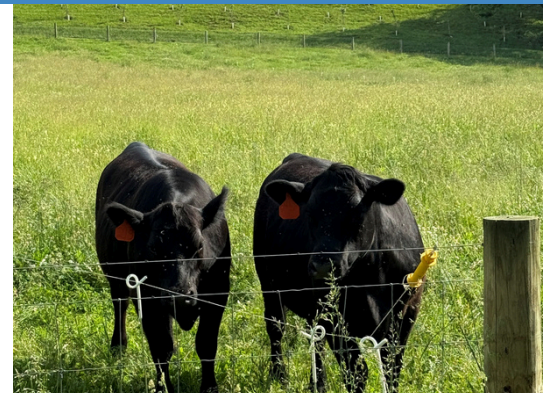
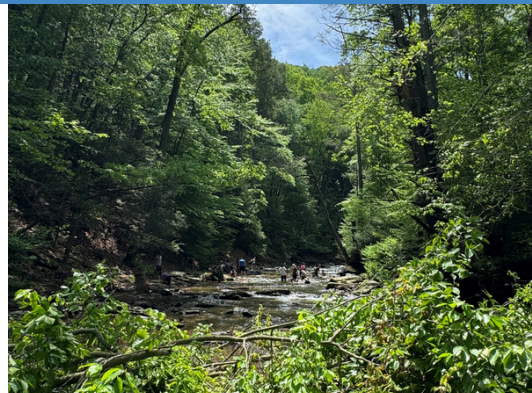


THE RE-CAP

Watershed Alliance of York's (WAY) quarterly newsletter with updates about the implementation of the Countywide Action Plan (CAP) for clean waters



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Spring 2024 | Re-CAP Issue 20

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WAY BOARD

This Spring, the WAY BOD dove into capacity building with Beam Consulting via a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. The organization was analyzed in various ways and interviews were conducted with several stakeholders to generate findings and suggestions. Since 2020, WAY has seen exponential growth as a volunteer only based organization and we are striving to grow in a sustainable nature. With these findings in mind, the organization is restructuring by eliminating some of our currently stagnant committees. We will also change to bi-monthly meetings starting in July. The composition of the Board will be a focal subject moving forward as we strive to create an organization that is ready for our first paid staff member. With that being said, we are still looking for a Treasurer! Know anyone?

WAY

BOARD OFFICERS

RACHEL STAHLMAN,

PRESIDENT

DUANE HYSON,

VICE PRESIDENT

EMILY NEIDEIGH,

SECRETARY

VACANT,

TREASURER

BOARD DIRECTORS

LETTICE BROWN

TED EVGENIADIS

MATT ATTIG

DIANE OLESON

JODI SULPIZIO

MARK LENTZ

ROB HARVEY

ETHAN DAVIAU

Hello Readers!

Spring was another busy season for WAY and the CAP. Our capacity building work with Beam Consulting was insightful and meaningful for growth. There's work ahead but there is a lot of momentous energy built from the past 4 years. I feel we've taken the right steps to grow into our vision as an organization.

Many projects are in the works or underway with WAY currently managing 13 grant funded projects and anticipation is building that more are on the horizon. One of those projects, which recently wrapped up a first round of funding, is the WAY Watershed Forestry Program. Since last summer, with the help of several awesome landowners, 64.17 acres of riparian forest buffers have been implemented. The riparian buffers were planted on an array of landscapes across York County, such as suburban, rural, and agricultural, and with a diverse range of landowners including individuals, families, groups, and businesses. The success we saw while implementing these buffer projects has inspired us to try and continue this type of work. There seems to be quite the demand and opportunity for WAY to work with more landowners. As we all know, without landowners, no water quality projects could be possible!

The next big event on the horizon is the 22nd Annual Watershed Week. Planning is underway for this years event September 21st - 27th. We look forward to partnering on and hosting events like the Youth and Family Fishing Conservation Evening, Tap Talks, stream studies, tutorials, hands on activities like tree planting, and more. Our website and socials will keep you updated as plans begin to be announced. I hope to see you out in September!

In Stewardship,



Rachel Stahlman, CAP Coordinator / WAY President
rstahlman@ycpc.org | 717.771.9870 x 1763



Local Highlights: Envirothon

Each May in York County brings the spirit of environmental learning alive with the annual Envirothon! What is Envirothon? It's the largest environmental education competition in the nation. It was created by Pennsylvania's Conservation Districts originally for senior high students. Envirothon events are held in 66 of 67 PA counties, all 50 states, Canada, and beyond. Our partners at York County Conservation District do an amazing job each year hosting this epic event. Fun fact, York County is one of the few places throughout North America to offer the Envirothon beginning in the third grade. Go York!

Nearly 1,000 students took part in the 2024 York County Envirothon. Students tested their environmental knowledge on aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and current issues in four competitions ranging from April 23rd to May 16th. Students participate in school teams, often with adorably savvy team names.

This year, the York Home School Association "Quack Masters" scored highest out of 20 teams at the Senior High York County Envirothon. The "Quack Masters" represented York County in the Pennsylvania Envirothon on May 21, where they placed 2nd out of 63 teams of Pennsylvania's best and brightest Envirothon students.

Together, the Middle School, 5th-6th grade, and 3rd-4th grade Envirothon Competitions included over 130 teams from across York County.

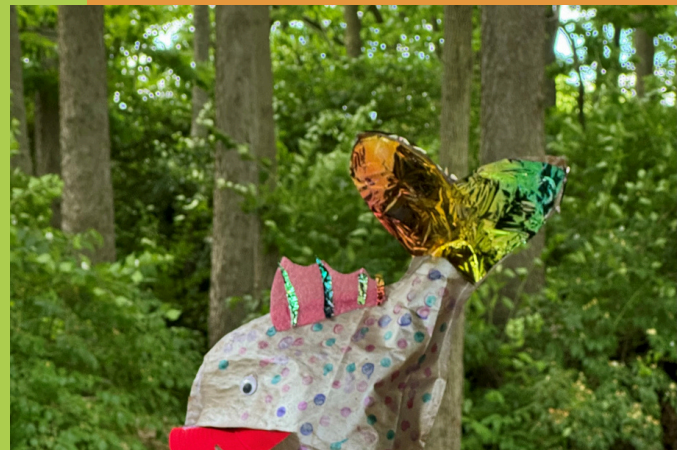
WAY is proud to sponsor the York County Envirothon and looks forward to assisting our partners at the York County Conservation District each year as they navigate, organize, and hold this incredible event!



Students create imaginative hats that correspond to their team's name. In this case, the team chose a spotted lanternfly theme. Photo credit goes to Anne Walko.



After a long day of testing, students gather to learn the outcomes and receive awards and recognition. Photo credit goes to Anne Walko.



This imaginative hat and team had a trout theme.

Projects Around the County:

UNT S.B. Codorus Creek Stream Restoration

The Unnamed Tributary (UNT) South Branch Codorus Creek Stream Restoration project is situated along a severely eroded and incised perennial stream located on three separate adjoining family member properties in Spring Garden Township. The stream has a drainage area of 0.17 square miles (108.8 acres) and is predominantly comprised of steep agricultural fields that produce flashy runoff surges of stormwater during large precipitation events. With a lack of a woody riparian buffer and repeated stormwater runoff events over the years, the stream had succumbed to bank erosion and stream bed incising that has produced notable head cuts in three locations. If this impacted stream section were just left alone, the conditions would worsen, and property damage would continue over time jeopardizing sections of residential yards and agricultural crop fields.

The purpose of this project was to address the stream degradation and make improvements to the channel and adjacent riparian areas. To accomplish this, WAY worked with the landowners and ECS Mid-Atlantic to restore about 1,100 feet of stream channel through regrading stream banks to 3:1 slopes, raising the stream bed invert of 300 feet of incised channel sections, installing eleven log sill grade control structures and establishing a native riparian buffer through the planting of trees, shrubs and live stakes. Construction funding for the project came from the York County Planning Commission's Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Block Grant.

Before construction, eroded stream bank heights ranged from 2.5-7.0 feet deep. Raising the stream channel in deeply incised sections and installing grade control structures will help the stream to return to its natural pre-existing conditions and reduce flooding issues. This project counts towards and gives credits for the York Countywide Action Plan and the Chesapeake Bay Pollutant Reduction Plan, in turn helping DEP to reach its Chesapeake Bay goals. The project is estimated to annually reduce 163.9 pounds of nitrogen, 75.5 pounds of phosphorus, and 143,750 pounds of sediment.

Before:



After:



Event Highlight:

Tap Talks: Deep Dive into Vernal Pools

Summer being right around the corner means Tap Talks season is here. Tap Talks is a Master Watershed Steward program where we gather at a local brewery to learn about a water quality topic, enjoy libations, and play talk themed trivia for prizes. We kicked off our seasonal series on May 22nd at Collusion Tapworks with Tap Talks: Deep Dive into Vernal Pools with Betsy Leppo, an Invertebrate Zoologist with the Western PA Conservancy.

Inside our forests you will often encounter small wetlands known as vernal pools. Most vernal pools perform a magic trick each year, vanishing during the heat of summer and returning during the cool rains and snows of fall, winter and spring. PA's geologic diversity can be seen in the different ways our vernal pools form. In the South Mountain region, you can find thousands of sag ponds. These ponds form where limestone bedrock melts away over time and the overlying soils sink into the depressions that form beneath the surface. These are the common types of vernal pools that are found in York County.

Vernal pools are special habitats that provide food, water, and/or shelter for all kinds of wildlife in the forest. They are critical habitat to a unique group of animals that breed in fishless waters. In PA there are 6 amphibians and 2 types of crustaceans that use vernal pools almost exclusively for breeding and larval development. These indicator species require vernal pools for breeding habitat and development of their young. The adult amphibians spend most of the year in the forest surrounding the vernal pool wetland. They can travel 1,000 feet or more between the breeding pool and their upland homes where they live most of the year.

The deep dive of the evening was into the life history of a common and charismatic vernal pool amphibian, the spotted salamander. Did you know that the spotted salamander can grow up to 9 inches long and can live up to 20 years? Scientists have even observed one spotted salamander that lived to be 32 years old! The spotted salamander is fossorial, meaning they spend most of their time underground. They only come above ground for foraging after rain and breeding. During the winter, they brumate underground, and are not seen again until breeding season in early spring. The spotted salamander then migrates to its vernal pool to breed. A female will lay about 100 eggs in one clutch that cling to the underwater plants and form egg masses. The adult spotted salamanders only stay in the vernal pools for a few days, then the eggs hatch in about 2 months. It was amazing to learn that in their long life, the spotted salamander typically returns to the same vernal pool each year. For reasons like this, it's important that we protect and conserve vernal pools!



Betsy Leppo leading Tap Talks at Collusion Tapworks. Photo credit goes to Jodi Sulpizio.

Where in the Watersheds?!

Interactive fun about York's 11 main watersheds! On this page are photos & clues about a place located in one of our 11 main watersheds. Play along by trying to guess the location & watershed.

Feeling extra playful? E-mail your answer along with mailing address to rstahman@ycpc.org to get a WAY prize delivered to you if your answer is correct.

We also take submissions! Send in some sneaky photos from a favorite spot in one of our watersheds along with clues to the location and you may get featured!

Find the answer to 'Where in the Watersheds?!' in our next newsletter.



Clues

- I'm the tributary closest to the youngest Lower Susquehanna River hydroelectric dam.
- I run through a County park that is named after a space mission.
- If you like Tom Hanks' Castaway, you know my name.



WAY WORKS

Upcoming Events

Visit the 'events' tab on WAY's website for full event details.

JUNE

6/26, Tap Talks: History of the Susquehanna

6/27, WAY Board of Directors Meeting

JULY

7/18, Tap Talks: The Susquehanna's Amazing Petroglyphs

7/27, Annual Codorus Creek Clean Up

AUGUST

8/21, WAY Board of Directors Meeting

SEPTEMBER

9/21-27, 22nd Annual Watershed Week

OCTOBER

10/12, 5th Annual Great Plastic Purge of the Lower Susquehanna

10/18-20, Keystone Hiking & Outdoor Weekend in the Susquehanna Riverlands

Contact us if...

- You have a water quality project and you are unsure if it's being counted for credit in restoration efforts
- You want to be part of WAY or any of the Committees of WAY
- You have any questions or comments



/WatershedAllianceOfYorkPA



@WAYorkPA



WatershedAllianceYork@gmail.com

Connect
with
WAY!

The WAY Board of Directors meet bi-monthly on the 4th Thursday in person at 6:30pm in Room 151 at 2401 Pleasant Valley Road, York

Join us virtually via TEAMS
Find the link under the 'About' section at watershedallianceofyork.org

The Watershed Alliance of York (WAY) is a group of volunteer stakeholders interested in improving local waterways for the betterment of the County and to meet clean water goals.

If you would like to get involved, **please contact Rachel Stahlman at rstahlman@ycpc.org**



Scan with your phone's camera to go right to our events tab to see all events and register!



YORK COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

YORK COUNTY
YCPC
PLANNING
COMMISSION

YCPC is the primary entity for implementing the CAP, with support from YCCD. The public partner in this undertaking is WAY.