

CHARTIERS CREEK

WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Spring, 2010 – Vol. 8, #2

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WALK the WETLANDS— April 24, 2010

Dr. Jason Kilgore, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at Washington and Jefferson College, will again lead this spring's walk through the North Franklin Wetlands.

The Wetlands Walk has been scheduled for Saturday, April 24 from 10 am until 12 noon. The group will meet in the parking lot next to the North Franklin Fire Company.

Attendance is limited to 20 people. Please sign up in advance with Julie Sigler, Watershed Specialist, at 724-222-3060x117.

Dr. Kilgore, whose doctorate is in plant physiology and ecology, will be assisted by his wife Pam. Pam Kilgore holds degrees in environmental science and management, and has worked as a wetland ecologist for natural resource consulting companies

The wetlands walk, first held in 2004, is a popular annual event for children as well as adults. It is an occasion to learn about the important roles that wetlands fill, identify wetland plants, and observe signs of typical animal inhabitants of wetlands.

WESTERN PA CONSERVANCY PROJECT BEGINS

What are the critical issues in the Chartiers Creek Watershed? How can the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association address those issues more effectively? What technical training and assistance do Association members need to prepare for the future?

These are some of the questions that were asked as Association members met with Nick Pinizotto and Eric Chapman of Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and Gwen Johnson of the PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers. The meeting marked the start of a valuable project for the Association, which is expected to last a year or more.

The Chartiers Creek Watershed Association is one of several groups selected to receive technical assistance from the Western PA Conservancy, services that are valued at \$30,000 or more. (Note: Buffalo Creek Watershed Association in Washington County has been awarded a similar project.) Cont. on page 2

CALENDAR

MARCH

10 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:00 pm

12, 13 — Ag Days

23, 25, 30 — Water Quality Monitoring, including macro collection/identification

APRIL

14 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm

17, 18 — *Save Canonsburg Lake*, tent-sale; Opening Day of Trout Season; main parking lot, Canonsburg Lake. (Rain dates: April 24, 25)

24 — Wetlands Walk; No. Franklin Wetlands, 10 am-12.

MAY

13 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm

JUNE

10 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm

ChCWA regular monthly meetings: 2nd Wed., 7 p.m., (7:30 pm April-Sept.) Cooper-Hinds Building, Meadowlands.

CHCWA AWARDED DOMINION MINI-GRANT

The Chartiers Creek Watershed Association will again receive a Dominion Mini-Grant which will help fund the Association's newsletter and website. The grant will also help with updating and printing the Association's informational brochure.

This grant of \$500 from the Dominion Foundation is administered by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

The purpose of these grants is to help watershed organizations with administrative expenses, as it is often difficult for small organizations to cover such cost. The announcement letter stated that 68 proposals had been received, which "created a very competitive review process."

ChCWA is very grateful for the grant award, particularly because we think it is vital to our mission to provide information to the community. Both the newsletter and the website are essential tools for that purpose.

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The list of critical issues identified was a long one—failing septic tanks, woodlands protection, cleaning up dump sites, improved stormwater management and flood prevention were some that were named by several of the members present at the meeting. Specific projects will provide opportunities for public outreach and education.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy expects to work closely with the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association for at least a year. The final result will be a plan of action for the Association for the next several years—and people trained to be able to carry out the plan.

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 was administered by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership and collaboration.

"SAVE CANONSBURG LAKE" TENT-SALE on April 17, 18

The opening weekend of trout season, April 17 and 18 this year, will again be the days for a tent-sale to raise funds for restoration of Canonsburg Lake. The tent will be set up in the main parking lot on McDowell Lane.

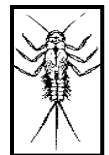
Members of the Canonsburg Lake Restoration & Improvement Committee will be on site with a variety of *Save Canonsburg Lake* products to sell. The items will include ball caps and T-shirts decorated with the Save Canonsburg Lake logo.

Committee members will be able to provide information and answer questions about the current status of plans to restore the lake.

SPRING, 2010 WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Water Quality Monitoring, including macroinvertebrate collection and identification, will be scheduled at four sites this spring.

Monitors this year will include students from Chatham College, who will be fulfilling a requirement for community service.



Mayfly
Larva

The sites are: Little Chartiers Creek at Linden Road and Linden Creek Road in North Strabane Township, Chartiers Creek near the Houston Park ball fields, Chartiers Run near the American Legion Post in Houston and Chartiers Creek near Scotty's on Rt. 18.

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.

POLLUTION DOWN STORM DRAINS MEANS POLLUTION IN STREAMS

▲ new project for the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (ChCWA), the installation of storm drain markers in Canonsburg and North Strabane, will soon be underway.

The project will be carried out in partnership with Canonsburg Borough, North Strabane Township, Canon McMillan High School, Pennsylvania American Water Company, and the Washington County Conservation District. The Association will apply for a grant to underwrite the projects costs.

The goal of the project:
To reduce the amount and volume of pollutants entering Chartiers Creek and its tributaries through the storm sewer system by increasing public awareness and encouraging pollution prevention as an established habit within the community.

The overall message for residents of the watershed?

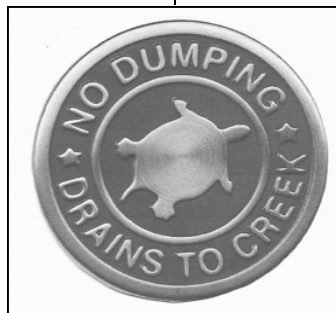
“In our everyday life, we can all help to protect and restore a biologically healthy and clean Chartiers Creek by preventing the intentional and unintentional release of pollutants into storm drains.”

The Chartiers Creek River Conservation Plan indicates **Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers** as the third major source of non-attainment of Pennsylvania Water Quality Standards in the upper Chartiers Creek watershed, impacting approximately 375 miles of stream. (Habitat modification, which includes stormwater runoff/erosion and sedimentation, is the first, and Agriculture is the second.)

A primary roadblock to reducing stream pollution from storm sewers is the lack of public awareness that storm sewers in their community drain directly to streams. The primary objective of storm drain inlet marking projects is to inform residents and visitors of that fact—with the goal of eliminating the dumping of pollutants into the drains.

But, to be truly effective in reducing stream pollution, people must also be aware of how their daily actions can contribute to the UNINTENTIONAL dumping of pollutants into the storm drains and streams, and how they can prevent it.

A stormwater/watershed education program will be presented to Canon-McMillan High School Environmental Science students by Pennsylvania American Water and the Washington County Conservation District.



In addition, through news releases, websites, newsletters, and videos, the ChCWA and the municipalities will inform residents about the storm drain marking project and how each one of us, in our everyday lives, can prevent and reduce stream pollution by stopping the intentional and unintentional

release of pollutants into the storm sewers.

Ways in which all of us can help to reduce or eliminate pollutants entering storm sewers include:

- ◆ Clean up and properly dispose of pet waste;
- ◆ Do not dump oil and other fluids from vehicle and equipment maintenance anywhere that is can get into the storm drain or the stream.
- ◆ Avoid washing vehicles where the wash water can go down the storm drain;
- ◆ Follow manufacturer’s instructions for fertilizers and pesticides; use only what is needed and properly dispose of any leftovers;
- ◆ Properly dispose of yard waste, litter, and cigarette butts; and
- ◆ Prevent soil erosion from unstabilized areas around our properties.

The stainless steel storm drain markers will continue to alert and inform watershed residents and visitors for many years to come about the connection of storm drains to the stream.

Barbara Rosensteel



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ADDRESS CORRECTION?
Send to: Joan Jessen, editor
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15317;
or email: joanjessen159@gmail.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
Joan Jessen, treasurer
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15317

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel.: _____ Email: _____