

May 2009
Volume 6
Issue 1



The Importance of our Streams – June 13 -

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Peter Loewrigkeit

Paul Palladino

The next Conservancy general meeting will take place on June 13 at 10:00 am at the Walker Lake Clubhouse. Our speaker will be Mike Lovegreen, District Manager from the Bradford County Conservation District. Mike will share with us the history and development of stream dynamics, especially geared to our lake communities. His presentation will include a marvelous slide show and a very knowledgeable narrative. This a great opportunity for everyone in our watershed community to hear and see the pros and cons of how water, which is one of our most valuable commodities here in Pike County affects us and the future generations who will follow.

On Water – Irene DeVito

Water is vital to life. From that basic statement flows the desire of the members of the board of the Twin and Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy to safeguard the drinking and recreational waters of the watershed. At our most recent board meeting, we spent some time discussing and preparing for our environmental day at the Shohola Elementary School and listening to Brian Oram, a hydrologist at Wilkes University and chair of the Pocono Northeast RC&D Council. Dr. Oram has generously shared his knowledge of the science of water and its health, flow and other factors that affect it with this organization. He explained a report to us and told us how to sample lake & stream water to make the next report even more meaningful in its findings. At the end of the meeting which lasted almost four hours, Ralph Cioppa, the president, asked if someone would write a synthesis of the session for the newsletter. Given the depth of the matter discussed, I did not volunteer to do that. The report is available and will be shared **it** with anyone in the watershed who is interested in reading it.

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.

What I do want to say though is this; you, the general public are very fortunate in having the watershed board that is in place now. I was most impressed with the interest & thoughtfulness expressed by my fellow board members, all volunteers, during the long meeting. It is volunteers that are taking the samples that provide the data for the reports and this is not a simple task. It requires a certain knowledge which they are willing to obtain. It requires care of the sampling mechanisms, again time consuming and specialized. Volunteers are also spending time in the classroom passing on knowledge of water and its importance to the next generation. From the inception of the conservancy, many people have given many hours of their time to perform the tasks that will pinpoint problems and create solutions so that our water may be kept as pure as possible. They deserve your thanks, your interest and your support. Financial support is very important and we hope that you will consider expressing support in this way, but it can be expressed by your attendance at meetings so that you can learn what you can do to cooperate with us in this ongoing mission.

President's Message - Dr. Ralph Cioppa

Individual contributions to the Conservancy have largely dried up. We are hoping that improvement in our economy will allow some of us to consider making contributions again or for the first time.

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

We have had a very busy winter working towards our mission, including the receipt of two important corporate grants. Citibank contributed \$500 for 2008. We expect another \$500 for 2009. These grants are part of Citibank's Volunteer Incentive Program and were requested by Kirk Mackey, one of our Board Members. If someone in our community has a similar option, please consider this opportunity. In addition, Walmart contributed \$1000 as part of their Community Enhancement Program to help defray the costs of our educational programs for Enviro Day at the Shohola Elementary School on May 13th. Our volunteers presented important information to twenty classes. These activities included many watershed topics such as protecting trees, protecting our water supply, protecting our land from water runoff, conserving water, and conserving our natural resources. Speakers from the National Park Service, Pike County Conservation District, the Milford Water Authority, and the Penn State Extension Service also participated. There was a tree identification and nature walk, and the students assisted us in planting one hardwood sapling for each class. We had a busy, enjoyable, meaningful day.

Professor Brian Oram, a hydro geologist from Wilkes University, is providing important consulting advice concerning our monitoring programs, our educational programs and our grant writing efforts. We obtained a CSAW grant to fund Dr. Oram's involvement.

We are currently sponsoring or assisting our communities with obtaining stimulus funds from the Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the state agency, PennVEST, to control storm water runoff. We hope to use green technology to make our watershed a showcase for how to best utilize techniques such as rain gardens, vegetative swales and basins, proper contouring of roads and properties so that we retain our valuable rain water and use it to promote green growth areas.

Our Stand on Fracking..... Dr. Ralph Cioppa

We are concerned about the issue of fracking to implement gas drilling in our watershed. We have nearly three hundred members representing the fifteen hundred households in our watershed who live here and remain here at least in part because of the pristine nature of the environment.

Gas drilling by fracking has the potential to destroy our ability to live in an area that is considered unique in its purity. Gas drilling can cause many dangers to our environment. Our households may be confronted with additional dust, smog, residual burning, new temporary and unpaved roads, undrinkable water, polluted streams and lakes, reduced ground water levels, and dry wells. These negative effects could result in reduced property values and reduced tax revenues to the townships.

The past history of these drilling companies is poor. They are unregulated and can operate without regard for protecting our environment. By fracking they are able to inject toxic chemicals into the water used to smash apart the shale rock infrastructure to great depths and lateral lengths to free the gas. The wells produce noise pollution and burning gases twenty-four hours a day. The companies have no capability to treat the recovered polluted water produced by the fracking process on site. The released water must be held in huge holding ponds before it can either be shipped out by trucks or injected into our ground water systems. The gas produced is sent away by pipeline or in liquid gas tanker trucks to be sold to the highest bidder, which may include foreign nations.

There have been many documented incidents of environmental problems, the most recent in Dimmick, Pennsylvania, where water wells have been contaminated. We understand the need for additional revenue and jobs but feel this is not worth the detrimental environmental cost for a few years supply of natural gas. This issue will remain quiet while natural gas prices remain low but this situation will change and fracking will again be lucrative for gas exploration companies. We, in our communities, cannot allow fracking. We may be able to do without a few years supply of additional natural gas but we cannot afford even the possibility of contaminating our water supply. If you wish to find out additional information about "Fracking" and the impact it can have on our lakes and streams please go to our website <http://www.twcwc.com/>.

Stewards of Our Lakes & Streams - Kirk Mackey

There is a group of volunteers who conduct water testing to ascertain the water quality in Walker Lake, Twin Lake and Little Twin Lake starting in June and ending in September. While this involves a commitment of time, those who participate in the water testing procedures share one thing in common; they realize that they are merely the stewards for our lakes and it is part of their responsibility to monitor the water quality to insure the preservation of our lakes and streams for generations to come. Twice a month you will see kayaks, canoes or rowboats tied to markers on the lakes and a crew of usually 2 gathering water samples as well as doing a wide variety of tests to aid in the evaluation of the water quality. The end result is a report that indicates the current water quality of the lakes, how the results compare to previous years as well as issuing alerts to make us aware of items that require our immediate attention.

How can those who live by our lakes make a difference?

- Stop the use of fertilizers that can run into our lakes and streams
- Check your septic system to make sure that it is in good working order. Old systems can breakdown and eventually the waste can leach into our streams and lakes.
- Take steps to stop or slow *road run off* from your property from flowing into our streams and lakes. The first 15 minutes of a rainstorm is when the majority of pollutants from our roads wash from the pavement and flow down toward our lakes/streams. If you have a ditch that runs straight into the lake, by simply making the water flow in a zig-zag pattern, you will allow a greater amount of pollutants to be absorbed by the land prior to reaching the lakes or streams. You should also make every effort to insure all ditches and drains on your property are free of debris. If you would like additional information please contact the Twin and Walker Creek Watershed Conservancy or visit our website at <http://www.twcwc.com/>.
- Maintain a vegetative barrier lakeside, which in turn will slow the flow of water and pollutants into our lakes. Taking this measure will also act as a deterrent to wildfowl such as Canadian geese. The geese want to be able to land on the lake and have access to the shoreline for food; if you remove their access they will seek another location to graze as well as to leave their droppings, a major source of pollution. We all like to view the lakes and streams from our homes but clear cutting of trees and vegetation is detrimental to our waters and should be avoided.
- Educate yourself when you hear of proposed changes that may impact our lakes and streams; such as the current effort by natural gas companies to obtain rights to drill in our community by leasing both public and private land then using a process called "Fracking" to remove the natural gas.

We are starting to see improvement in the water and streams due, in large part, to the increase in public awareness. This article started by telling of the Stewards of our lakes and streams who do the water testing. I hope you have the realization that we all are stewards of our waters and our increased involvement and awareness is needed if the water quality is to continue. The choice is



quality of our lakes and streams. Our public awareness of our lakes and streams have now come to the fore and our increased involvement in the positive trend in water quality is yours.

Treasurer's Report - Linda Cioppa

This has been a difficult time for individual contributions. Since January we have only received three. Luckily, during that time we received \$1500 in grants from Citibank and Walmart as discussed in the President's report. We also expect another \$500 from Citibank in the near future. The President's report discusses how we received these monies and I will not repeat that information here.

As of April 30 we had \$3762.42 in our checking account. The cost of printing and mailing this newsletter will be approximately \$700.00 and is not reflected in that balance. We are not renewing our CD, which came due on May 9, 2009. The \$13,234.53 will be placed in a money market account. This is being done in anticipation of approval of stimulus funds for the Maple Drive Stormwater project. Monies to fund that project will have to be paid out and reimbursed if we receive the grant. The total amount requested is \$54020.00 to complete the entire project of four phases. If we do not receive the grant we will begin Phase 1 of the project with money from WLLA, TWCWC and an individual landowner.

TWCWC is working very hard to protect and maintain our vital water resources. We hope you will find it possible to contribute to this effort, both monetarily and through volunteering.

Twin & Walker Creeks
Watershed Conservancy

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Shohola, PA 18458
570-296-2244
Www.twcwc.com

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*Next Meeting 10 am—
June 13, 2009 at the Walker Lake
Clubhouse*

Resident
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Shohola, PA 18458

2009 CONSERVANCY CONTRIBUTION

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 contribution

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
132 East Shore Road
Shohola, PA 18458