



Fall Newsletter

Vol. 9, #4 2011

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FALL HIGHLIGHT: WORKSHOP ON BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR STORMWATER RUNOFF

The Washington County Planning Commission and the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association will co-sponsor a workshop this fall. The workshop will feature Jennifer Kehler, DEP Water Program Specialist' who will address various stormwater management issues.

The workshop will be held on Tuesday, September 13, 2011 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. at the Washington County Fairgrounds, Exhibit Hall #2. It is designed particularly to help municipal officials implement the recently adopted Act 167 Washington County Stormwater Management Plan.

Topics to be covered:

- ◆ General Overview; Municipal Implementation
- ◆ Simple Best Management Practices (BMP) Designs AND Cost Estimates for Small Commercial and Residential Applications
- ◆ Structural Stormwater BMP
- ◆ Oil and Gas Activities Implementing Act 167

Also, Todd Moses from Skelly and Loy will present "Stormwater Management in the Catfish Creek Watershed – History and Future." The presentation will review the project from the study phase through project implementation. The process has resulted in \$1.9 million being committed to stream and floodway restoration projects in Washington Park and the City of Washington.

Questions? Call Jeffrey Leithauser at the Wash. Co. Planning Commission, 724-228-6811.



**At Tanger Outlets:
Detention Pond to help
control stormwater runoff**

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

13 — *BMP Workshop, 4-6 pm, at Wash. Co. Fairgrounds, Building #2*

14 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7 pm

22 — Ohio River Celebration

OCTOBER

12 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7 pm

22 — W. Edward Sell '45 Legal

Lecture, "Marcellus Shale: Legislative & Legal Realities; Olin Fine Arts Bldg., W&J; 8:30-10:30 a.m.

NOVEMBER

9 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7 pm

DECEMBER

14 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7 pm

Election of officers, directors

Adoption of 2012 budget

ChCWA regular monthly meetings: 2nd Wed., 7 p.m. Cooper-Hinds Building, Meadowlands.

2011 OHIO RIVER CELEBRATION TO BE HELD ON SEPT. 22

The annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration will be held on September 22 this year.

The Ohio River Watershed Celebration (ORWC) is a free, educational event, designed to illustrate the value of watershed protection and conservation. A variety of groups and organizations will take part in the event—many will set up informative displays on the dock and cruise ships and be on hand to provide information about their current activities and projects.

The ORWC is an annual event planned by an ad-hoc Steering Committee. Attendees will cruise stretches of Pittsburgh's three rivers—the Allegheny, the Monongahela and the Ohio — while aboard one of the Gateway Clipper Fleet's cruise ships, either the Empress or Majestic. The "Imagination Cruise" on the Empress is for stu-

dents, parents and educators; the "Networker Cruise" on the Majestic is for adults.

The time on the Cruise provides a unique opportunity to exchange information and get acquainted with others concerned about our water resources. As the event's flyer said: "The Celebration demonstrates, from the unique perspective of Pittsburgh's Three Rivers, the economic, environmental and cultural impacts the resources of the Ohio River Watershed have upon the region."

The ORWC's Imagination Cruise was filled within 20 minutes of the opening time for registration (a new record)! But those interested in this cruise can get their names put on the wait list by emailing orwc@streamrestorationinc.org.

The Networker Cruise is not filled up and those 18 and over interested in attending can register at: <http://www.streamrestorationinc.org/rsvp/>.

ChCWA AT COUNTY FAIR

Members of the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association were among those staffing the display area for the Washington County Conservation District, the Washington County Watershed Alliance, and other watershed groups that belong to the Alliance.



A display of preserved macroinvertebrates attracted attention from children and their parents.

STORMWATER PROBLEMS ALONG CATFISH CREEK

The Chartiers Creek Watershed Association hopes to be a partner with Washington City on a streambank restoration project along Catfish Creek.

As Washington residents and many visitors to our county seat are aware, problems with flooding along Catfish Creek have been with us for many years. And the problems have grown worse in recent years.

The 2010 watershed management plan for Catfish Creek named several high priority sites, among them, BMP Site 10A which will be location of this project, including restoring the adjoining flood plain area of Catfish Creek.

The *W. Edward Sell '45 Legal Lecture* topic this year is *Marcellus Shale: Legislative and Legal Realities*. Panelists include: Amy L. Barrette '98, Robert Kozel '89, James H. McCune, Barron P. "Pat" McCune, Judson Starr '68, and The Honorable Jesse White '00. It will take place at the Olin Fine Arts Center, W&J College on October 22 from 8:30-10:30 am.

HELLBENDER SURVEYING: An Awesome Experience

By Laurie Popeck

In July, I had the amazing opportunity to participate in a survey for the eastern Hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*) with staff members of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy Watershed Assistance Center.



Hellbenders are one of the largest salamanders in the world and are only found in the mountains and foothills of the eastern United States, generally in streams that flow to the Mississippi River. They prefer a habitat areas that have remained isolated from development and urbanization. Streams need to be at a cool temperature (due to them breathing oxygen through their skin to their lungs) and have many large rocks. They feed almost entirely on crayfish, but will also eat small fish, invertebrates, and other hellbenders.

We surveyed a stream in Westmoreland County for the beautiful salamander. The technique was explained to me by Eric Chapman, Director of Aquatic Science at WPC, while we were walking in the stream to our first sampling site.

Basically, the 5-6 surveyors lift the huge rocks that the hellbenders live underneath, so



that one of the other surveyors can then squeeze in between to reach into the water and feel the substrate to see if they find a hellbender. (This reminded me of my rugby days from college and felt similar to a "scrum.")

Now, hellbenders are hard to get a hold of—literally. They are slippery (due to secreting mucus) and their coloration blends into the muddy bottom of the stream. So, it's almost like being blindfolded and feeling for a soft rubbery slimy animal that moves quickly through the water.

After about an hour of "not having any luck", we finally found one! Alysha Trexler, Watershed Scientist at WPC, helped weigh and measure the hellbender. It did look like all the pictures I have seen— with the wide head and little eyes on the side, but to me, it was so cool to see the hellbender in person!



I was surprised that the hellbender hardly moved while being measured and examined (the WPC staff checks to see if any toes are missing, and also scans the left side to see if there is a tag (similar to a microchip in dogs and cats) already there. This tells us that this animal has been found before and the location of the habitat rock is recorded and then will later be added to a map to show how the animal has moved over time. Eric asked if I wanted to hold the hellbender, to which I replied "of course!" It was not easy as then the hellbender decided to start wiggling and squirming around! And, I had to get a picture with this fascinating and gorgeous animal!

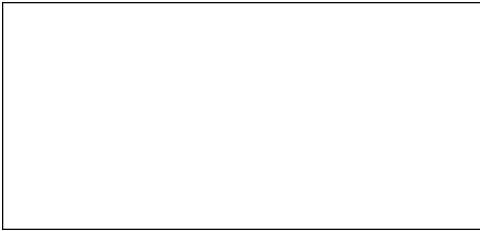
Overall, during eight hours, we found only 6 hellbenders throughout the stretch of stream that we surveyed. Each time we found one, I was more excited and really came to appreciate such a unique creature. I can honestly say that I LOVED every minute of this day and hope to participate in another survey next year!!



100 West Beau Street, Suite 105
Washington, PA 15301



**An Island in
Chartiers Creek**



We're on the Web
www.upperchartierscreek.org

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ADDRESS CORRECTION?

Send to: Joan Jessen, editor
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15317;
or email: joanjessen159@gmail.com.

Chartiers Creek Watershed Association

Purpose: to enhance, protect and develop the ecosystem of the upper Chartiers Creek Watershed in Washington County, PA

Membership: open to anyone who lives in the watershed, as well as individuals, businesses and organizations that own property or are actively involved within the boundaries of the watershed.

Please join us! Annual Dues: Individual, \$10; Family, \$15; Organization, \$50

MAIL THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK TO:

Chartiers Creek Watershed Association
Carrilee Hemington, treasurer
107 Williams Ave., McMurray, PA 15301

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel.: _____ Email: _____