Canonsburg Lake.

STAY TUNED!

LEARN ABOUT INVASIVE PLANTS AT TRAVELING DISPLAY

Why plant native plants? Why be concerned about invasive plants? How can I recognize an invasive plant?

These are questions a gardener might ask. They are questions that can be answered at an informative display now set up at Citizens Library. Included in the display are photos of both native plants and invasive plants. The display features field guides of invasive plants. Bonus: it tells where to get a list of deer-resistant plants.

The display will move to Burgettstown Library in May and to the Bentleyville Library in June. Other libraries will also be scheduled.

Jean Bear, a member of the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association, designed the display and is in charge of the arrangements.

NOTE: The Canonsburg Lake Master Site Plan study is financed by a Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Grant.

Financial support for this newsletter is provided by the Dominion Foundation which is dedicated to the economic, physical and social health of the communities served by Dominion companies.

This grant program is administered by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's Watershed Assistance Center. Through the Center, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy committed to its core mission of conserving water, land, and life.

WORK TO BEGIN SOON ON CLEANUP OF MOLYCORP SITE IN CANTON TOWNSHIP

The long process of cleaning up the Molycorp property in Canton Township is about to begin. In fact, it may have started by the time you receive this newsletter.

After the site is cleaned up, the property will be ready for productive commercial, business or industrial redevelopment.

As of February 8th when Molycorp held its Public Meeting, planning was complete. The cleanup would start as soon as the company received the final permits it needed.

The cleanup project is a complicated one. One part is the Site Closure Process that must follow standards of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. It includes removal of different kinds of radioactive materials that have to be sent to different disposal locations. Great care must be taken with transporting these materials to the disposal sites.

The second part of the project is the removal of tar that was already on the site when Molycorp bought the property in the 1970's. The tar was left there from operation of a manufactured gas plant in the early 1900's. Some of the tar deposits are located in or near the creek.

The third part of the project is protection of Chartiers Creek and restoration of the stream-banks. Some of the materials to be removed are in or close to the creek; when they have been removed, the banks of the creek will need to be restored and enhanced.

For safety reasons, Molycorp proposes the closure of Caldwell Ave. while the cleanup work goes on. At the conclusion of the project, the company promises to restore Caldwell Ave to state and local standards.

Information about the project will be available on the company's website, www.molycorp.com, or by calling 1-800-952-5504.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

(Could change if unexpected problems arise)

Late Winter, 2006: Construction begins; steel piling installed.

Spring, 2006 - Fall, 2007: Excavation of Thorium-containing material.

Early Summer, 2006 - Summer, 2008: Temporary closure of Caldwell Ave.

Spring, 2006: Removal of Uranium-containing material.

Winter, 2006 and 2007: Tar removal.

Spring, 2006: Sheet piling, Chartiers Creek.

Summer 2008: Stream bank enhancement.

Spring-Summer, 2008: Final restoration of property, and rebuilding of Caldwell Ave. to state and local standards.

WATCH FOR DETAILS

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP: Make your own rain barrel to provide free water for your garden and help reduce stormwater runoff. May 6, 2006; location, time to be announced.

GIRL SCOUT COMMUNITY DAY: Probably in May. Adult volunteers will be wanted to help with a Girl Scout project.

CHARTIERS CREEK SOJOURN: June 10. Canoe the Creek. Launch site will be near South-pointe !!. There are tentative plans also for family activities at Canonsburg Lake.

CHARTIERS CREEK



WATERSHED
ASSOCIATION

100 West Beau Street, Suite 105
Washington, PA 15301

We're on the Web
www.upperchartierscreek.org

Contents;

- ◆ Wetlands Walk Scheduled—April 29, 10 am.
- ◆ ChCWA Receives Dominion Grant
- ◆ Canonsburg Lake Study Continues; Army Corps of Engineers Evaluates Ecosystem Improvements
- ◆ Plans for Cleanup of Molycorp Site in Canton Township

ADDRESS CORRECTION?

Send to: Joan Jessen, secretary
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15317;
or email: jjessen@pulsenet.com.

Chartiers Creek Watershed Association

Purpose: to enhance, protect and develop the ecosystem of the upper Chartiers Creek Watershed in Washington County, PA

Membership: open to anyone who lives in the watershed, as well as individuals, businesses and organizations that own property or are actively involved within the boundaries of the watershed.

Please join us! Annual Dues: Individual, \$10; Family, \$15; Organization, \$50

MAIL THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK TO:

Chartiers Creek Watershed Association
Carrilee Hemington, treasurer
107 Williams Drive, McMurray, PA 15301

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel.: _____ Email: _____