

May 2004  
Volume 1,  
Issue 1



## *President's Message - Peter Wulfborst*

### Inside this issue:

*Septic System Program* 2

*Financial News* 2

*Watershed Assessment* 2

*Water Quality Monitoring* 3

*Canaan Valley Institute* 3

*Membership Application* 4

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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.

### **A Letter from the President**

The Conservancy received our Lake and Watershed Assessment Study in December. This study was funded through a PA DEP Growing Greener Grant. As expected, the greatest threat to the water quality of the 3 lakes is non-point source pollution. The most common sources of non-point source pollution are stormwater runoff and septic systems. The Lake & Watershed Assessment Study identified 31 priority non-point source pollution sites within the watershed. The Conservancy has submitted a PA DEP Growing Greener Grant to design and construct Best Management Practices at two priority sites in Walker Lake and one site on Big Twin Lake. The Conservancy should receive notification from PA DEP by this summer whether we will be funded. If the Conservancy is a recipient of the grant, we would design the Best Management Practices in 2004 at the three sites and begin construction in 2005. The Conservancy has received letters of support from the Pike County Conservation District, Shohola Township Board of Supervisors, Walker Lake Landowners Association and Twin Lakes Park Association.

With regard to septic systems, the Conservancy is the recipient of a grant from the Canaan Valley Institute to conduct a 2-pronged approach to educating the residents of the watershed about septic systems. See the CVI article on page 3 for

more information. The Conservancy has also been notified that we are the recipient of a Stream Signage Grant from the Pennsylvania Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers. This grant will install stream signs for Twin Lakes Creek and Walker Lake Creek on Twin Lakes Road. This is another effort by the Conservancy to educate the residents and visitors to the watershed of the names and locations of the streams within the watershed. The signs will be installed by Shohola Township in July or August.

The Conservancy will be continuing our water quality monitoring in 2004 of Little Twin Lake, Big Twin Lake and Walker Lake. The parameters that will be tested are chlorophyll A, total phosphorus, dissolved oxygen, temperature and clarity.

If you care about the water quality of Little & Big Twin Lakes and Walker Lake and want to ensure that these lakes remain healthy and pleasant, then **we need you to become a member of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy**. Your membership support will assist the Conservancy in continuing to monitor the water quality of our lakes as well as to protect the property values of our community. There is a membership application in this newsletter.

## *On-lot Septic System Seminar*

Perhaps where you lived in the past, your house was connected to a central sewer system and you didn't have to worry where the water went after you flushed your toilet. In the country, your responsibility does not end with the flush. If your house is not one of many hooked to a central sewer, the water your family uses flows literally into your own backyard! If you are new to the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed or a long-time resident and are interested in learning how to properly maintain and identify potential problems with your septic system, then you should plan to attend an On-lot Septic System Seminar on Saturday, **July 24, 2004** from 9 am – 11 am at the Shohola Township Building on Twin Lakes Road.

Are you properly managing your system? Learn how to maintain and identify problems with your septic system. These and other questions related to on-lot septic systems will be discussed by Bruce Fox. Bruce is a certified Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO) and principal with Allstate Septic Systems and a professional on everything from designing a septic system to pumping out your septic tank. Bruce will discuss Overview of Systems: What are they and how they work? System Maintenance Requirements, and How to address potential system failures.



The On-lot Septic System Seminar is sponsored with Penn State Cooperative Extension in Pike County. The program is free, but pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, contact the Pike County Cooperative Extension office at 570-296-3400 or e-mail at PikeExt@psu.edu.

## *Financial News - Linda Cioppa, Treasurer*

With the completion of our 2nd Growing Greener Grant, the Conservancy has an ongoing need for additional funds to continue its work.

We have approximately \$4000 in our account, made up of contributions from members and the land-owners associations within our watershed. As you have heard elsewhere in this newsletter we have just received a small grant from the Canaan Valley Institute to work on a septic system project and we have applied for another Growing Greener Grant to help us begin to correct some of the storm water runoff problems in our watershed.

We intend to continue to send out newsletters letting our constituents know what is going on and

what we are doing. We intend to continue to offer public programs which we believe may help people to understand what they can do to improve the quality of our lakes and streams. We need your continued support to help us with our work. We need to pay our own costs for printing, insurance, postage, testing, and a variety of other items. Your contributions go directly to these items.

We will continue to search for additional funding sources to help us correct some of the problems which impact directly on our lakes and streams but,

**PLEASE, WE NEED YOUR HELP  
AND CONTRIBUTIONS!**

## *Watershed Assessment Study*

The Conservancy received in December 2003 our lake and watershed assessment study. The study was funded by a Growing Greener Grant from the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The 107 page document synthesizes the results of two years of analysis of the Twin & Walker Lake Creeks

Watershed and its water resources to provide a plan for the long-term management of the watershed.

The fall newsletter will provide additional information on the watershed assessment study.

## *Water Quality Monitoring - Joyce Laudise & Ralph Cioppa*

The Conservancy spent \$1500 for testing Big Twin Lake, Little Twin Lake and Walker Lake in 2003. Volunteers collected water samples in June, July, August and September. Others recorded secchi disk readings or used 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. Total phosphorus and chlorophyll *a* were tested in their laboratory. Knowing the measurements of these parameters (clarity as measured by a Secchi disk, dissolved oxygen, total phosphorus and chlorophyll *a*) one can calculate a Carlson Trophic State for each lake. FX Browne compiled the report. This report for Summer 2003 notes that the trophic state was generally lower for 2003 than in 2002 in all lakes with the greatest reduction in Walker Lake. The authors believe that the higher average rainfall in 2003 is primarily responsible for the observed shifts in trophic state. As they state, "We suspect that the increased rainfall resulted in frequent runoff events that exported significant portions of algal biomass from Walker Lake. This export of algal biomass could explain the reduction in chlorophyll *a* concentration and the increase in Secchi depth (clearer water) in Walker Lake in 2003." They point out these shifts do not indicate any significant "real" improvement in water quality. They also say that over time there will be inter annual changes in trophic state most often caused by natural fluctuations in precipitation. It is the significant variations in trophic state over decades due to human activities that concern us. Because these trends can only be seen by collecting data each year we plan to monitor the lakes in 2004 just as we did in 2003.

The Walker Lake Landowners' Association paid for additional monthly wet chemistry for the 2003 season that included conductivity, dissolved solids, pH, sulfates, ammonia, nitrates and phosphates. Runoff from septic systems, roads and properties deposit pollutants into our streams and lakes. This nutrient material is favored by algae and these

organisms reproduce excessively. They are photosynthetic consuming carbon dioxide and water and producing oxygen and food. This sounds great but it is not. Some oxygen is consumed when the plants respire at night and a lot is consumed by animals that give off waste materials including carbon dioxide. When these living things die the decay



process consumes oxygen. More plants and animals grow and die until the limit the lake can support is reached. The lake becomes atrophied, dead. This is why it is vital to control runoff into our streams and lakes.

It would not be possible to monitor without volunteers. Often they were out on the lakes or streams gathering data when the rains came and the rains came often in 2003. The Conservancy especially wishes to thank Chet and Pat Dawson, Joe and Pat Messineo, Nancy and Glyn Eisenhauer, Robin Kadlec, Helen Saines, Peg Bruton, Peter Loewigkeit, John Laudise and Rich Schuster.

A copy of the report is filed in the hydro lab at Walker Lake and is available for anyone to read. Just ask a board member if you wish to see it.

## *Canaan Valley Institute Grant - Peter Wulfhorst*

The recently completed Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy Lake & Watershed Assessment Study indicated that the 3 major lakes in the watershed are being impacted by nutrient pollution and that one of the sources is possibly septic systems. The Conservancy was recently informed that we received a grant from the Canaan Valley Institute to assist the Conservancy in addressing the issue of on-lot septic systems in the watershed.

The grant will enable the Conservancy to assess the condition of the septic systems in the watershed through a septic system homeowner questionnaire. In addition, the grant will fund the production and distribution of a septic system fact sheet and septic system maintenance checklist to educate residents about proper septic system design, function and maintenance. Finally, the grant will help the Conservancy in conducting a Septic System Workshop to educate homeowners on septic systems.

**"The best preventive maintenance you can take to protect your septic system is to pump the septic tank periodically"**

Twin & Walker Creeks  
Watershed Conservancy

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

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SHOHOLA, PA 18458

*Next Meeting 9 am—July 24, 2004 at  
the Shohola Township Building*

Resident  
RR 2  
Shohola, PA 18458

## 2004 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**