



APWC Newsletter

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2023 Meetings will be held at 7pm on: January 17, March 21, May 16, July 18, September 19, and November 21. **Please note meetings may be via zoom or in person We will announce before each one!**

EV PETITION UPDATE!!!!!!!

As of January 3, 2022, DEP added Aquashicola Creek, from the source in Hamilton Township to confluence with Buckwha Creek in Lower Towamensing Township, as Exceptional Value on the Existing Use list! We started working on the petition in 2008, submitted to DEP in September 2010, and were approved for final study in December 2010. DEP was kept up to date on any changes in the watershed, such as Alpine Rose Racetrack being defeated, and the discovery of a species of dragonfly verified that was never seen in Pennsylvania (Brook Snaketail). It was a long time coming, but worth the effort. Thanks to all that wrote letters of support, including many conservation groups. Clean Air Council helped with a huge push for more support and press in the recent years. *We did it!*

A Message from the Secretary:

Greetings Members, Friends, and Protectors of our watersheds! We hope that this communication finds you safe and well. I must (yet again) apologize for an overdue newsletter. Life is good but very busy. Getting the time to put together a newsletter is often hard to find. But I feel that having environmentally-centered goals makes for days that are never boring, and a life that feels meaningful. As usual, APWC has several “irons in the fire”. Hope you enjoy these updates on our current projects!

Please Help Save Camp Trexler!

Trexler Scout Reservation has been a Scouting Camp for nearly a century, since decorated war hero General Harry C. Trexler donated the property to the Boy Scouts in 1927. Camp Trexler opened to the Scouts in 1928. This historic 755-acre parcel in Polk and Chestnuthill Townships contains pristine woodlands, multiple springs, and two lakes-one of which is the headwaters of Middle Creek. Part of the Pohopoco Watershed is on this property, hence our interest in the Camp. The current situation is that Camp Trexler is in danger of being sold for development. In March 2022, the governing body of our local Boy Scouts of America (BSA), the Minsi Trails Council (MTC), published a letter stating that it plans to consolidate all of its camping facilities at Camp Minsi. They intend to sell off some of their properties, including Camp Trexler, in order to provide the \$2.6 million contribution required by the BSA national chapter 11 bankruptcy and cover other debts. They intend for camping activities to be at both sites until 2024, which is when all camping will be at Camp Minsi only. There are currently several buyers interested in Camp Trexler, including some developers. The Camp could be clear-cut, turned into tract housing, or possibly warehouses. Our focus here is to

persuade MTC to consider only conservation-minded buyers such as Land Trusts, the PA State Park System or Gamelands, etc. Environmentally minded APWC finds it appalling that MTC would even consider selling the historic Trexler Scout Reservation to a developer.

Harry Trexler was a well-known philanthropist in the Lehigh Valley and surrounding area. Though he was primarily a businessman, he also understood and deeply cared about the natural world and its' importance in the web of life. Because of this, he established Trexler Nature Preserve and donated the land which became Camp Trexler. These impacts are still bettering our lives today. It would be a travesty to disregard what General Trexler felt so passionately about, and hypocritical to sell a historic Scouting Camp to a for profit developer!

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contact MTC and tell them that selling Camp Trexler to a developer is a BAD idea-that the camp should be kept in preservation. We have enclosed a flier for you to use. This information is also a link on APWC's website. There is lots more info on this topic on the web as well. See also www.savecamptrexler.org

Thank You for your support!!

Recent Events

Monroe County Master Watershed Stewards had a strong presence at the Fall Festival at Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge on October 8th. The weather was nice and the turnout was great! Our Stewards had a table equipped with an "Enviroscape". This is a table-top model of a landscape which shows how storm water runoff collects pollutants and carries them into streams and lakes. It explains point and non-point sources of water pollution, along with the water cycle. Enviroscape is a valuable learning tool for better understanding of watersheds and the threats to clean water. We also handed out other watershed related educational materials, and generally brought environmental and water quality topics to the forefront.

MWS also helped at the Fall Fest down in Cherry Creek introducing folks to macroinvertebrates. There was actual in stream collection of "macros" and discussion as to what they are, their role in the life cycle of these insects, and the significance of finding them in a stream or not, i.e. their indication of water quality. Plus, their role as fish food and how they break up leaf packs that collect in streams in the fall. ***Thanks to everyone who helped that day!***

2023 Master Watershed Steward Training

Monroe County MWS will be holding classes starting March 8. We are up to 31 volunteers and have contributed 5,562 hours of volunteer time valued at \$166,597 by IRS standards. Stewards have educated 1,422 adults and youth at community outreach events. Stewards are in every watershed group in Monroe County, and they are starting a pilot program with Stroud Township that involves outfall inspections, looking for illicit discharges. This helps Stroud fulfill one of their MS4 requirements and reduces the expense of hiring engineers to do the inspections. For an overview of the program:

https://psu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/MWS_Program_Information_Sessionhow_stormwater_runoff_collects_and_carries_pollutants_into_rivers_and_lakes.Participants_learned_n_Fall2021/1_10pw62e4

If you wish to apply:

https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eLhq9J1HsIFhpzf

Carbon County has a BIG WIN at the Polls!

A referendum in Carbon County was on the ballot this November 8th. The question to voters was whether the county should borrow up to \$10 million over the next 20 years to be used for land preservation. The money can *only* be used to buy land to protect water resources, forested areas, working farms. These lands will be preserved as open space for generations to come. This is a huge win for farmers, water quality, and wildlife habitat! There is a trend recently for municipalities across the state to approve similar bonds as people see the negative results of human activities such as over development, the exponential growth of warehouses, fracking, etc. For example, in 1998 Monroe County voters approved a bond of \$25 million. County Commissioners there voted to borrow an additional \$11 million. And because of these funds, they were able to leverage an additional \$78 million for other sources!

It should be noted that the referendum in Carbon County last month passed with a nearly 83% approval rating!! There were over 21,000 “YES” votes in favor and only 4,394 “No” votes. This clearly shows overwhelming public support for environmental preservation. Cost to the average property owner will only be an additional \$22 *per year* in taxes, or \$1.80 per month. The money in this fund will enable Carbon County to obtain matching grants from federal, state, and private sources. The result could be actually \$20 million or more used to protect open space. The referendum still needs the approval of the three county Commissioners: Rocky Ahner, Chris Lukasevich, and Wayne Nothstein. We are hopeful that they will follow the will of the voters and establish the program. An advisory committee of residents will have to be established to decide where to spend the funds.

The campaign to educate the voters was a grassroots effort by Carbon County Citizens for Water, Farms, and Land. The group understands that there has to be development, but they want to strike a balance by protecting some open space proactively. APWC wishes to give a shout-out to everyone who worked on the campaign and who sat at the polls on November 8th in an effort to make sure that voters did not go in with misinformation about what this entails.

We Thank You So Much!! Great job done!!

The Trouble With Road Salt

By Al Barney

The first thing is that as a motorist driving in the winter I am thankful to see snowplows clearing the roads and applying salt! However, did you wonder how they know how much to apply? Is it too much? It turns out after applying rock salt for some fifty to seventy years it is causing damage. Some of the streams in the Delaware River Basin close to major urban areas are saltier than the ocean! Not only is it damaging streams and all the organisms within but it is also affecting drinking water. It is also damaging road surfaces, bridges, and buried pipes carrying water and natural gas as well as your automobile.

How are we aware of the impact? Well if you don't maintain and clean your vehicle you will soon find out. It will rust the same as bridges and other critical infrastructure. Streams on the other hand need to be measured. How is it being measured and by whom? Local watershed groups like APWC are working with the Stroud Water Research Center to maintain and collect data from stream sensors. The measurement we are using is electrical conductivity and measured in microsiemens (uS) per centimeter. Some streams have measured as high as 58000 uS which is higher than seawater! A normal reading would be between 100 – 250 uS! Although we have not seen increases like more urban areas our local streams are being affected!

What to do? **A measured approach to the application of road salt!** Some states are using diluted salt solutions called brine to treat roads. New plow designs and the use of anti skid materials such as screenings and sand will help! It is critical that we act to protect our streams and drinking water!

U.S. rivers are spiking more fevers. Heat waves can cause trouble for wildlife and water quality

BY JUDE COLEMAN, www.sciencenews.org. November 19, 2022

U.S. rivers are getting into hot water. The frequency of river and stream heat waves is on the rise, a new analysis shows. Like marine heat waves, riverine heat waves occur when water temperatures creep above their typical range for five or more days. Using 26 years of U.S. Geological Survey data, ecosystem ecologist Spencer Tassone and colleagues compiled daily temperatures for 70 sites in rivers and streams across the United States. The team then calculated how many days each site experienced a heat wave per year. From 1996 to 2021, the annual average number of heat wave days per river climbed from 11 to 25, the researchers report October 3 in *Limnology and Oceanography Letters*. The study is the first assessment of heat waves in rivers across the country, says Tassone, of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. His team tallied nearly 4,000 heat wave events (the number of events jumped from 82 in 1996 to 198 in 2021) that amounted to more than 35,000 heat wave days. The frequency of extreme heat increased at sites above reservoirs and in free-flowing conditions but not below reservoirs—perhaps because dams release cooler water downstream.

Human-caused global warming plays a role in riverine heat waves, the team says, with heat waves partially tracking air temperatures. Additional factors are probably also driving the trend. For example, less precipitation and lower water volume in rivers mean waterways warm up easier.

Compared with a gradual increase in temperature, sudden heat waves can have a greater impact on river-dwelling plants and animals by quickly pushing them past their thermal tolerance, Tassone says. Salmon and trout are particularly sensitive to heat waves because the animals rely on cold water to get enough oxygen, regulate their body temperature and spawn. There are chemical consequences to heat waves as well, says Sujay Kaushal, a hydrologist at the University of Maryland in College Park who was not involved in the work. Higher temperatures can speed up chemical reactions that contaminate water, in some cases contributing to toxic algal blooms. Most heat waves with temperatures that were the highest above typical ranges occurred outside of summer, between December and April, pointing to warmer wintertime conditions, Tassone says. The findings can be used as a springboard to help mitigate heat waves in the future, Kaushal says, such as by increasing shade cover from trees or managing stormwater. In some rivers, beaver dams show promise for reducing water temper-

"You can actually do something about this," he says.

Article contributed by Charlie Ogle

In Conclusion:

We hope you continue to support APWC and our efforts to protect our water resources. Please renew your membership and help get out the word about our small but feisty group! Wishing You All Healthy and Happy Holidays!!

PROTECT YOUR DRINKING WATER-PROTECT YOUR WATERSHED