

VOL. 65, NO. 1 Spring 2018

A publication of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, central New Jersey's first environmental group.

WELLSPRING

Your Water. Your Environment. Your Voice.



A Powerful Voice on Climate Change ...p4

Watershed Trustee Bernadette Woods Placky of Climate Central talks 'water'

Join us for our
12th Annual Earth Day
Stream Cleanups! ...p6

Stormwater Utilities Would Benefit NJ

p5...
Reducing Flooding & Improving Water Quality



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bold Action Required from Governor Murphy

by Jim Waltman

Governor Phil Murphy arrived at the statehouse at a critical time for our state's environment after years of poor stewardship.

Centuries of development that occurred before our modern environmental laws, as well as poorly designed and located new construction projects continue to degrade our waterways and natural environment. Our state's infrastructure to manage wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water has severely deteriorated, while climate change compounds our environmental challenges. It will take bold action from Governor Murphy to put our state on a course for environmental recovery.

Reverse the Rollbacks. The first task for our new governor should be to undo the damage done by his predecessor. Gov. Murphy got off to a great start by moving swiftly to re-enter New Jersey in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and withdraw the state from litigation that Gov. Christie joined against President Obama's Clean Power Plan.

The governor should continue this movement by reversing other Christie Administration actions that weakened environmental protections. Rules protecting streams and wetlands from encroaching development should be restored. Given that climate change will only make flooding worse, we should make it more difficult to build in these areas, not easier.

Leadership on Stormwater & Flooding. Polluted stormwater runoff from parking lots, roadways and other hard surfaces that are impervious to water is the leading cause of flooding and water pollution in most areas of the state. Yet new structures and paved areas less than 11,000 square feet are largely exempt from any regulation. And very little is being done to address runoff from older buildings and pavement. The Governor should modernize our stormwater regulations to address these growing problems. Advocating for stormwater utilities (see p5) would help.



Old Mill Rd closes due to flooding from the Stony Brook

Stop PennEast. The new administration has the power to block this unneeded and damaging project and should exercise it (see p3).

Invest in Water Infrastructure. New Jersey's crumbling water infrastructure needs an estimated \$25 billion in upgrades over the next two decades, according to the Jersey Water Works collaborative (of which the Watershed is a member). The state's leaking pipes lose an estimated 130 million gallons of treated drinking water a day, and every year our overwhelmed sewer systems dump more than 7 billion gallons of raw sewage into our waterways. Gov. Murphy must find and implement smart and sustainable strategies to address this critical problem.

Restore Natural Resources. Under the federal and state Natural Resource Damage Assessment process, damages to wildlife and habitats from oil spills and other environmental injuries are determined and the polluting parties are made to fund restoration of those natural resources. In November 2017, New Jersey's voters passed a ballot measure that ensures that funds collected from such polluters cannot be diverted for other purposes. The Murphy Administration should aggressively pursue recompense from polluters and use these funds to usher in a new era of environmental restoration in the state.

(continued on next page...)

PennEast Pipeline Battle Continues

Opponents of the proposed PennEast pipeline, a 118-mile, 36-inch pipeline from Lucerne, PA, through Hopewell, NJ, have redoubled their efforts in wake of a conditional “go ahead” for the project by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The FERC decision in late January to grant PennEast a “Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity” was widely expected. The approval authorized PennEast to seize land through eminent domain from homeowners, towns and land trusts along the proposed route. The company has already filed paperwork in federal court for approximately 150 eminent domain lawsuits as of this February in New Jersey alone.



Under Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act, however, the pipeline cannot be built unless it receives certification by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) that it complies with all applicable water quality standards, limitations, and restrictions. Other states have rejected requests for 401 certification for similar FERC-approved pipeline projects so there is ample precedent for New Jersey to do the same with PennEast.

“Now, it’s up to New Jersey to protect our land and water from this dangerous and unnecessary pipeline, and for our state to reject the Trump administration’s dirty and reckless energy policies,” said Jim Waltman, executive director, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association. “This is far from over.”

Opponents have said the proposed PennEast pipeline is not needed, would damage sensitive waterways and bucolic landscapes, take private property against the wishes of landowners, and harm lands that were ostensibly protected with state, county, municipal and private open space funds.

The proposed PennEast pipeline, which would run through Hunterdon and Mercer counties, can’t be built without approval from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC). In June 2017, NJDEP administratively closed PennEast’s application because it was woefully inadequate, did not include information specifically required by the NJDEP, and PennEast did not have the authority to submit the application. In early February, the agency reiterated its rejection in a letter to PennEast. The DRBC hasn’t begun its review. Concerned residents should urge NJDEP and DRBC to reject PennEast’s pending application. To learn more, visit thewatershed.org/penneast.

Climate Change & Green Energy. Our state must do all that it can to address Climate Change, which is ultimately the greatest threat to our waterways and water supplies. As mentioned above, the Governor took quick action to address the problem and he outlined ambitious goals for our state to transition to a green energy future during his campaign. Specifically, he has called for New Jersey to obtain 100% of its energy from green sources by 2050. It will take concerted leadership, a new generation of incentives, and unwaver-

ing opposition to new fossil fuel projects like gas pipelines to meet these ambitious goals.

New Jersey faces urgent environmental challenges. Bold action from Governor Murphy can put our state on the right course to address them.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Governor Murphy, positioned at the end of the paragraph.

A Powerful Voice on Climate Change

Bernadette Woods Placky of Climate Central in Princeton educates people with her Climate Matters program, partnering with more than 500 U.S. and international meteorologists to explain the connections between local weather and climate change.



Bernadette speaks at the People's Climate March in Princeton, April 2017

Placky, the chief meteorologist and director of the non-profit's Climate Matters program, became a trustee at the Watershed Association last year because she appreciates its "intense, local focus" on water. Her involvement in these organizations extends her reach on both local and global levels.

"The Watershed is focused on water impacts, water quality and how water affects us in our lives. At Climate Central, what we are trying to do is to get information out on how our climate is changing, what the impacts are and what we should do about it," she said.

Woods Placky, an Emmy-award winning meteorologist, said her Climate Matters information is aired on 200 television stations and helps explain weather in timely and accessible ways. Water is greatly affected by climate change. Warmer air can hold more moisture, resulting in more precipitation in many regions, she said. "Here in New Jersey, we are seeing more and heavier rain events. The rain is coming in cycles with big bucket events. That is, overall, forcing people to evaluate stormwater runoff and how that impacts our watershed."

Woods Placky expects the warmer climate will create more powerful storms that cause washed-out roads, overflowing streams, property damage, and increased environmental damage, such as soil erosion and polluted stormwater runoff. "We need to prepare for it. The Watershed is trying -- on a local, granular level -- to do work on these issues for what is happening now and for what is going to come. Our heavy rain events will get heavier, our coastal flooding will get higher and some coastal storms will get more extreme."

Advancements in science allow meteorologists to attribute extreme weather events to climate change. Climate Matters does local data analysis and extreme weather analysis, providing reliable data as big storms are happening and when millions of people are paying attention.

"The science has advanced and progressed dramatically," she said. "The storms will still happen, but how has climate change increased the event? How much more intense is it? In science, we can now actually quantify it. This is critical for rebuilding purposes."

Woods Placky also believes it is essential to instill wonder and respect for nature in children. Her sons have attended the Watershed Nature Camp for years. This summer, she will help teach a Watershed Academy program on climate change for high school students, integrating data from the Watershed's weather station. "I personally identify with the science and education going on at the Watershed," she said. "Climate change is changing our water cycle and it is something we need to stay on top of and prepare for in our future."

"There is a lot of negative rhetoric around climate change," she said. "We've made huge advances in a very short amount of time and I believe we can solve this issue and we will. I am not naively optimistic, but I am optimistic."

Stormwater Utilities Would Benefit NJ

Stormwater utilities, a tool for addressing flooding and water pollution, are gaining prominence in New Jersey as a better way to capture rain, fix old stormwater systems and build new ones to benefit homeowners, commuters, and the environment.

Instead of soaking into the ground, stormwater runs off of roofs, streets, parking lots, driveways and other impervious surfaces and causes flooding. During a storm, pollutants from human activities, such as motor oil, soaps, fertilizers, pet waste, and agricultural runoff, mix into the stormwater. The polluted runoff flows rapidly into local streams and overwhelms storm sewers.

According to the NJDEP, stormwater is one of the most significant sources of pollution in our waterways. "Polluted stormwater is a problem both from a flooding and water pollution perspective," said Policy Director Michael Pisauero, Esq. "Our current systems in New Jersey are failing."

As the climate changes, and with scientists predicting larger and larger rainstorms, this issue is becoming increasingly urgent. A stormwater utility is an efficient way to reduce flooding and improve water quality. A utility is responsible for the funding, construction and maintenance of a management system for polluted rainwater runoff.

Utilities can charge user fees based on the amount of stormwater generated by a site and use those funds to correct the problem. Individuals that address the problem on their own can secure credits against the fee.

Stormwater utilities are not new. Since 1976, over 1,600 stormwater utilities have been created throughout the country. New Jersey is one of only 11 states in the nation without one.



A bridge underpass on Titus Mill Road closes due to flooding, February 2018



Watershed Policy Director Mike Pisauero testifies before the state Senate Environment and Energy Committee

The Watershed supports the passage of legislation allowing the creation of stormwater utilities. Senators Bob Smith (D-17th District) and Kip Bateman (R-16th District) introduced such a bill in early January.

We know the old way of addressing stormwater has resulted in flooding and degraded water. A stormwater utility can be the tool that reverses the course, improves our waterways, and keeps our environment healthy.

The Watershed's work to advance policies that protect water is supported by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. For more information on stormwater utilities, visit thewatershed.org/stormwater.

CONSERVING & RESTORING HABITATS

Stream Cleanups

On April 14 and 21, the Watershed will once again organize volunteers to help remove trash and debris from our local rivers and streams at our 12th Annual Stream Cleanups.

Over the past decade, these efforts have helped remove more than 93,000 pounds of garbage with the help of 4,600 enthusiastic volunteers.



Volunteers clean Colonial Lake Park in Lawrence



Families and friends help pick up trash in Hightstown (above), Plainsboro (at right), and Millstone Township (shown below)

This year's cleanups in 12 locations are a great way to get outside, improve the scenic beauty of our region, and positively impact our wildlife habitat.

A new location will be added this year with a Wargo Pond clean up on the Watershed Reserve for families, and along Wargo Road for adults on April 21.



We appreciate the continued support of our generous sponsors who make our cleanups possible. Bloomberg, American Rivers and New Jersey Clean Communities have provided volunteers and resources. Please contact Erin Stretz at estretz@thewatershed.org for donations and volunteer support.

Saturday, April 14

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Franklin | 9:30am - 12pm |
| Lawrence | 9am - 11am |
| Millstone | 9am - 12pm |
| Montgomery | 9am - 11am |
| Princeton | 1pm - 3pm |
| West Windsor | 1pm - 3pm |

Saturday, April 21

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Cranbury | 9am - 11am |
| East Windsor | 9am - 11am |
| Hightstown | 9am - 11pm |
| Hopewell | 1pm - 3pm |
| Monroe | 1pm - 3pm |
| Plainsboro | 9am - 11am |

Visit our website for updates and clean up locations:
thewatershed.org/stream-cleanups



Spring 2018 Calendar

Enjoy a new lineup of spring programs at the Watershed Center, featuring events and environmental programs for everyone.
Be a part of the magic that makes our work so special. Clean water and a healthy environment depend on you.
We hope you will join us for one of our upcoming events. Call 609-737-3735 to get started!
Unless stated otherwise, all programs meet at the Watershed Center, 31 Titus Mill Road, Pennington.

Pre-Registration required. Credit cards accepted by phone. **Members** of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association are eligible for discounts on most program registration fees. Membership starts at \$35 and helps to protect clean water in central New Jersey.

Refund Policy: A full refund will be made if notice of cancellation is received by phone at least 48 hours before a program. No refunds or credits will be given after that time. All returned checks incur a bank fee. Membership transactions are non-refundable.

Adult Education

THURSDAYS, MAR 15 | APR 12 | MAY 10 | JUN 14

Spring Reading Group

Out There: Voices from the Wild

7:30–9:00PM, \$5 per session (Free for members)

Facilitator Jeff Hoagland invites you to enjoy this unique and relaxed reading group in exploring the wide and varied terrain of nature writing, wildness and wilderness. Each month, readers will receive some poems and prose focused on a specific topic. Spring topics: March – New Jersey; April – Haiku sampler; May – Eco-poetry sampler; June – Rivers, for National Rivers Month. Sign up for individual sessions or all 4. Light refreshments provided.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17

A Year on the Stony Brook – Headwaters

9:30–11:30AM, Adults, \$5 per person

Join us as we explore different stretches of the Stony Brook throughout the seasons. On this adult walk, examine the unique headwaters of the Stony Brook, from perched wetlands to babbling waters. Gain a detailed perspective on watersheds and water cycle as we explore the movement of water and encounter a variety of organisms that make their home in the headwaters region. This hike is co-sponsored by the Sourland Conservancy. *This program does not meet at the Watershed Reserve. We will send directions upon registration.*

ARRIVING THIS AUTUMN...

Ecology of New Jersey Rivers, Streams, Lakes & Ponds

&

Trees of New Jersey & Their Lives

Learn more online at thewatershed.org/adult-education

SUNDAY, APRIL 15

International Haiku Poetry Day

Ginko & Reading

1:30–4:00PM, ages 15+, Free

Join Education Director and haiku poet Jeff Hoagland on a ginko, a haiku walk, in celebration of this traditional Japanese form of poetry, with its luminous focus on nature. No prior writing experience required. Bring a journal and your favorite book for sharing passages. Light refreshments will be provided. Presented in collaboration with The Haiku Foundation.

SATURDAY, MAY 19

Back to the River – Millstone Canoe Trip

9:30AM–2:30PM, ages 15+, Fee varies dependent on craft

Explore the centerpiece of our watershed, the Millstone River, from Griggstown to Manville. Canoes/ kayaks are rented onsite and fee covers watercraft, paddle, and PFD as well as guide/naturalist and lifeguard services. Call for more information, 609-737-3735. *This program does not meet at the Watershed Reserve. We will send directions upon registration.*

WEDNESDAYS, MAY 9 - JUNE 13

Plants & Wildflowers of Woods, Fields & Roadsides

Wednesdays, 7:30–9:00PM, Adults, \$245 (\$195 members)

Saturday field trip dates: May 19, June 2 and June 9

Instructor: Dr. Kate B. Lepis, Adjunct Professor, Monmouth University

As spring descends, learn about all the fantastic new growth of plants and wildflowers, their morphology, evolution, and pollinator interactions. Find out about the conservation of New Jersey's plant communities, native plant functions, and discover local habitats during three weekend field trips.

Family & Adult Programs

SATURDAY, MARCH 10

Woodcock Watch

6:00-7:30PM, Adults and Families, ages 6+, Free

Join Jeff Hoagland at dusk as we watch and learn more about the spring courtship dance and fascinating life of this bird. Walk is co-sponsored by Washington Crossing Audubon Society.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24

Build a Rain Barrel Workshop

1:00-3:00PM, Adults and Families, \$50 per barrel

Watershed Ambassador Gad Lee will teach you how to capture and reuse rain water in your home garden as you construct your own rain barrel in this River Friendly Workshop. Fee includes ALL materials to construct one rain barrel.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

Bringing Migratory Shad Back to Princeton - Lecture

1:00-3:00PM, Adults and Families, Free

Learn about the efforts to restore the once-great runs of American shad and other migratory fish on the Millstone River with Olaf Jensen, Associate Professor with the Department of Marine & Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University, and Watershed Science Director Steve Tuorto, Ph.D. See some of these fish up close in our big tank and enjoy other exhibits at the Watershed Center!

THURSDAY, MARCH 29

Flashlight Egg Hunt

7:30-9:00PM, ages 5+, \$10 per child

Come out after dark to roam the field in search of real colored eggs. Will you find a prize egg? This is the most egg-citing way to celebrate spring. Bring your own flashlight and a basket or bag for your eggs. Join us early for photos with the bunny at the Watershed Center, then head out to the field for an 8:00 p.m. start to the hunt.



APRIL 8 | MAY 6 | JUNE 3

First Sunday Environmental Film Series

Sunday, 1:00PM, Adults & Families, Free - Walk-ins welcome

Visit thewatershed.org/films to learn more about upcoming movies at the Watershed Center including trailers for *An Inconvenient Sequel* (2006) in April, *What the Health* (2017) in May, and *The Age of Consequences* (2016) in June.



Watershed Board Chair Laura Hanson drills a rain barrel spout - photo by Pierce Backes

SATURDAY, APRIL 7

Vernal Pools of the Sourland Mountains

10:00-11:30AM, Adults and Families, ages 6+, Free

Come on an exploratory hike of vernal pools in the Sourland Mountains. Waterproof boots/shoes are necessary. Presented with funding from Washington's Crossing Audubon Society. *This program does not meet at the Watershed Reserve. We will send directions upon registration.*

FRIDAY, APRIL 13

Frog Slog Night Hike

8:00-10:00PM, Adults and Families, ages 6+

\$15 (\$10 for members)

Friday the 13th is your lucky night to discover the secret life of frogs. Join us at the soggy and sonic Wargo pond on the Watershed Nature Reserve. Boots and a flashlight are necessary. This hike does not meet at the Watershed Center; meet at our pond on Wargo Road.

SATURDAYS, APRIL 14 & 21

12th Annual Stream Cleanups

*Times and locations vary by community,
Adults & Families, Free*

Do your part in keeping our watershed clean, safe, and healthy! Join Watershed staff and volunteers in celebration of Earth Day to help clean up your town or surrounding community! There will be various sites to choose from, with time slots in the morning and afternoon. *For more information see page 6.*



A Girl Scout Troop cleans a park in Lawrence Twp.

SATURDAY, APRIL 28

Build a Birdhouse

10:00-11:30AM, Families, \$20 per birdhouse

Hike the Watershed Nature Reserve, examining several bird homes and discovering some of the unique places that birds will build their nests. Then build your own bird house with us, take it home and wait for your new avian neighbors! All children must be accompanied by an adult. Count this activity toward a River-Friendly resident certification.

APRIL 28 - SEPTEMBER 14

Kwel Hoy': We Draw the Line

10:00AM-4:00PM Daily, Adults and Families, Free

Native American communities have taken a leading role in the grassroots movement to protect the environment for future generations. Kwel Hoy': We Draw the Line is an exhibit that introduces visitors to the values and concerns guiding Indigenous environmentalism, testifying to the resilience and courage of Native American communities today. The exhibit on display at the Watershed Center is a collaboration between the Lummi Nation and the Natural History Museum that centers on the Totem Pole Journey, a multi-year Indigenous-led initiative to raise awareness about our shared responsibility to land, water, and people.

SATURDAY, MAY 5

A Year on the Stony Brook – The Watershed Trail

9:30–11:30AM, Adults and Families, ages 6+, Free

Join us as we explore different stretches of the Stony Brook throughout the seasons. On this hike explore the Stony Brook as it rambles along the Watershed Reserve. We will focus on seasonal ecology, meeting a variety of plants and animals, including those that indicate water and environmental quality. Presented with funding from Washington Crossing Audubon Society.

SUNDAY, MAY 20

Watershed 10K/5K Trail Run & Festival

Sunday, 12:00pm, Families (see back cover for details)

Run the 950 acre Watershed Reserve, win cash prizes, and support clean water during our 3rd Annual 10K & 5K Trail Run. Family and friends can cheer you on from the victory village, tour the Watershed Center, and listen to live music. The festival is complete with beer, wine, and hard cider available for purchase as well as delicious food and dessert. Visit exhibits, sponsors, and vendors during this midday outing. Pre-paid childcare is available for runners as well as a free community kids event being held after the race.



Trail runners cruise into the home stretch of our 10K

SATURDAY, JUNE 2

Water Wheelies

9:30AM–12:00PM, Families, ages 8+, \$15 (\$10 for members)

Working with Teacher-Naturalist Vicky Allen, families will explore kinetic energy by building their own experimental waterwheel. Then put on your boots for a hike to the Stony Brook, where we will test our waterwheels for an investigation of water's energy as it turns the blades of our mini hydro-turbines. All materials included. You're guaranteed to get your feet wet!

Programs for Children

SATURDAY, MARCH 24

BSA Sustainability Merit Badge Workshop

9:30AM–12:30PM, Boy Scouts ages 13+, \$25 per scout

Follow up sessions: 7-8PM Tues, May 8 or Mon, May 14

Join Education Director/BSA Merit Badge Counselor Jeff Hoagland for this special two-part workshop designed to help Boy Scouts earn the 'Sustainability' merit badge. During the first session, scouts and parents will tour the Sustainability Trail at the Watershed Center and work on the requirements of this badge. During the second session, with two options available, scouts will review their work with the merit badge counselor.



Property Mgr. Matt Thompson surveys the Watershed Center's green roof - photo by Jake DiPietro

MONDAYS, MARCH 12 | APRIL 9 | MAY 14

Tiny Tot Walks

10:30-11:30AM, ages 18-36months (with an adult)

Class fee per child: \$15 (\$10 for members)

You are never too young to start exploring the outdoors! You and your toddler will experience nature as we share walks on the Reserve, art activities and story time. Tiny Tot walks provide a fun introduction to animals, plants and nature in general. Dress for the weather because we always go outside. Class size is limited, and pre-registration is required. All children must be walking and accompanied by an adult.

MONDAYS, MARCH - MAY

Home School Nature Classes

10:00-11:30AM, Families, ages 5–12

Class fee per child: \$15 (\$10 for members)

We dedicate one Monday per month to families who home school their children. Each month we offer a different topic. Students may be divided into two groups to ensure the activities are age appropriate. Pre-registration is required.

MARCH 26 - Vernal Pools (meets off-site)

APRIL 23 - Water Wonders

MAY 21 - Birds

MONDAY - FRIDAY, APRIL 2 - 6

STREAM into Spring Mini Camp

9:30AM–4:00PM each day, ages 6-12

Daily fee per child: \$100 (\$90 for members)

Sibling and Multi-Day discounts are available. Extended care is available for an extra fee.

Is your school closed for spring break? Spend the week exploring science, technology, reading, engineering, art and math with our Teacher-Naturalists. The Watershed Center and lab is home base and children spend much of each day exploring outdoors. Sign up for one day or all week. Registration deadline is March 20. Call or email tlove@thewatershed.org for a registration packet.

TUESDAYS, APRIL - MAY

Weekly Preschool Nature Classes

10:00-11:30AM Class fee per child: \$15 (\$10 for members)

If you register and pay for the entire series, you can pay for 6 classes and receive the 7th class free.

Children 3-5 years old learn about nature while exploring the out-of-doors with one of our educators. Each class includes outdoor exploration, stories and simple crafts. A parent must stay with any child younger than 4. Class size is limited and pre-registration is required.

APRIL 10 – Fur, Feathers, Skin

APRIL 17 – Spring Green

APRIL 24 – Dandy Dandelions

MAY 1 – Fragile Beginnings

MAY 8 – Wiggly Worms

MAY 15 – Frogs and Toads

MAY 22 – Animal Aerobics



Teacher-Naturalist Sam Bernstein leads a Preschool Nature class - photo by Jessica Sanders

Jug-O-Rum

by Jeff Hoagland

I have lived near water my entire life. I truly have no choice in this matter. Isn't there something wonderful about the smell of marsh grass and the delicious hum of insects on the wing? They create the perfect sense of home. My life is defined by water. And an insatiable appetite. Jug-o-rum.

I spent my childhood in another watershed, at a small horse farm along the Bedens Brook. It was there that I first met pumpkinseed sunfish with their bright, scaly armor. I often found myself in schools of dace who tired me with their nervous pacing upstream, downstream. I watched whirligig beetles in constant pirouette overhead while water boatmen rowed through the depths. I wonder now why I did not eat them.

Those waters suited me just fine but, reaching adulthood, I got the urge to travel. Soaking rains from the remnants of Tropical Storm Bill provided the proper invitation so, right then, around the Summer Solstice of '15, I up and left, eating my way up and over the Mount Rose Ridge. So many small creatures flooded out of home – what a tasty delight. Jug-o-rum.

After this suitable and pleasing adventure I settled south of the ridge, in a small cattail marsh. I briefly enjoyed a rich smorgasborg of insects until a close encounter with a hefty, hungry water snake sent me wandering again. Soon after I discovered the Honey Branch and after days of stop-and-shop dining, moving downstream, I settled here on the north shore of Wargo Pond.

I have many a neighbor here. The day is owned by my feathered friends who spend much of their time aloft in the sky. The song and dance of the tree swallow, the jaunty jazz notes of the song sparrow, and the colorful antics of the red-wing blackbird are all welcome entertainment here. Unwelcome, however, is their propensity for feeding on insects. Jug-o-rum.

A variety of waterfowl call this neighborhood home. The wood duck visits and bedazzles as I slowly rise from my slumber season. The mallards raise their families here, nesting invisibly in the whispering marsh grass. Their larger cousins, the Canada geese, also live here, often forming

boisterous rafts in the evening. While I admire their ability to enjoy this world of water and own the sky as well, I do wish they could do so with more decorum.

At night, many larger creatures come to visit drawn by water's invitation. Graceful white-tailed deer drink from these waters while more ominous creatures also come to hunt. I have lost many offspring to the appetite of coyote, red fox, raccoon. I am a master at finding shelter beneath waterside brambles and have perfected the art of escape. Jug-o-rum.

Likewise and troublesome, I've had many a friend caught unawares by the great blue heron and his friend the great egret. These tall tree-like birds cast a wicked shadow upon the water with their approach. Thus far I have better mastered the art of stillness than these wading birds.

Most curious of all the creatures I've encountered are the humans. Barely awake from my slumber season, I'm greeted by a group of them wading into the marsh, waking me and my kin with their blinding headlamps. I even ended up captured by that one with the gray hairy head and he seemed to delight in showcasing me before my release. Their wide-eyed stares still haunt me. I hear they come back year after year - something they call the Frog Slog. Jug-o-rum.

I've seen swarms of children investigating my pond, rafts of water vessels zigging this way and that, and even grown men casting over and over the most hideous imitations of my pond friends into the water. Yet, at the end of the day, I can't help but feel grateful. Grateful . . . that I live where clean water is valued and protected, not just by all my friends, but by all those humans too. Jug-o-rum.



bullfrogs
force my window open
jug-o-rum

What's Happening in the Royce Brook?

This subwatershed report is a little different from those in other Wellsprings. Go ahead and look through the scorecard. There is a lot that we still don't know about water quality in the Royce Brook! Our water quality assessments are usually based on data collected from StreamWatch volunteers and NJDEP staff, but in this case, there isn't enough data from either source to make a proper characterization of the Royce Brook.

Our data does show that macroinvertebrate communities have been adversely affected, but we don't yet know the cause. A shift in species diversity and composition could be due to poor stream habitat, high turbidity clouding the water column, or low levels of dissolved oxygen. The only way to find out is to monitor the stream – and this is where you come in!

StreamWatch, our Watershed Association's volunteer water quality monitoring program, is launching two new monitoring sites on the Royce Brook in Hillsborough and we need volunteer monitors. After an initial training session, volunteers will be tasked with collecting chemical data from the Royce Brook every month, helping us to build our baseline data set and provide some insight into what is happening in the stream.

It is important to track the water quality in the Royce Brook because almost 18% of its watershed is covered with impervious surfaces. Polluted stormwater flowing from these surfaces harms stream health, so our Science staff has been working with Rutgers Water Resources Extension to design and install green infrastructure, like rain gardens and bioswales, to help alleviate the impact of stormwater.



Scorecard

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Aquatic Life | 🔴 |
| Nitrogen | 💧 |
| Phosphorus | 💧 |
| Dissolved Oxygen | 💧 |
| pH | 💧 |
| Temperature | 💧 |
| Turbidity | 💧 |
| Bacteria | 🔴 |
| Impervious Cover | 🟡 |

Overall Health 💧

Rankings

🟢=Excellent 🟡=Good 🟠=Fair 🔴=Poor

Rain gardens treat and infiltrate a substantial amount of stormwater runoff, especially when regularly maintained. This month, our Watershed Association is launching another new volunteer opportunity for people in and around the Royce Brook watershed to do just that. Working in pairs or groups, volunteers of all ages are invited to help keep the newly-installed rain gardens at the Hillsborough Municipal Center in great condition through weeding and mulching a few times a year. A rain garden maintenance training session will be held in late March for interested volunteers.

Get Involved in the Royce Brook! Whether you are monitoring the quality of the stream or helping to keep stormwater out of it, we could use your help to protect and restore water quality in the Royce Brook. Contact Erin Stretz, Assistant Director of Science and Stewardship, at estretz@thewatershed.org to learn more or visit thewatershed.org/streamwatch.

Acknowledgements

The StreamWatch program is funded by Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc, RBC Blue Water Project, Colgate Palmolive Company, Dodge Foundation, and the New Jersey Water Supply Authority.

Another Summer of Science Ahead



Watershed Nature Camp is a highlight of the year for kids who can't get enough of playing outside with friends, building forts, and searching for critters in the stream. As the camp fills up at record speeds, there is still plenty of fun to be had outdoors. Enter Watershed Science & Stewardship Academy for high school students - a program that connects environmental issues with young creativity.

But students can't have all the fun! The Watershed Science Teacher's Academy is a testament to the fact that educators are eager to get their feet wet in the name of science. This summer, we're doing it all again. Forts, field science, and fun for all.

Science & Stewardship Academy

The Watershed Science and Stewardship Academy classes are week-long environmental investigations for high school students designed to invoke a sense of wonder and inquiry of the natural environment in the context of real-world issues.

Climate Change | JULY 9 - 13

Field Science | JULY 16 - 20

Green Architecture | JULY 23 - 27

Clean Water | JULY 30 - AUG 3

Explore environmental careers alongside professors and professionals through hands-on activities engaged in real scientific techniques and conservation projects.

Learn more online at:

thewatershed.org/academy



Field Science takes students all over NJ

Watershed Science Teachers Academy

In addition to our Science & Stewardship Academy for high school students, we will also be hosting a professional development program for science teachers again this summer. The Watershed Science Teachers Academy is a partnership between the Watershed, Princeton University, Rider University and Raritan Valley Community College.



TeacherPrep
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PROGRAM IN TEACHER PREPARATION



Teachers will learn from Watershed Association scientists, educators and water stewards about the major factors contributing to pollution and the engineering principles behind stormwater management.

Information is available at: **<https://teacherprep.princeton.edu/watershed>**

Helping Plan for the Watershed's Future

Connie and Bill Bauder, longtime residents of Cranbury, have been a part of the Watershed family for more than 25 years. They were first introduced to the Watershed Association in the 1990's, when they participated in a Watershed-led hike along Cranbury Brook. Shortly after that hike, they joined the Watershed Association, and became volunteers for Stream-Watch, our water quality monitoring program.



Muriel Buttinger Legacy Society

Mary Jane Augustine, Esq.
Barbara Baumecker
Connie and Bill Bauder
Beth Behrend
Howard Russel Butler *
Jane L. Buttars and Daniel A. Harris
Elliot Cohen
Brenda and Swep Davis
Anna Drago
James Gambino, Jr.
Meg and Tom Gorrie
Stephanie and Bob Harris
Frank O. Henschel *
James Scott Hill *
Betsy Hoover
Audrey C. Johnson *
Robert C. Johnston *
Sue and Tony Parisi
Richard Peery *
Susan and Cornell Rudov
Jamie Kyte Sapoch
Raymond S. Schuller *
Alice Bishop Shannon *
Doreen Spitzer *
Jim Waltman
Sally Wells
Anne Wieland & Todd D. Gustafson
Myra and Van Williams
Helen Woodruff *

*deceased

As kids, both spent time playing in local streams that connected them with nature. Bill first became aware that water shouldn't be taken for granted when he was enlisted in the U.S. Navy from 1966-1970 and shipped out on many tours of duty, including the Arctic Circle.

"Looking out into that great expanse of water, it struck me how little we had to drink and that we had to make water safe to cook and drink through evaporation, a process that takes the salt and other impurities out of the water," Bill said.

Connie's awareness of the importance of clean water were top priorities during her teaching career as a high school biology and environmental science teacher. She taught her students about fresh water and salt water ecosystems, stressing the importance of unpolluted water for the survival of plants and animals. Using water test kits like those at the Watershed, she taught her students how to test water as they learned what constitutes safe drinking water.

Connie and Bill became more connected to the Watershed Association because of their close relationship with their neighbor's daughters, Amanda and Emily Hardman. Connie and Bill watched as these children enjoyed many years as campers at the Watershed Nature Camp and also as some of the youngest StreamWatch teams. Connie said that watching the kids grow up and eventually become scientists made her realize how big an impact the Watershed has on young people.

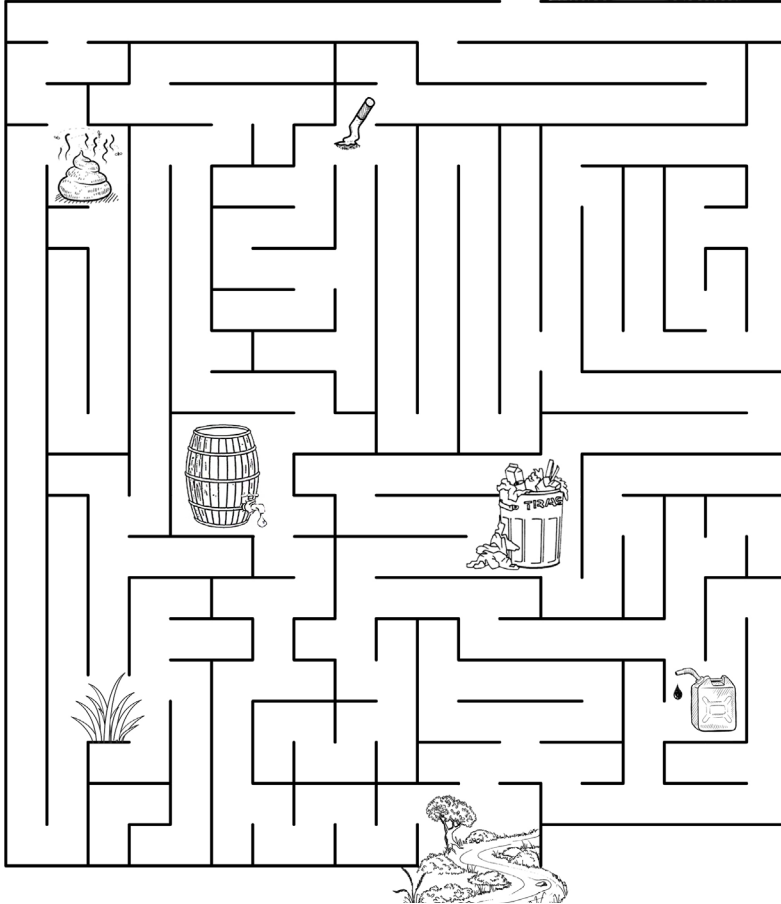
Last year, when the Watershed encouraged its members to think about ways to contribute, Connie and Bill chose to make a bequest to the Watershed Association. They said they want future generations to acquire the connection with nature that they enjoyed in their lifetimes and to become good stewards of our water and land.

Connie and Bill are still very involved in Cranbury Township, attending many planning, zoning, and other meetings because they care about the environmental issues where they live. The Watershed Association is thankful to have members, like the couple, who are vocal advocates and help advance the Watershed's mission in their communities.

If you have designated the Watershed as a beneficiary of your planned giving or if you are interested in learning more about planned giving, please contact Jenny-Ann Kershner at 609-737-3735 ext. 36 or jkershner@thewatershed.org.

Maze of Pollution

The stormwater from the roof of your home has two paths through this maze into the stream below. Find a way to slow the flow of stormwater while avoiding the pollution.



Keeping water clean, safe and healthy is the heart of our mission.

We work to protect and restore our water and natural environment in central New Jersey through conservation, advocacy, science and education.

Visit us online to show your support. Stay informed, get involved, donate.
www.thewatershed.org

Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association
The Watershed Center • 31 Titus Mill Road, Pennington, NJ 08534
609-737-3735 • sbmwa@thewatershed.org



@theH2Oshed



★★★★★
CHARITY NAVIGATOR
Four Star Charity

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Laura Hanson, *Chair*
Scott Sillars, *Vice Chair*
Beth Behrend, *Secretary*
Robert Baldwin Jr., *Treasurer*
Jim Waltman, *Executive Dir.*

Sandra Allen
Patty Cronheim
Emily Firmenich
Deborah Sands Gartenberg
Sophie Glovier
Katharine B. Hackett
Robert Harris, PhD

Carolyn Ryan Healey
Anna Horner
Michael Hornsby
Dinni Jain
Mark S. Nurse
Bernadette Woods Placky
Aaron Schomburg
Catherine Sidamon-Eristoff
Fredric Spar
Gregory Vafis
Daniel J. Van Abs, PhD
Philip Wey, MD
Margaret R. Gorrie,
Trustee Emeritus

STAFF

Jim Waltman,
Executive Director
Kevin Walsh,
Deputy Director
Jeff Hoagland,
Education Director
Jenny-Ann Kershner,
Development Director
Mike Pisauo, Esq.,
Policy Director
Steve Tuorto, PhD,
Science Director

Vicky Allen
Laurie Babicki
Sam Bernstein
Rich Cavallaro
Tyler Christensen
Jennifer Cuevas
Lisa D'Ambrosio
Dom Giglio
Nik Hansen
Pat Heaney
Nicholas Ho
Greg Hunter
Allison Jackson
Kory Kreiseder
Gad Lee
Tammy Love
Lynn McNulty
Suzanne Moran
Rob Nicolaides
Eve Niedergang
Alison Novobilsky
Michelle Perkins
Alan Polk
Pam Podger
Kimber Ray
Tammy Sands
Casey Schott
Tara Slater
Erin Stretz
Matt Thompson
Mike Torres
Korie Vee

ADVISORY BOARD

Kevin Kuchinski, *Co-chair*
Margaret Sieck, *Co-chair*
Mary Jane Augustine, Esq.
William Ayers, PhD
Mary Baum
Nancy Beck
Kathleen Biggins
Ted Bromley
Lori Citrone
Elliot Cohen
Barbara Griffin Cole
Dan Dart
Swep Davis
Anna Drago
Wendy Pierce Evans
Alix Gerry
Peter Gibson
Ed Gwazda
Thomas B. Harvey
Katie Heins
Robert Hillas
The Hon. Rush D. Holt, Jr.
Betsy Hoover
Betty Wold Johnson
Mary Leck, PhD
Richard Levandowski, MD
Wendy Mager
The Rev. David McAlpin
Nelson Obus
Thomas O'Neill
Kim Otis
Betsy Peyton
Candace Preston
Ingrid Reed
Amy Regan
Jamie Kyte Sapoch
Lorraine Sciarra
Dick Scribner
Pete Taft
Ted Thomas
Daphne Townsend
George Vaughn
Jay Vawter
Jack Wallace
Van Zandt Williams
Bob Wolfe



31 Titus Mill Road
Pennington, NJ 08534

Your water. Your environment. Your voice.

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

PERMIT NO.



SUNDAY | MAY 20 | 12PM

WATERSHED TRAIL RUN

10K•5K
Watershed
Trail Run
& Festival

WIN CASH PRIZES | RUN THE RESERVE | SUPPORT CLEAN WATER
THEWATERSHED.ORG/TRAIL-RUN

The poster features a background image of a runner in a green vest and black pants running on a grassy trail through a forest. The text is overlaid on the image, with the event name in large white letters and the date and time in smaller white letters. A circular logo on the right side of the poster contains the text "10K•5K Watershed Trail Run & Festival". At the bottom, there is a line of text about cash prizes and a website URL.