

WELLSPRING

A publication of The Watershed Institute. Keeping central New Jersey's water clean, safe, & healthy since 1949.

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Equipping teenagers to create a brighter environmental future.

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See our newest River-Friendly champions!

The
Watershed
Institute



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Inspiring Generations of Environmental Leaders

by Jim Waltman

I take tremendous pride in knowing that The Watershed Institute has helped launched the careers of many environmental scientists, advocates, and educators. We've taught hundreds of thousands of young people over the last seven decades and for many, their engagement with us was a pivotal experience.

Pamela Silver, PhD, is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Distinguished Professor of Biology at Penn State Behrend. Her research focuses on the ecology of freshwater organisms that live on the bottoms or on surfaces in lakes, streams, and wetlands. Until recently, Silver served as Editor-in-Chief of the esteemed international scientific journal, *Freshwater Science*.

Silver grew up in Harbourton in the 1970s and said, "As a child, I developed a life-long passion for the outdoors and especially for lakes and streams." She credits the Watershed with developing that passion and recalls her high school experiences here as particularly important in crystalizing her thinking.

Christopher Ives, a Watershed camper in the early 1990s, is a forest ecologist and crew leader for a "hotshot" firefighting crew in Durango, Colorado. Ives did research for his Master's Degree on fire mosses, a trio of pioneer species that colonize areas after high-severity burns. His work, which landed a feature spot in NPR's *Earth Notes*, examined these mosses as a restoration tool.

Ives says that his experiences at the Watershed "had a huge influence on me and were instrumental in making me the person I am today; my love of nature, my environmental ethic and my desire to work with others in the outdoors."



Christopher Ives as a boy.

Silver and Ives are just two examples of the many people whose experiences here played a key role in their lives.

The Watershed Academy for High School Students (see p.3) is designed to help students explore their passions—and possible careers—in environmental science, engineering and conservation.

As with a growing number of our education programs, the Watershed Academy is also designed to challenge students to explore solutions to environmental problems—from engineering systems to address polluted runoff to designing more sustainable buildings to learning about policy solutions and how to be an effective environmental advocate.

Our interactions with high school students are not a simple one-way street, however. We learn as much from these students as they do from us. And as Swedish activist Greta Thunberg has demonstrated, young people are often our movement's most effective communicators.

Our job is to equip these students as best we can, support them, and hope that they find the same kind of spark that previous generations of students have experienced at the Watershed.

[Please join us at an upcoming program or Academy and stay in touch so we can learn about your own career trajectories.]

Program Sparks Student Engagement

As fires burn hundreds of acres in the West, snowstorms bury the Rockies and floods engulf the South simultaneously, the harsh realities of climate change prompt today's students to search for real solutions to global warming and widespread environmental degradation.

Students in the Watershed Academy for High School Students learn about answers to some of today's most pressing environmental issues as they engage in field research and participate in conservation projects. These weeklong summer courses spark curiosity, instill passion and provide opportunities for students to explore research and career options.



Students inspect and identify stream samples in the Watershed Lab during the Clean Water Academy.

For example, during an Academy course on climate change, students channeled their energies into exploration and action. They learned about green energy and other technological advances such as soil carbon storage and emissions control from Princeton University engineers. In a Sept. 20 *Los Angeles Times* article, some of these students voiced hope after they learned about hydrogen cells that power homes and cars as well as some green architecture techniques that save water and energy. Some participated in the global Friday Climate Strike.

Summer 2020 will feature six Watershed Academy choices that immerse students in outdoor settings as they identify and design solutions to problems explored in the Stream Science, Climate Change, Environmental Field Science, Clean Water, Green Architecture and Environmental Advocacy offerings.

“Students are the change agents and we want them to discover skills needed to create better outcomes on vexing environmental issues,” said Jim Waltman, Executive Director of the Watershed. “Not only will they gain a deeper understanding of the urgent issues and solutions, they will develop the tools needed to advocate for policy changes.”

Along coastal waterways, Academy students last summer removed micro plastics from the water and beaches to improve wildlife habitat. Learning outside, exploring topics in the lab, and diving into environmental science with field trips were some highlights for last summer's students. The Watershed Institute exposes students to practical solutions for improving water quality, like installing floating wetlands to absorb nutrients from a polluted lake.

Giancarlo Grullon, 15, of Trenton said he gained a broad overview on “climate change, things like hydrogen fuel cells, how greenhouse gases affect our environment, and how we need to stop climate change before it gets too hot.” One Academy student wrote in the Stream Science survey, “It helped further inspire me to get involved in stream health/biology and gave me a really good foundation of information.” Added another Academy student, “I hope I'll be better prepared for environmental coursework and potential volunteering and job opportunities.”



Registration for our summer Watershed Academy opens to members on January 6, 2020 at thewatershed.org/academy.

Faster than Me - The Sound of Thin Ice

by Jeff Hoagland

Growing up, winter was a game of wait and wonder. We waited for the next approaching storm. Would it be a direct hit, blanketing us in snow, or just a glancing blow? Would it be cold enough? Would school be canceled? We waited for the deep freeze. Would it rescue our one-eyed snowman? Would it preserve the sledding runs, in the neighborhood and in the park? Would it lay down enough ice on the pond for another season of skating?

In childhood, we find magic all around us. If you are lucky you have found a way to preserve that viewpoint throughout your life. The big magic in winter is simply water, in a solid form – snow, sleet, ice. Water is the only substance on our planet that exists in all three states – liquid, solid, gas - in ambient temperatures. When water is in a solid form, things can get interesting. And fun. Fun, like sledding, snowballs, snowmen, snow forts, snow angels and ice skating.

Before I ever thought about driving, ice was one of my favorite winter phenomena. Overnight, as if by magic, glistening ice feathers grow and arc across old storm windows. Out on the trail, needles and columns of ice form, giving voice to the soil. Hoarfrost and frost flowers adorn the dry, still vegetation. When admiring these features, you have to be careful that your breath doesn't melt them away.

In my youth, ice-storms added drama to winter, transforming the landscape into a slippery playground of light. The silver maple was winter-pruned, some of its branches unable to bear the weight of the ice and crashing to the ground. More pliable, the birch trees bowed in perfect arcs, their tops touching the ground. They would never stand straight again. As the temperature warmed, shards of ice would cascade through the branches to the ground, offering a most unique music. On more than one occasion, ice-storms coated the snow cover with such thickness that we ice skated across our lawns.

Ice skating more typically was limited to certain bodies of water which usually required a car ride. Skates tied over my shoulder, I hiked to Neiderer's Pond, in Washington Crossing State Park, just once, though I skated there numerous times. It usually hosted a gathering of local children and families. Buckman's Pond, in Washington Crossing Historic Park in Pennsylvania, drew people from all over the Delaware Valley.



Ice rarely freezes uniformly. Within just a few feet, ice can vary drastically from one inch thick to over a foot.

In high school we skated at a friend's house. Ken Cook lived on a farm, soybeans as a front yard, and Curlis Lake out back. We played ice hockey, our winter boots as goals, across a large expanse of the lake. Once we found a deer, frozen solid, its antlers above the ice. It made a horrible miscalculation. Not far from that spot I was chased by cracking ice after I skated too close to the inlet.

When we weren't enjoying the spirit of competition or the rush of speed skating, the frozen water was simply enchanting. You could skip a stone, any stone, forever. It took absolutely no skill but produced the most memorable sound as it bounced across the frozen surface. The pond itself has a winter voice as the ice settles and shifts.

We searched for window ice, formed by a sudden, deep, unrelenting freeze. Through the clear ice we gazed beneath us hoping to spy sunfish, or bass, or even a turtle. We marveled at a large bullfrog sprawled above the mud below us, wondering if he was alive. Until he kicked, and glided out of view.

I still enjoy the magic of winter. Every season has its charms. Loving winter isn't reserved for childhood though having a winter break certainly enhances the relationship. I will look for you, out there, this winter, celebrating our place on this planet. We will celebrate water in all its forms – as our words drift out of our mouths as clouds; as we leave our stories in the snow; as the meltwater sings its way back to the sea. Slow down – the water cycle does.

Winter 2019 Calendar

Explore some winter fun with The Watershed Institute! Join our programs & events with the whole family. Be a part of the magic that makes our work so special. Clean water and a healthy environment depend on you.

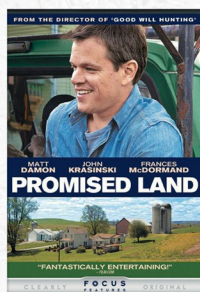
Visit us online to register for events, renew your membership, and automatically receive member discounts securely from any device. Pre-registration is required. Programs with low registration are subject to cancellation. Watershed members receive 20% off most programs when signed in.

thewatershed.org/events

SUNDAYS | JAN 5, FEB 2, MAR 1

First Sunday Environmental Film Series

1:00PM, General Audience; Free - Walk-ins welcome
Visit thewatershed.org/films to learn more about upcoming screenings at the Watershed Center. This year's lineup includes: Tomorrow (2017), Promised Land (2013), The Pollinators (2019).



Enjoy free, locally sourced popcorn with your movie!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

Welcome Winter Walk

9:30-11:30AM, General Audience, ages 6+; Free
Join Education Director Jeff Hoagland on a morning walk at the Mountain Lakes Preserve in Princeton to explore the wonders of the natural world in winter. Discover the unique survival strategies of local plants and animals, learn where animals store food and how they survive the season's relentless chill. Dress warmly; boots are recommended. Presented in partnership with the Friends of Princeton Open Space and co-sponsored by the Washington Crossing Audubon Society.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

Summer Camps & Academies Open House #2

10:00AM-12:00PM, General Audience; Free
Drop into the Watershed Center to learn more about Watershed Nature Camp and the Watershed Academy for High School Students! Meet the directors of each of these programs, ask questions, and learn about how to register. Registration for open house is not required.

FRIDAYS | JAN 10, 31, & FEB 7

In Search of Owls

7:00-8:30PM, General Audience, ages 8+; \$10 per person
Begin the evening indoors with a presentation that will introduce you to owls, their calls, and their adaptations. After an Educator-led night hike in search of the nocturnal raptors, we will warm up indoors with a hot beverage. Three dates available; please sign up for one date only.

SATURDAYS | JAN 11, FEB 8, MAR 14

Nature & Body Connection through Movement

10:00-11:30AM, Adults; \$20 per person
Start the day by engaging mindfully with nature and your body through movement. Re-establish a deeper connection with the land and then we move inside for a gentle yoga flow focused on choice making and interoception. No prior yoga experience necessary. Bring a mat. Simona Lederman is a registered yoga teacher, a certified trauma-sensitive facilitator (TCTSY-F), a Certified Kripalu Mindful Outdoor Guide, and a Forest School teacher.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

Weaving Winter Water Tales

7:00-8:00PM, General Audience, ages 7+; Free

Step away from the screen, cozy up and listen to our storytellers spin yarns from several cultures. Spark your imagination with stories both funny and poignant. Enjoy a hot beverage indoors around a 'magical campfire' as you lend an ear to stories from far and near. Co-sponsored by the Washington Crossing Audubon Society.

THURSDAYS | JAN 23, 30, FEB 6, 13

Literary Language of Nature - EcoPoetry

7:30-9:00PM, Adults, \$75 per person for the series

What is happening to nature writing under the inescapable pressures of climate change and environmental crisis? In this NEW course, with Winifred Hughes Spar, explore our evolving human relationship with the natural world through the eyes of contemporary poets. Discover mid-twentieth-century awakenings to current issues of environmental justice, biocentrism, and "the end of nature."

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Groundhog Day Celebration

10:00AM-11:30PM, General Audience; \$5 per person

Join Watershed Wally the Woodchuck as we celebrate winter and look forward to the return of spring. Learn all about groundhogs, enjoy a hike to a groundhog hole, play the hibernation game, and try your hand at chucking wood with a catapult or trebuchet. Warm yourself by our campfire and enjoy some treats on this festive winter morning.



A group enjoys a guided hike about groundhogs.

SATURDAYS | FEBRUARY 1 & 8

Winter Weed Collage Relief Workshop

1:00-3:30PM each day, Adults; \$160 per person

Join us for this unique two-part workshop as we partner with The Seward Johnson Atelier! The first part takes place at The Watershed Institute, where we explore weeds, trees, and other plants in winter. We will collect and assemble our collages. The second part takes place at TSJA where you will take part in the devesing of your sand mold and observe the pouring of your aluminum relief!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Great Backyard Bird Count

9:30AM-10:30AM, General Audience, ages 6+; Free

Anyone (yes, you!) can participate in this annual event by helping us count and identify birds. We will be participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), which is a citizen-science project that helps ornithologists take a snapshot of bird populations. Our Educators will guide you through the whole process from the comfort of our Discovery Room! Bring binoculars if you have them. Co-sponsored by the Washington Crossing Audubon Society.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Winter Fairy Festival

11:00AM-1:00PM, Children; \$10 per child (free under 2)

Come celebrate the mystical creatures of the winter Watershed! We will dance, play magical games, listen to winter tales, and create fairy art. Then, venture outside if you wish for some winter wonder exploration too! Dress in fairy attire for indoor activities and/or in winter gear for outdoors.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Animal Tracks and Trail Cameras

9:30AM-12:00PM, General Audience; ages 8+, \$5 pp

On this family hike, learn to identify the tracks, trails and signs of our resident mammals. Discover how to "think like an animal," understanding their movements across the landscape. We will view some recent photos from our camera 'traps' for an extraordinary view of local wildlife.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Maple Sugaring Scout Event

1:00-3:00PM, General Audience; \$5 per scout

Come individually or with your troop to discover the science and folklore of maple sugaring! Visit our sugarbush, practice drilling a tree tap, learn how syrup is made, and of course taste our own homegrown maple syrup. Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts are welcome.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Woodcock Watch

6:00-7:00PM, General Audience; 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, FEBRUARY 29

Maple Sugar Brunch

9:30-11:30AM or 11:00AM-1:00PM, General Audience;
\$22 per adult, \$15 per child ages 3-13, (free under 3)

Join us for this sweet and popular annual event. Discover the history, folklore and science of maple sugaring. Take part in our taste test and head out to our trees to learn how they are tapped. The highlight of the morning is a delicious pancake brunch, served with real maple syrup.

WEDNESDAYS | MAR 11, 18, 25 & APR 8, 15, 22
+ SATURDAYS | MAR 21, APR 11 & 25 (TRIPS)

Understanding and Identifying the Birds of New Jersey

7:30-9:00PM, Adults; \$245 per person

This intensive and enlightening course returns for a fifth year! Get ready for the song of spring by learning about our feathered neighbors. Examine their evolution, morphology and taxonomy, while discovering their behavior, habits and habitats. Identify bird neighbors on several field trips and learn about bird conservation. Includes three Saturday morning field trips, to Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, the Watershed Reserve, and Rogers Wildlife Refuge. Trips may be re-scheduled based on weather. Instructed by Luke K. Butler, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Biology, at The College of New Jersey

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

World Water Day Festival

10:00AM-2:00PM, General Audience; \$5 pp for ages 4+

Save the Date for our celebration of world water day. Join in the Water Olympics, become a River-Friendly Resident, explore life in the Brook with our microscopes, take the water taste challenge and much more.



Stormwater Specialist Kory Kreiseder demonstrates permeable pavement to Board Chair Scott Sillars.

TUESDAYS | DEC - MAR

Toddler Nature Class

10:00-11:00AM, Children, ages 18-36mo.; \$10 per child

Start 'em young! Toddler Nature Classes provide a fun introduction to animals, plants and nature in general. You and your toddler will experience nature together as we share a song, a story, and a walk outside. Dress for the weather because we always go outside! Children must be accompanied by an adult.

TUESDAYS | DEC - MAR

Preschool Nature Class

10:00-11:30AM, Children, ages 3-5; \$10 per child

Get wild with us weekly, as we learn about a variety of nature topics! Each class includes outdoor exploration, stories and a craft. Dress for the weather because we always go outside. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Homeschool Nature Classes

**** NEW FORMAT **** Join us each semester for 8 weekly classes (3 classes per bridge) that deeply investigate a topic. Classes include informational classroom-style presentation and outdoor investigation. Parents must stay on the property and are encouraged to let their children participate in the class independently. Dress for the weather of the day. If there are fewer than 6 students per age group, the groups may be combined.

TUESDAYS | JAN 7, 14, 21, 28, FEB 4, 11, 18, 25

9:30-11:30 AM, Children, ages 6-9 & 10-13,
\$105 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

WINTER SEMESTER: SURVIVAL

This semester will cover survival basics, shelter, fire, water, cordage and knots, navigation, what not to wear, and a survival challenge day.

TUES | MAR 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, APR 14, 21, 28

9:30 - 11:30 AM, Children, Ages 6-9 & ages 10-13,
\$105 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

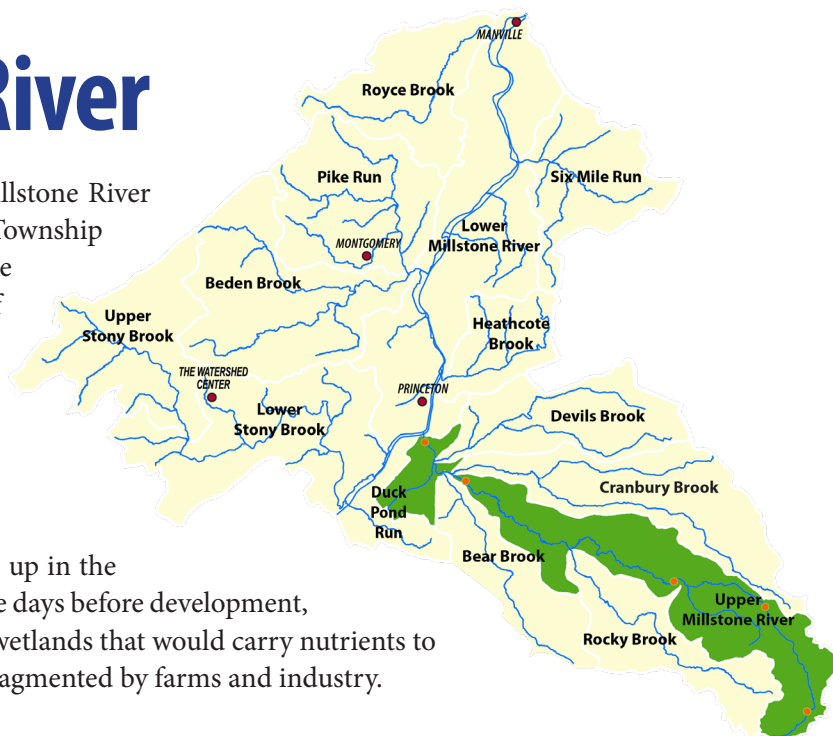
SPRING SEMESTER: ASTRONOMY

This semester will cover the solar system, the moon, constellations, galaxies, the sun, moving objects, telescopes and optics, and humans in space.

Upper Millstone River

The Upper Millstone River is a segment of the Millstone River that stretches from its headwaters in Millstone Township to where it meets the Stony Brook at Carnegie Lake in Princeton. This subwatershed includes areas of Cranbury, East and West Windsor, Plainsboro and Monroe. What happens to the land and water in this subwatershed affects hundreds of thousands of residents downstream as the Millstone makes its way to the Raritan River.

The Millstone River begins as a spring that percolates up in the coastal plain geology of East-Central New Jersey. In the days before development, this spring would flow through a network of miles of wetlands that would carry nutrients to native plants and wildlife. Today, these wetlands are fragmented by farms and industry.



Millstone River, West Windsor, May 2019

The StreamWatch sampling site at its headwaters has been monitored by the Millstone Township Environmental Commission for 12 years. This site has shown consistently poor pH, phosphate and dissolved oxygen scores, affecting the water quality for miles downstream.

In addition to ongoing problems with water chemistry, the Upper Millstone has also suffered from significant increases in fecal contamination that correspond to the recent increases in rainfall we have seen statewide. As heavy stormwater runoff sweeps across lawns and developed areas, it collects waste contaminants, chemical fertilizers, and other pollutants on the way to our streams.

StreamWatch volunteer Ted Chase has been collecting bacterial samples at the Millstone River near Carnegie Lake in Plainsboro for four years. In that time, levels of E. coli have increased dramatically. In 2018, a year of record rainfall, E. coli at Ted's site exceeded the state standard for healthy streams 50% of the weeks it was measured.

The Watershed Institute continues to advocate for better stormwater management and advancements in agricultural practices to protect and restore water quality in the Upper Millstone subwatershed. You can support our initiatives for stormwater utilities and restoration projects in our region by volunteering or becoming a member.

Scorecard

Aquatic Life	Yellow
Nitrogen	Orange
Phosphorus	Red
Dissolved Oxygen	Red
pH	Red
Temperature	Green
Turbidity	Yellow
Bacteria	Red
Impervious Cover	Orange

Overall Health Orange

Rankings

Green=Excellent Yellow=Good Orange=Fair Red=Poor

Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to StreamWatch volunteers Ted Chase, Karuna Lynne Elson, Ken and Jackie Johnson, Jessie Liang, Doug Lischick and the Millstone Twp. Environmental Commission, and Barbara Zajac for monitoring the Upper Millstone subwatershed. Generous funding for the StreamWatch program is provided by Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc, and the New Jersey Water Supply Authority.

Pipelines on Pause

State regulators and a federal court have blocked two proposed gas pipeline projects that would traverse central New Jersey—at least temporarily.

The Watershed Institute and other environmental groups oppose the proposed PennEast Pipeline and Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE) because of the harm they would do to water and the environment. With the recent rulings, the groups are more hopeful than ever that the projects will be defeated.

PennEast would run 120-miles from northeastern Pennsylvania to Mercer County, damaging numerous streams and lands that were supposedly preserved from development. NESE would transport natural gas from Pennsylvania through New Jersey to consumers in New York City; the project threatens to pollute Raritan Bay and other waterways and would require a compressor station be built in Franklin Township that would involve cutting down forests, crossing streams and harming wetlands. Neither project is necessary to meet New Jersey's energy needs.



A pipeline project after clearing and staging phases.

In order for the PennEast pipeline to move ahead, the company must condemn parts of about 40 properties that were preserved by the state of New Jersey. Both pipelines would need to meet state water quality standards and win approval from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) before they could proceed.

NJDEP rejected applications from both pipeline companies on the grounds that the applications were incomplete, but both companies resubmitted their proposals. In September, the federal Third Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that PennEast cannot condemn lands preserved by the state. The Court found that the 11th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution preserves state sovereignty against such action and that those protections were not altered by the federal Natural Gas Act or by the certificate that Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) granted the project several years ago. This is the first time an appellate court has made such a decision.



Watershed exec. director Jim Waltman speaks at an Aug. press conference urging NJDEP to deny PennEast permits.

In October, NESE's sponsor (the Williams Transco company) withdrew three permit applications with NJDEP—presumably because it thought the applications would be rejected for a second time. The company indicated that it would resubmit permit applications again.

With New Jersey and other states starting to push back against proposed pipelines, pipeline companies are turning to the federal government in an attempt to override state decisions. Their strategy appears to be having an impact. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to narrow the scope of what may be considered for review by state regulators under the federal Clean Water Act. The EPA is likely to try to curtail what states may review and grant FERC the power to override a state's decision. The Watershed will object to these proposals, which would significantly impact a state's primary right to regulate and protect its waterways.

Great Organizations Lead By Example

Congratulations to Meadow Lakes Senior Living Community (East Windsor) and Chapin School Princeton for their recent River-Friendly certifications! Both organizations achieved River-Friendly certification by meeting standards that encourage environmental stewardship in our local communities.



The Chapin School rain garden after a storm.

Businesses, such as Meadow Lakes, must meet an array of standards such as tracking and evaluating their use of chemicals, pesticides and de-icing materials. Meadow Lakes also installed floating wetlands to reduce nutrient loads in their water bodies, planted a riparian buffer, and more.



Floating wetlands deployed at Meadow Lakes.

The River-Friendly program offers certification for schools, businesses, golf courses, and residents. All River-Friendly programs focus on the four foundational principles of water quality management, water conservation, wildlife habitat enhancement, and education and outreach.

In the River-Friendly certification process, schools concentrate on teaching students about water and environmental topics, as well as taking optional steps to improve stewardship of their campuses. Chapin School Princeton installed a rain garden on their property, engaged students in an organic garden, and drastically reduced their pesticide use.



After some months, the vegetation on the wetlands flourished!



Thanks to Meadow Lakes and Chapin School for becoming River-Friendly certified and leading our communities by example! *To learn more about the River-Friendly program, visit www.njriverfriendly.org!*



Did You Know... an inch of rain can equal 10 inches of snowfall? All that snow precipitates the use of over 22 million tons of road salt in the U.S. each year. (That's 130+lbs of salt per person!) Many cities dump plowed snow into waterways or pay to melt it!

Mental Floss | "15 Surprising Facts About Winter Weather" - www.mentalfloss.com/article/89881/15-surprising-facts-about-winter-weather

Wandering Winter Tracks

Draw a line to match the critters with their tracks in the snow.



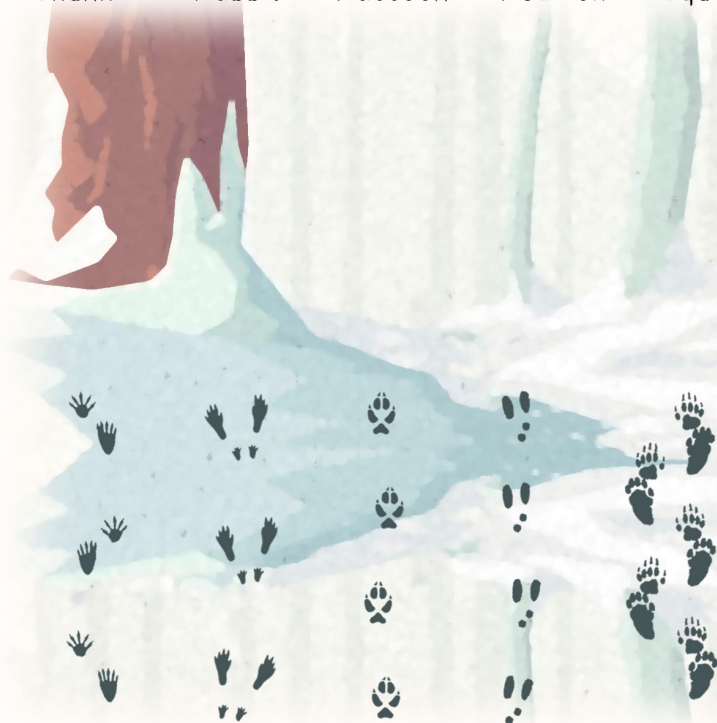
Skunk

Rabbit

Raccoon

Red Fox

Squirrel



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.
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Answer Key | Tracks from left to right:
 Raccoon, Squirrel, Fox, Rabbit, Skunk



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Watershed Nature Camp

and

Watershed Academy

Programs
for ages
5-18

Brand new
adventures
every year!



Online registration opens for members on January 6

thewatershed.org/camp