



WSWA Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 3

Spring Stream Monitoring Review

If it's springtime, rest assured that your WSWA Stream Monitoring Team is in the Run gathering samples and assessing the number of macroinvertebrates (macros) and the size of the rocks! This yearly ritual is important for many reasons, but none more so than because of the flood last September and the gasoline spill last November. In addition to monitoring the sites normally done on an annual basis, at the request of the WVDEP we are monitoring two sites affected by the gasoline spill as well as a control site upstream from the spill. Also, as a result of the gas spill, we raised our monitoring standards to Level 3 so we could better evaluate the effects of the spill. In addition to other things, Level 3 criteria dictate the identification of macros to Family rather than just Genus.

This year the Stream Monitoring Team conducted its yearly monitoring activities at Routes 522 & 13, River Road & Fairview Drive, Widmyer Elementary School, Jimstown Road, and Airport Road (to be conducted on July 18th). The weather has played havoc with the monitoring schedule, delaying the completion from June 3rd to July 18th.

Stream monitoring evaluates four aspects of a stream: water chemistry (e.g., alkalinity and dissolved oxygen); physical conditions (e.g., clarity and color); habitat conditions (sediment deposition, embeddedness, riparian buffer width); and biological conditions (the number and types of macros). The water chemistry and physical condition results are what they are; however, the numbers and varieties of macros and the habitat conditions yield a numeric value calculated by the Level 3 scorecard which then assigns an integrity rating based on that number. All results are filed with the DEP Volunteer Assessment Database and hard copies of the scorecard are retained in our WSWA records in the Extension Office. We also plan to place the results on our website.

Four of the five sites usually monitored have been completed as of this time. The score for the Routes 522/13

site was significantly better than last year, though it must be noted that we did our monitoring after the September 1st flood at that site. The scores at the site just south of the Widmyer Elementary School were good last year and this year. The score for the Fairview Drive site was down quite a bit from last year, while the score for Jimstown Road was better this year.



Kris O'Brien and Kate Lehman take macros off the seine net at Widmyer Elementary School.

For assessing the impact of the gasoline spill, the Team selected Yellow Run (both above and at the point of the gas spill), behind the Coldwell Banker building, and Earth Dog Café as sites to monitor. Earth Dog, which was above the site, and the above entry location on Yellow Run were chosen as control sites. The four sites were monitored this year on April 15 and 16. Last year immediately after the spill, Earth Dog had good macro numbers; however, this year, the macro numbers decreased dramatically. It cannot be claimed with certainty but the dredging at the high school in November of last year (see WSWA Newsletter for

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Quarterly Highlights

- Annual Meeting** -- The WSWA annual meeting was held on April 30th with approximately 25 people in attendance. Jim Buchanan and Carol Reece were newly elected to the Board of Directors while Rebecca MacLeod and Andy Swaim were re-elected to the board.
- NFWF Grant Application** – WSWA, the Town of Bath and the Greenway Cemetery Committee have joined together to apply for a \$40,000 grant from NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund to help with erosion efforts at the Greenway Cemetery. Awards will be announced in early September.
- Widmyer Wetlands Project Update** – EPCD has secured a grant for \$5,000 to be used for educational kiosks in the area. WSWA was awarded \$2,790 grant for signs to be posted on Rt. 522 and along the Run to explain why not mowing helps to prevent erosion and reduce flooding.
- Rail Trail Hike** – On April 18th approximately 50 people showed up for the hike along the route of the first two phases of the proposed Morgan County Rail Trail. The hike was sponsored by the Morgan County Economic Development Authority and the WSWA.
- EPCD Watershed Meeting** – The annual EPCD Watershed meeting was held May 22nd in Martinsburg. Several board members attended the meeting which provides the opportunity for watershed associations in the Eastern Panhandle to come together to learn about the successes and lessons learned from each other's experiences. This year the guest speaker was Bill Howard, Executive Director of the Downstream Project, whose mission is to promote conservation through the use of visual arts and technology.



President's Perspective *by Kate Lehman*

There is often a significant gap between a plan put forth in a grant proposal and what actually ends up happening if the funds are received. Such has been our experience this year.

Based on a recommendation in the Comprehensive Plan, WSWA submitted a Stream Partners grant proposal to hire a state-certified lab to test all the parameters used by WVDEP to establish a TMDL. TMDL is a regulatory term in the US Clean Water Act describing a value of the maximum amount of a pollutant a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards. WSR was not scheduled to have a TMDL established until 2021.

Because we proposed that volunteers would collect samples to be tested, and, in order for the test results to have value for DEP and US EPA as well as the WSWA, we determined that we would write a Quality Assurance Project Plan to be approved by WVDEP and EPA. A QAPP outlines exactly how volunteers will be trained, how samples will be collected and transported to a lab for testing, in what time frame, etc. WSWA members, as well as Matt Pennington and personnel from the Cacapon Institute (CI), the lab with whom we have a Memorandum of Understanding to do testing, put many hours into writing a QAPP.

Then we learned that the DEP will establish a TMDL for WSR in 2014. We wondered if the testing done by WVDEP would make our proposed testing regimen redundant. WVDEP will test all the necessary parameters to establish a TMDL. CI and WSWA, however, will do more extensive testing on the areas suspected to be the sources of impairment in the Run. Specifically, CI will collect and process water samples to test for fecal coliform bacteria. Sampling will be done on a quarterly basis, as well as after two storm events, when significant amounts bacteria can be washed into the Run. WSWA members, trained by Glenn Nelson, will test for sediment in the Run, collect and interpret data related to issues with sediment.

Does WSWA still need to submit a QAPP for approval given that WVDEP will run tests to establish a TMDL, as well as the fact that CI has an approved

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WSWA Committees Are Up and Running...And Need Your Participation

One of the early goals of the Board of Directors has been the establishment of standing committees that would foster the systematic formulation of ideas, strategies, and plans of action for our organization. These committees are chaired by board members but it is important that participation on these committees be shared by the overall membership. Please consider joining one of the following:

Financial Committee – chaired by Andy Swaim, Treasurer, and responsible for the budget and administration of grants.

Planning Committee – Chaired by Rebecca MacLeod and responsible for establishing the overall long-term plan of the association and what grants to pursue to accomplish these goals.

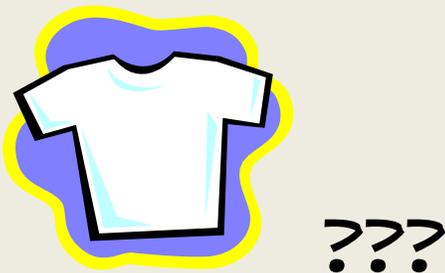
Programs Committee – Chaired by Kate Lehman, President, and plans our yearly involvement in the County Fair, Make-It-Shine, and any other community activities.

Membership Committee – Chaired by Susan Jones, Secretary, and focuses on outreach plans to both individuals and local businesses for broadening our membership.

Publicity Committee – Chaired by Carol Reece and responsible for any press releases, communications, and overall community advertising plans, including T-shirts, hats, pens, etc. to publicize WSWA.

Stream Monitoring Committee – Chaired by Norman Dean and responsible for all aspects of our stream monitoring activities.

One of the most exciting activities going on in the Publicity Committee is the design of the first WSWA t-shirt. We are hoping to develop a slogan that can be used in the t-shirt design as well as be a central element in our membership appeal. Stay tuned...



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QAPP for testing fecal coliform bacteria? The jury is still out on that question. Regardless of what the answer turns out to be, the process of writing a QAPP was highly informative for those volunteers involved, and new knowledge is rarely wasted. Also, our proposal to write and submit a QAPP for approval lifted up the larger issue of what local watershed associations can do to make certain their monitoring results are taken seriously by state and federal agencies.

Watershed Celebration Day!

Get out your calendars and reserve November 2-3, 2013, for Watershed Celebration Day! This year the event will be held right here in Berkeley Springs at Cacapon State Park. See more details in the next newsletter.

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Jan-Mar 2013 for story) may have caused excess sedimentation that may have contributed to the drop in macros at Earth Dog. Additionally, the control site on Yellow Run also showed a precipitous decline in macros which cannot be currently explained. The second monitoring activity of these gas spill sites will take place later this summer.

Norman Dean, who heads our WSWA monitoring team, has been monitoring the Run for three years and other streams in Morgan County for ten years. Glenn Nelson, Coordinator of the WV Save Our Streams Program, praises Norman for his accurate record keeping and has stated that he knows that the data he gets from WSWA is extremely reliable. In response to the question "why do we monitor?" Norman replied that: "over time macros will tell you the condition of the stream and habitat will tell you why." Many thanks to Norman and the WSWA 2012 Team of Monitors: Susan Jones, Kate Lehman, Stan Oaks, Kris O'Brien, Carol Reece, and Andy Swaim.

Calendar of Events

- July 18 Stream Monitoring at Airport Road, 9:00am
- July 24 Board of Directors Meeting, 4:00pm Extension Office
- July 27-28 WSWA Booth at Morgan County Fair
- August 7 Stream Monitoring Level 3 Class at Cacapon State Park, 9-5 (taught by Glenn Nelson)
- August 8-9 Stream Monitoring Classes at NCTC (contact Tim Craddock)
- August 28 Board of Directors Meeting, 4:00pm Extension Office
- September 25 Board of Directors Meeting, 4:00pm Extension Office

WSWA ISO...someone willing to help maintain the WSWA website.

As hard as getting the website up and running was for those of us not especially computer savvy, maintaining the site is proving to be even more of a challenge. We are asking any of you with teenage children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, even neighbor kids who would be willing to spend no more than a couple of hours a month updating the site with new information, **PLEASE** contact either Kate Lehman or Susan Jones. In order for the website to be effective, it needs to be properly maintained and that is beginning to not happen.

...Desperately Seeking Susan



THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETS EVERY 4TH WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 4:00PM AT THE EXTENSION OFFICE. ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE.

NOTE NEW TIME!

Volunteer for the WSWA booth at the Morgan County Fair, July 27-28!

Contact Kate to schedule your time

WSWA Officers and Board Members

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