

# CHARTIERS CREEK

## WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Spring, 2008

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### CALENDAR HIGHLIGHT: ANNUAL WETLANDS WALK on APRIL 26

The popular Wetlands Walk will take place this year on April 26 from 10 am until noon. The walk through the North Franklin Wetlands will be led by Barbara Rosensteel, Environmental Scientist, holding a Professional Wetlands Scientist certification from the Society of Wetland Scientists.

Wetlands are an essential part of the web of life, supporting many different plants and animals. The North Franklin Wetlands are a particularly fine example of several different types of wetlands and therefore host varied natural communities



To find out more about our wetlands treasure, join us on the walk.

*Please sign up in advance. There is no charge, but we need to know how many will take part in this event. Call Julie Sigler, Watershed Specialist, at 724-222-3060x117.*

### THE FUND-RAISING BEGINS...

...On April 12, 13 and 19. It is only a baby step on the way to finding the money needed to save Canonsburg Lake, but it is a start.

This event has a second, equally important goal—to raise awareness of the urgent need to protect and restore Canonsburg Lake. Committee members will also provide information about the lake, and recruit new members and supporters to help save the lake.

The Canonsburg Lake Restoration and Improvement Committee will be set up on April 12, 13, and 19 from 7 am until 5 pm in the lake's main parking lot on McDowell Lane. Look for [Cont. on pg.2](#)

### CALENDAR

#### APRIL

9 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm  
12, 13, 19 — SAVE CANONSBURG LAKE: parking lot, McDowell Lane. Details above.  
26 — Wetlands Walk; North Franklin Wetlands, 10 am-12 noon  
date to be announced — Water Quality Monitoring, including macro collection/identification

#### MAY

7 — Workshop: Plants for Riparian Buffers; Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve. 8:30 am-3:30 pm (Details pg. 3)  
14 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm

#### JUNE

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

## WILL CANONSBURG LAKE BE SAVED?

**F**or now, we are sorry to report that the question cannot be answered with any confidence.

This is not due to public opinion as to whether it should be saved.—most everyone is in agreement that the lake is an asset to the region, and should be saved for future generations. The answer, however, depends on whether the necessary funds can be raised to match the Army Corps of Engineers budgeted funds for restoration of the lake.

The Final Draft of the Corps' plan for the lake will be completed very soon. Work to carry out the plan could be started next year, provided the local matching funds are assured. The local match would be about \$1.4 million.

That is a lot of money for a small volunteer committee to raise.

The Canonsburg Lake Restoration and Improvement Committee had hoped to receive much of the necessary funding from the Local Share of the county's gaming funds. Unfortunately, the application was turned down. This is the second time the committee's request has been turned down by the Washington County Commissioners. The first time was a request for funds from the DCNR's (Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources) Growing Greener allocation to the counties.

The committee is exploring other funding options, but large-scale fund-raising takes time. The concern now is: will the funds the Army Corps of Engineers wants to invest in Washington County for this project still be available when the required local match has been secured? It sure would be a shame to see over \$2 million dollars go to some other county or state, when the approval to invest right here in Washington County has already been made by the Corps.

To be continued!

### Canonsburg Lake, cont. from pg. 1

the canopy with the **Save Canonsburg Lake** banner prominently displayed.

The event will feature the sale of hats, T-shirts, and grocery/tote bags with the new "Save Canonsburg Lake" logo embroidered on them..

This is the committee's first public event on the way to its goal of restoring the Lake. Others will be scheduled as the year goes on.

## SPRING, 2008 WATER QUALITY MONITORING

**W**ater Quality Monitoring, including macroinvertebrate collection and identification, will be scheduled for three sites this spring.

The sites are: Little Chartiers Creek at Linden Road and Linden Creek Road in North Strabane Township, Chartiers Creek near the Houston Park ballfields, and Chartiers Creek near Scotty's on Rt. 18.



**Stonefly  
Nymph**

The specific monitoring dates will be available after mid-April. Anyone interested in helping with (or simply observing) the monitoring activities should call Watershed Specialist Julie Sigler at 724-222-3060x117, or Joan Jessen at 724-941-9370.

## MOLYCORP PROJECT MOVES CLOSER TO COMPLETION

Molycorp has made significant progress since its last update to the Chartiers Creek Watershed. As of Dec. 31, 2007, more than 85,000 tons of tar material had been shipped safely to Arden Landfill and nearly 103,000 tons of slag had been sent by rail to a permitted disposal facility in Idaho. Molycorp has also been able to begin restoration efforts in areas that had been excavated early in the project.

This year, Molycorp will achieve two important milestones. This spring, Molycorp will complete the excavation and disposal of the final 20,000 tons of MGP tar. By early summer, we anticipate completing the excavation of the remaining 38,000 tons of slag requiring off-site disposal. When these two phases of the project are completed, we estimate that we will have excavated and disposed of approximately 105,000 tons of MGP tar and 140,000 tons of slag from the site.

Once all excavations are complete, and the necessary approvals are obtained from the state and federal regulatory agencies, Molycorp's work will focus on restoring the property. Molycorp will remove sheet piling along Chartiers Creek and backfill excavated areas using imported soil and on-site material as allowed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Back-filled areas will be vegetated to prevent erosion and sedimentation.

*Stan Luckoski*

Public Affairs Manager - CEMC Projects East

## WORKSHOP: PLANTS-FOR RIPARIAN BUFFERS

An all-day workshop about plants for riparian buffers is scheduled for Wednesday, May 7, 2008 at the Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve. The program will begin at 8:30 am and end at 3:30 pm.

On the program:

- 8:30—Introduction, overview (Patrick Adams, Vicky Michaels)
- 8:45—Establishing, maintaining a Riparian Buffer (E. McDonald)
- 9:30—Invasive Plants Overview, Identification (A. Paluh)
- 10:15—Break
- 10:30—Control of Invasive Plants (G. Holesh)
- 11:00—Native Plants & Biodiversity (A. Paluh)
- 11:30—Basic Plant ID; Plants to Look for in the Field; Practice Using Field Guides and Keys (S. Miller, A. Paluh)
- 12:00—Lunch on your own
- 1:00-3:30—Identification in the Field. (All)  
Travel to a nearby riparian site to look at riparian buffers and to identify native and invasive plants.

This workshop is sponsored by the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve.

### Some Background on the Molycorp Remediation Project:

The site is located in Canton Township, bordering Chartiers Creek. The Molycorp plant there produced a ferroniobium alloy from an ore that contained natural thorium with some uranium. The operation resulted in the production of thorium-bearing slag that was used as fill over portions of the site. Tar materials, left from an earlier industrial operation, were found on the site and have also been removed.

Two local public meetings were held to keep interested parties informed—the second meeting was attended by over 300 people. On March 20, 2001, DWM staff participated in an “open house” style public meeting in Washington, PA, hosted by the Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR).

**CHARTIERS CREEK**



**WATERSHED  
ASSOCIATION**

100 West Beau Street, Suite 105  
Washington, PA 15301

**We're on the Web**  
[www.upperchartierscreek.org](http://www.upperchartierscreek.org)

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**ADDRESS CORRECTION?**

Send to: Joan Jessen, editor  
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15317;  
or email: [jrjessen@comcast.net](mailto:jrjessen@comcast.net).

**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: \_\_\_\_\_