



TOBYHANNA CREEK  TUNKHANNOCK CREEK
 WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
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2018 President's Message

By Geoff Rogalsky

The State of the Watershed 2018

As laid out in last year's message, your Watershed Association has continued to successfully develop local and regional partnerships with organizations whose goals align with ours – goals of responsible watershed stewardship. In addition to our expanding involvement in the William Penn Foundation's Delaware River Watershed Initiative, we are now active in the Penn State Extension's Master Watershed Steward program (explained further in this newsletter). Also, I am happy to report that last year's concern about the growing pro-development orientation of the Monroe County Conservation District (MCCD) Board has been largely alleviated and MCCD is restoring its previous focus on monitoring developers and other stakeholders to ensure that they conduct projects within the watershed in a responsible manner. This change in direction occurred in part due to the persistent opposition offered by TCTCWA's Board. More about MCCD's role and its relationship with TCTCWA is discussed further in this newsletter's article co-authored by Adam Schellhammer of MCCD.

On the other hand, unfortunately, a group has recently formed to declare war against the TCTCWA's goals. It calls itself the Monroe County Clean Streams Coalition (MCCSC), with the stated goal "to ensure that waterways in Monroe County are properly safeguarded and that economic progress and job development are cultivated". This group's members consist of businesses and landowners who are attempting to reverse PA DEP's recent decisions regarding Exceptional Value (EV) protection conferred upon certain waterways in our watershed, including the EV petitions sponsored by TCTCWA. This group's tactics are, unsurprisingly, aimed at making PA DEP's execution of their responsibilities regarding the public's right to protection of existing water quality to be unfairly infringing on their members' property ownership rights. However, they seem to feel that maximizing profit at the public's expense is among their rights. I will reiterate TCTCWA's position: we are not opposed to responsible development; we are opposed to development that puts the existing high quality and exceptional value (EV) portions of the watershed at higher risk of degradation. Responsible development is not free, but it is considerably less expensive than restoration of degraded waterways and ecosystems. Development profits go to a few; the consequences of watershed degradation are suffered by many – and not just water quality suffers. Increased flood frequency and severity may also result from less responsible development, as well as reduced stream base flows and groundwater levels.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 2018/2019

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President's Message
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In reflecting on this conflict, I think the biggest challenge we face when it comes to watershed management is clarifying to the average citizen "what is responsible." The average citizen is probably focused on his/her own interactions with water - primarily consuming it and secondarily looking at or swimming/boating in it. They may see the Poconos' biggest asset as appearing scenic and wild, but not understand (or perhaps see any benefit to themselves from) the concept of biologic diversity and ecosystem integrity. Absence (i.e., extirpation) over time of this particular plant or that particular bird is probably not noticed as long as the overall aesthetics are maintained, and something else will always grow/live in the vacated habitat. This would appear to be the MCCSC's perspective - basically to create a "one size fits all" set of water quality standards that focus solely on people's minimum needs and figuring, for example, that some kind of fish will live in it or survive after stocking at least for a while and that will ultimately keep the fisher-people happy - so that some degree of degradation in the name of maximizing economic prosperity is a worthwhile sacrifice. Under this mindset, the area could still be fundamentally forested and have non-toxic, visually-appealing streams running through it (if they don't start periodically drying up) - who cares what types of bugs live in it?

For those of us who do understand and care, the time is now to voice our concerns and opinions. It is time for each of us to advocate for protection of water quality and watershed integrity. With the support of TCTCWA, OurPoconoWaters.com has been created for this purpose – to collect our individual voices and allow us to project a combined and hopefully more forceful message. This campaign, hosted by PennFuture, “aims to unify the community while educating citizens, business owners, and local leaders about the importance of protecting these [i.e. EV] streams, highlighting the many ways in which clean streams and economic development coexist in a region known for its natural beauty and booming tourism industry.”

Please check out OurPoconoWaters.com to learn of the ways you can amplify our voice with yours.

A Field Volunteer's Perspective
by Lorraine Kosciusko

Hello everybody, my name is Lorraine and I've been with the Watershed Association for the past five years. In addition to working on the Board, I've been helping the watershed test 6 to 7 stream monitoring stations each month out of the total of 21 in our network. We test the water quality and make sure that any new construction, road work, etc. does not do any long-term damage to our streams, lakes and rivers. We measure the depth of the streams, temperature, color, smell, pH, conductivity, TDS (total dissolved solids), salinity and nitrates and phosphate using hand-held meters and test kits.

I also obtain DMRs (discharge monitoring reports) that permitted dischargers (such as area wastewater treatment plants) must file monthly with PADEP and review them to be sure that the dischargers are complying with their permits. If they aren't, we target those sites with testing and bring the situation to the attention of the regulatory people.

We are always looking for new people to help and join the watershed. The more people that join and help to keep our waters clean will help the environment.



TC/TCWA MONITORS AT WORK

Spring in the Poconos

It snowed last night.

It is the 19th of April and I have a white covering on the ground. This is way past annoying, but it is part of living in the Poconos. Fishing season was last Saturday and by now Laura and I should be thinking about crocuses. Instead it is 21 degrees and white outside.



Snow on April 19th

It has been cold for an unusually long time this year but the Poconos are prone to this. My house is more than 1,800 feet above sea level and the Poconos are a large uplift plateau that always catches the weather. It means the summers and falls are glorious but the winters are cold, and springs nonexistent. It is not unusual to go from plowing snow to bicycling in the same week. But I have gotten entirely used to it. Living in the Poconos means you are living in one of the greatest areas on Earth. It is still wild but there are enough amenities to keep you in coffee and ice cream. Some of the best fly fishing in the world is only minutes away but you can still easily reach shopping in 20 minutes.



Tobyhanna Creek by 115

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Spring in the Poconos
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*Annie Mikol, John Lyman, Jim Vogt and Geoff Rogalsky.
Annie and Jim organized the Master Watershed Steward course.*

This year I retire in July. Laura and I have agreed we will retire on the same day, something we have been planning for several years. To keep me from being bored in my retirement, Geoff and I are attending the Master Watershed Steward training that Penn State Extension is offering.

It is being sponsored by Monroe County Conservation District and covers all aspects of how to maintain a healthy watershed. Besides the usual stuff that you would expect in a watershed program, the course has had field trips to look at wastewater systems, aquatic bugs, what a good stream and not-so-good stream look like, and a host of other things. This is a fabulous course that has been a real eye-opener. Come retirement, Laura and I plan to do lots of boating and visiting grandkids. And I plan to spend more time with TCTCWA doing watershed protection.

It has been a good year for TCTCWA:

- The Board has done a great job as the president and we have some new potential board members.
- After years of selfless service, George White has finally decided he is going to back off on monitoring but we have a plan to fill the gap. George has been a enormous benefit to the Watershed, monitoring streams for years as a volunteer.
- Last year some of the creeks in the Watershed were elevated to Exceptional Values streams by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. This was a big win for the Poconos since the exceptional value designation makes it easier to protect the streams from uncontrolled construction.
- There are certainly challenges ahead particularly with some of the contractor community, but that's one thing we will work on.

So I hope to see you on the river sometime, either as a person wetting a fishing line, or a person standing on the shore line looking at the hills of the Poconos.

John Lyman

FINANCIAL STATEMENT
YEAR END COMPARISON - 2017 VS. 2016

	Jan - Dec 17	Jan - Dec 16	\$ Change	% Change
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4000 · Member Dues				
4002 · Single Membership	120.00	60.00	60.00	100.0%
4003 · Family Membership	210.00	450.00	-240.00	-53.33%
4004 · Corporate Membership	150.00	0.00	150.00	100.0%
4005 · Adopt-A-Stream	0.00	300.00	-300.00	-100.0%
4006 · Other Membership	240.00	1,150.00	-910.00	-79.13%
Total 4000 · Member Dues	720.00	1,960.00	-1,240.00	-63.27%
4030 · Contributions Income				
4070 · Unrestricted	0.00	265.00	-265.00	-100.0%
Total 4030 · Contributions Income	0.00	265.00	-265.00	-100.0%
4100 · Grants				
4117 · Fidelity Grants	250.00	0.00	250.00	100.0%
Total 4100 · Grants	250.00	0.00	250.00	100.0%
4999 · Interest Income	10.20	3.52	6.68	189.77%
Total Income	980.20	2,228.52	-1,248.32	-56.02%
Expense				
6120 · Bank Service Charges	16.00	0.00	16.00	100.0%
6130 · Sec'y/Bkbp Expense	780.00	660.00	120.00	18.18%
6140 · Contributions				
6142 · Educational Expense	508.43	0.00	508.43	100.0%
Total 6140 · Contributions	508.43	0.00	508.43	100.0%
6160 · Dues and Subscriptions	30.00	30.00	0.00	0.0%
6180 · Insurance				
6185 · Liability Insurance	323.00	36.00	287.00	797.22%
Total 6180 · Insurance	323.00	36.00	287.00	797.22%
6240 · Miscellaneous	0.00	140.00	-140.00	-100.0%
6250 · Postage and Delivery	91.63	154.86	-63.23	-40.83%
6260 · Printing and Reproduction	434.60	296.80	137.80	46.43%
6290 · Rent	507.00	528.50	-21.50	-4.07%
6340 · Telephone				
6341 · Voice Mail	75.05	57.61	17.44	30.27%
Total 6340 · Telephone	75.05	57.61	17.44	30.27%
6550 · Office Supplies	116.59	34.84	81.75	234.64%
6670 · Program Expense				
6672 · Stream Monitoring Expense	0.00	302.66	-302.66	-100.0%
Total 6670 · Program Expense	0.00	302.66	-302.66	-100.0%
6810 · Web Site	139.50	208.71	-69.21	-33.16%
Total Expense	3,021.80	2,449.98	571.82	23.34%
Net Ordinary Income	-2,041.60	-221.46	-1,820.14	-821.88%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Expense				
8010 · Other Expenses	0.00	31.52	-31.52	-100.0%
Total Other Expense	0.00	31.52	-31.52	-100.0%
Net Other Income	0.00	-31.52	31.52	100.0%
Net Income	-2,041.60	-252.98	-1,788.62	-707.02%

TCTCWA and MCCD

By Adam Schellhammer

How is MCCD and TCTCWA related?

MCCD and TCTCWA are two organizations with a shared mission; the protection of the water resources of Monroe County. As a regulatory agency, MCCD carries out local, state, and federal programs to maintain and improve water quality in Monroe County. While these programs have varying areas of focus (agriculture, construction, transportation, etc.), they are all implemented to achieve the same desired outcome.

TCTCWA, like other watershed groups, is really the eyes and ears of the watershed. Water Quality Monitoring programs, like TCTCWA's, are key to the early identification of impacts to our water quality and having a group with dedicated volunteers at the ready to report such impacts can help avert long-term negative effects.

We each have our role to play in keeping our waters clean for today and for future generations and it's important to understand each organization's unique function and vision in order to achieve our shared goal.

What direction does MCCD give to TCTCWA, or how do they work together?

MCCD is made up of a diverse and highly trained staff with varying specialties and skill-sets. Because of this, we are able to assist TCTCWA in solving local watershed issues. The role of MCCD is one of support and it is more likely that we would take direction from TCTCWA. Your group makes up the "boots on the ground" that regulatory agencies rely on; by highlighting areas of concern or partnering with us on restoration and clean-up projects we are better able to serve the community.

Members of TCTCWA know the watershed intimately, and it is that local knowledge that makes all the difference in the world. MCCD is a resource or a tool to be utilized, so I can't emphasize enough that I hope TCTCWA members know that we are here to help in any way possible. Everyone here at MCCD, from the technicians to the engineers to the educators is here because we share the same passion as the TCTCWA members for protecting and advocating for our natural resources.

MCCD

How did MCCD get started, and what is the history of MCCD?

Conservation Districts were established nationally in response to the effects of the Dust Bowl. Soil erosion and impacts to our waterways were severe and Conservation Districts were established to address local issues within their county. Monroe County Conservation District was established by the county commissioners in 1947 and we're one of the oldest in the state. Each county in PA has a Conservation District except for Philadelphia.

MCCD has a rather unique job as it oversees programs to *maintain* water quality. I say maintain because having worked around the state I have never before had the privilege to work in an area with such pristine water resources. Progressive planning and foresight by past District staff, county commissioners, and municipal officials allowed Monroe to grow without experiencing the major resource collapses that you might find in other areas of Pennsylvania.

What is the management or political structure of MCCD?

All Conservation Districts are similar in that they were created by the county commissioners and are governed by a volunteer board of directors made up of farmers, members of the public and 1 county commissioner.

The board can then delegate their responsibilities to staff. Most districts started off as purely educational organizations, but as districts took on more responsibilities the governing boards hired the staff needed to carry out new programs that would meet their county's needs.

So in a nutshell, the board decided (with staff guidance) what programs and activities would best meet the needs of the county and those tasks are delegated to the staff to implement.

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Some facts about MCCD and TCTCWA

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How is MCCD related to DEP and EPA?

The easiest way to look at it is that MCCD is the local arm of DEP and EPA. There are certain programs that we are delegated to perform. The big difference between a delegated responsibility and a contractual obligation is that MCCD essentially operated *as* DEP or EPA when carrying out certain delegated duties.

There is a bit more to it than that of course, but we work closely with DEP to carry out the programs needed to conserve our soil and water. They have been a good partner for us and I am proud of the relationship we have with the DEP staff in Wilkes-Barre.

DEP

What is the DEP and why is it important?

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is the state agency responsible for administering Pennsylvania's environmental laws and regulations. Its responsibilities include: reducing air pollution; making sure our drinking water is safe; protecting water quality in our rivers and streams; making sure waste is handled properly; supporting community renewal and revitalization; promoting advanced energy technology; and helping citizens prevent pollution and comply with the Commonwealth's environmental regulations.

This list shows the breadth and scope of what DEP is responsible for and it is no easy task administering all of these programs. This is where Conservation Districts can play a major role in alleviating that workload and incorporate local knowledge into the process.

Through delegation agreements, DEP can delegate its programmatic responsibilities to districts. The districts then administer the programs, acting as the Department. Conservation Districts follow the same protocols and procedures when implementing the program to ensure consistency and effective resource protection.

DEP, or a delegated Conservation District, strives to achieve what is known as voluntary compliance. We want to work with the regulated community, which can vary depending on the program, to make sure that they understand the regulations, their purpose, and why we need to work together to ensure that the program requirements are being met. In the event that voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, DEP can levy penalties against a non-compliant entity.

Enforcement and levying of penalties is a last resort though. We want this to be a partnership, and as I said before we all have a role to play in keep our water resources clean, that includes the regulated community.

OUR MISSION

The purposes of the Tobyhanna Creek/Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Association shall be to promote and preserve the water quality and the environment of the Tobyhanna Creek and Tunkhannock Creek watershed including surrounding areas of special concern and improve the water quality of the associated creeks and tributaries, promote the natural bounties thereof, provide educational materials on the benefits of and methods to achieve protection and preservation of the natural integrity of the watershed, educate the general public and interested parties in the value of stress controls and land activities, promote and coordinate the conservation of natural resources of the watershed, and protect and preserve terrestrial and aquatic life in the watershed.

TC/TCWA

ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall, the members of the Watershed participate in the Adopt-A-Highway Program in Monroe County. Our four mile stretch of highway is Route 423 from just past Timber Trails to the County's maintenance shed area by Hummler Run.

This year's members are from left to right: Dean Neeley, Susan Neeley, Lorraine Kosciusko, John Lyman and Geoff Rogalsky.



