

May 2006
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Issue 1



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The mission of the Conservancy is to promote a better understanding of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed and its ecosystems and to protect, restore and enhance the watershed through proper management and watershed stewardship.

Public Meeting - June 3 - Peter Wulfhorst

IMPORTANT - There has been discussion lately about the possible residential development across from the Walker Lake community on Twin Lakes Road. Any residential development in this part of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed could have impacts on the quality of Walker Lake.

On **Saturday, June 3, at 10 am at the Walker Lake Clubhouse** representatives from the developers of the 300 acre parcel on Twin Lakes Road will present information on their development plans at a Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy public meeting. The Conservancy is planning the meeting to be an educational meeting that will provide the residents of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed with information on the proposed development and how it might impact our watershed.

If you want to know what development potentially might take place on a remaining large tract of land in our watershed, it is important for you to attend the meeting.

President's Message - Peter Wulfhorst

The Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy has been busy this winter trying to address stormwater runoff issues in our watershed. The Conservancy has submitted a Growing Greener Grant to the PA Department of Environmental Protection to design and permit Best Management Practices at 2 of the priority stormwater runoff sites in Walker Lake. We hope to know whether our application will be funded by July.

With regard to what you can do to prevent nonpoint source pollution to our streams and lakes, we are encouraged that many residents have started to address the maintenance of their on-lot septic systems. Several metal tanks have been replaced with newer concrete tanks and there has been an increase in people having their tanks pumped out. Pumping out your septic tanks on a regular basis is the best preventive measure you can take to prevent septic system malfunctions.

In this newsletter, you will see a report on our 2005 water quality monitoring. All the activities the Conservancy undertakes including sending out newsletters requires some financial commitment. When the Conservancy first started in 2000, we saw a large number of residents join the Conservancy. Over the last several years, we have seen our membership numbers decrease. If you are one of the people who made a financial contribution to the Conservancy in the beginning, but not lately, won't you consider making a contribution in 2006.

We hope to see you at our next public meeting.

Environmental Monitoring - Summer 2005 - Joyce Laudise

The Conservancy spent \$1100 for monitoring Big Twin Lake, Little Twin Lake and Walker Lake in 2005. Volunteers collected samples in June, July, August and September. We are grateful to Pat and Chet Dawson, Peg Bruton, John Laudise and Matt Warden who helped with the monitoring. Joe Messineo repaired the equipment used to collect underwater samples thus saving us from having to purchase new equipment.

The volunteers collected water samples and used the secchi disk to record the clarity of the water and the probe to record water temperature and dissolved oxygen. The samples and the on site data sheets were delivered to FX Browne at Marshalls Creek by volunteer Bill Andrews. Total phosphorus and chlorophyll *a* were measured in the FX Browne Laboratory. Knowing the measurements of clarity, dissolved oxygen, total phosphorus and chlorophyll *a* one can calculate a Carlson Trophic State for each lake. FX Browne compiled the report.

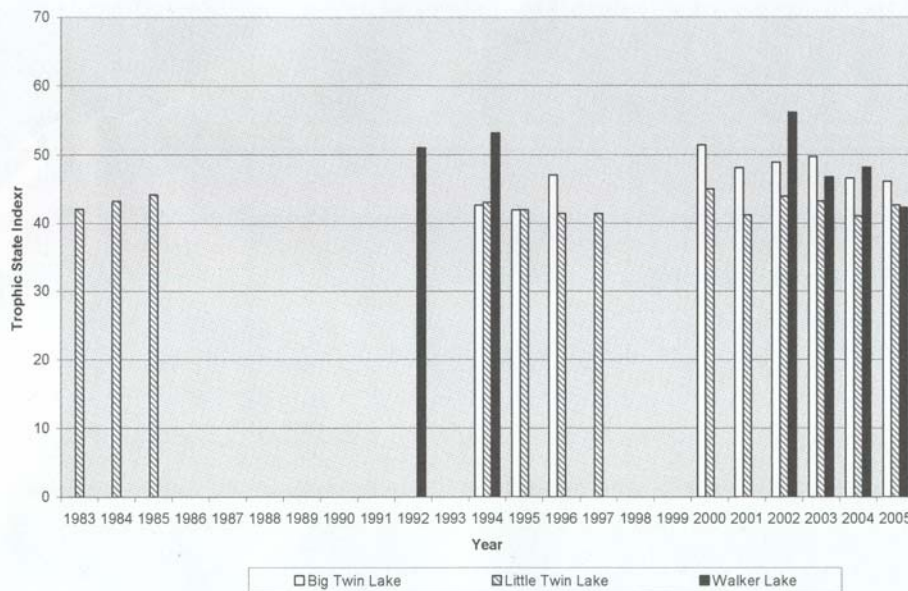
Their report for the summer of 2005 notes “that based on the four years of available data it appears that the trophic states of the three lakes are stable and the lakes are not degrading. This trend is also present when viewing the long term secchi disk trophic state indices.” See Figure 3 from the report. The two black lines on the right between 50 and 30 in Figure 3 are the ideal range for a healthy lake. It is called the Mesotrophic range. Anything higher means a lake has enough biological activity

to interfere with recreational activity. Such a lake is labeled Eutrophic. The report further states that it is important to continue monitoring to “determine the presence or absence of long term water quality trends.”

In spite of this good news the Board believes we must continue to be vigilant. A large area of Big Twin Lake was affected by an algal bloom in October. Such blooms can only occur if weather conditions are right and most importantly nutrients must be present in a lake for algae to multiply.

Please continue to make certain your septic system is in good working order and runoff from your property is kept on site. The Conservancy is working to reduce road runoff. If we all do our share we can reduce pollutants that enter our lakes and keep our lakes in the Mesotrophic range.

Figure 3. Comparison of Secchi Depth-Based Trophic State Index for Big Twin Lake, Little Twin Lake, and Walker Lake 1983-2005



What's Happening? - Joyce Laudise

The mountain laurel we all enjoy has suffered from the winter drought that produced hardly any snow to blanket the ground and protect this shallow rooted plant. In addition the leaves show evidence of a fungus infection. Deer have also taken their toll. This triple assault has left the shrubs in a sorry state. Some residents remember the mountain laurel being similarly stressed about 5 years ago. It is hoped that they will thrive during the new growing season so that they are in good shape to withstand the winter of 2006-2007.

Experts suggest doing nothing right now. Above all the shrubs should not be pruned. The branches are not dead. Left alone new leaves may emerge. If the drought continues, however, the plants could benefit from watering. A soaker hose is an effective way to water. If further recommendations are given by Penn State Cooperative Extension, the Watershed Conservancy will publicize them on its website.

Gypsy Moths back in town - Ralph Cioppa

We have an increase over the last few years in the Gypsy Moth population. To help understand better Gypsy Moths, the lifecycle of them is as follows:

September through April – Egg masses appear on external surface of trees, homes, woodpiles, etc. During this time, they masses should be removed, and soaked in soapy water.

May & June - Caterpillars emerge from the egg masses depending on the duration of warm periods.

At this time, the application of Bt, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, and spray can done by air or ground. Bt spraying normally provides foliage protection adequate to reduce tree stress and related mortality. The caterpillars devour tree leaves and will ingest the Bt and its accompanying toxic protein. This will kill the caterpillars and disrupt the Gypsy Moth life cycle. The bacillus and protein are harmless to humans, pets and other vegetation.

Commercial products are available for application but might be toxic to other species.

Place burlap wrapping around tree trunks. The caterpillars will hide under the wrap during the day and can be removed.

July – The larvae hatch into pupae, a stage that lasts about two weeks. Remove any pupae and reduce their resting places.

August – brown adult male moths fly about and mate with white female moths. Egg masses are again deposited.

Source: Gypsy Moth Update, Pike County Conservation District, Spring 2006

Shohola Townships Adopts Well Ordinance - Peter Wulfhorst

Many residents of our watershed rely on private wells to provide their daily drinking water needs. We are fortunate so far that these wells provide good quality drinking water to our residents. However, the responsibility for ensuring that the water is safe to drink is the responsibility of the individual homeowner. As the population continues to expand in Pike County as well as the watershed, there is a greater risk to our drinking water. It is recommended that private well owners test their water regularly to ensure it is safe to drink as well as protect the well from nearby land uses that can possibly contaminate the well. For more information on water testing, contact the Penn State Cooperative Extension - Pike County office at 570-296-3400.

In order to promote and protect the general health and welfare of the residents of Shohola Township, the Board of Supervisors recently enacted the Shohola Township Water Well Ordinance. This ordinance is intended to prevent the pollution and contamination of groundwater, protect the quantity, quality, suitability and sustainability of water supplies and secure and maintain isolation distances between water supplies and sewage disposal systems and other sources of pollution and contamination. The Water Well Ordinance requires all water users located within the service area of a central water system to connect to the system. There are a few central water systems in Shohola Township including Happy Hollow, Trails End, Evergreen Park and parts of Sagamore Estates. Also, a permit will now be required to install all wells, casing or well pits in Shohola Township. Because of the development occurring in Shohola Township, the Township is interested in keep track of water usage to protect our precious water resources. For more information on the Shohola Township Water Well Ordinance, contact the Shohola Township Building at 570-559-7394.

From the Treasurer - Linda Cioppa

We have paid for a series of tests on Walker and Twin Lakes and an analysis of the results by FX Browne Inc. We have a current balance in our account of \$4,584.32 as of March 31, 2006. We continue to pay for newsletters each year and to attempt to provide needed information and services to the people in our Watershed. **We can only continue to work for the benefit of the Watershed with the financial support of the people who live in the Watershed. We need your contribution not just once, but every year.**

The Conservancy has continued to receive monies in 2006 from a variety of people as well as a \$1,000 donation from both the Walker Lake Landowners Association and the Twin Lakes Property Owners Association, but the number of individuals and families making contributions has slowed dramatically.

Twin & Walker Creeks
Watershed Conservancy

100 Walker Lake Road
Shohola, PA 18458
570-296-3400
Www.twcwc.com

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*Next Meeting 10 am—
June 3, 2006 at the Walker Lake
Clubhouse*

Resident
RR 1
Shohola, PA 18458

2006 CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I am concerned with the future quality and quantity of the water resources in our neighborhood and would like to support the conservation efforts of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy through a yearly membership.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

I am interested in learning more about volunteer monitoring efforts

Check type of membership

Senior/Student—\$5.00

Individual— \$10.00

Family— \$15.00

Corporate— \$40.00

In support of the Conservancy's efforts, I would like to provide an additional gift in the amount of
\$ _____ Total Enclosed _____

Mail this form with check payable to:

Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy
100 Walker Lake Road
Shohola, PA 18458