



WSWA Newsletter

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Report Finds WSR Still Impaired for Fecal Coliform Bacteria

The Warm Springs Watershed Association's (WSWA) Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, completed in 2012, recommended that one of the first tasks we as an association should perform was testing by a state-regulated laboratory to establish a baseline from which to judge the efficacy of any future projects WSWA undertakes in terms of reducing nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment, all of which the Comprehensive Plan found to be problems in Warm Springs Run (WSR). To this end, WSWA was awarded a \$5,000 2013 Stream Partners Grant to pay for the testing of total nitrogen, total phosphorus, total suspended solids, fecal coliform, dissolved nitrate, dissolved orthophosphate, and total suspended sediment. Cacapon Institute won an open source competition to perform this testing and their final report was issued June 30, 2014. The full report, entitled Fecal Coliform Bacteria Monitoring for the Warm Springs Watershed Association Final Report can be found on our website.

WVDEP identified WSR as impaired for fecal coliform in 2012. During preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, it was noted that there were wide variations in values for fecal coliform; therefore, WSWA tasked CI to conduct monitoring for fecal coliform bacteria and to help WSWA prepare and successfully submit a QAPP (Quality Assurance Program Plan) for this fecal monitoring project.

CI's testing was designed to provide additional data to better understand the problem. Using state-approved water sampling methods and the Membrane Filtration Method for analysis, CI found "widely variable bacterial counts over the sampling period" and concluded that their results were "consistent" with that of the Comprehensive Plan. Weather events could not totally account for the inconsistencies in data. The CI Report concludes with the following: *"The results of this study support the listing of this stream as impaired for fecal coliform bacteria. The drivers for elevated fecal coliform bacteria counts at the samples sites remain unclear."*

WSWA Redesigns Its Website

After a year of working with our Word Press website, Tyler Orr, our Social Media Guru, concluded that the better way to encourage readership was to move to a more interactive blog-type website. This method combines the best of Facebook and a normal website in that members who "join" the website will be emailed when blogs describing WSWA events are posted to the website. The website still retains documents such as newsletters and minutes.

The new website contains PayPal for the online payment of dues and donations. The new site is now located at <http://warmspringswatershed.webs.com/>.

Michael Brooks is our new Web Master (or Apprentice, as he likes to call himself since Tyler left for UVA) and he stands ready to answer all your questions. Michael will gladly answer questions and can be reached at 304-258-7910 or at jm.brooks1@gmail.com.

Quarterly Highlights

- ✚ **Annual Meeting Report** – The Annual Meeting was held on April 23rd and attended by 14 members. Kate gave her President's Report on the activities of 2013; Rebecca MacLeod reported on the Membership Committee's efforts to start a Business Campaign to solicit the participation of local businesses; Jeff Hankey, Susan Jones, Tim Rowland, and Bob Wurster were elected and/or re-elected to the Board of Directors. Guest Speaker, Brent Walls, concluded the evening with a presentation on issues related to fracking in Morgan County.
- ✚ **WSWA T-shirt is ready!** – The new WSWA T-shirt, designed and created by local artist, Mary Klotz, will be available by the time of the County Fair on July 26-27.
- ✚ **Coming Soon to the Widmyer Wetlands** – With creative help again from Mary Klotz, signage has been designed and created for the Widmyer Wetlands. This effort, made possible by a \$3,000 grant from the **Two Rivers Giving Circle**, will include erecting educational signs in the area of the Widmyer wetlands to transform public attitudes regarding the wetlands near the Widmyer Elementary School and the high school track.
- ✚ **Gov. Tomblin ensured WV's commitment to the Chesapeake Bay restoration** by signing the landmark Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement on June 16th. This partnership supports a six-state region that includes thousands of streams and rivers, including Warm Springs Run.
- ✚ **Birthplace of Rivers Resolution** - The WSWA Board of Directors passed a resolution of support for creating the Birthplace of Rivers National Monument. The land encompasses the headwaters of six streams in the Monongahela National Forest.

President's Perspective *by Kate Lehman*

There has been discussion at recent Board meetings on the *raison d'être* for recruiting new members. While membership dues are welcome, they aren't sufficient to finance most of our projects. Perhaps more significantly, there is hope that a certain percentage of new members will become involved with the work of WSWA such as stream monitoring, purple loosestrife eradication, etc.

While on Long Island this past weekend I thought of another reason to attract new members – to educate people and then increase their awareness to issues in the watershed which need our attention.

For example: although I had lived on Long Island for 25 years, I never noticed the presence of purple loosestrife. As someone made aware through watershed work here, I now saw this invasive species in garden after garden less than half a mile from wetland areas in Long Island Sound! A Google search indicates that purple loosestrife poses a serious problem in that area just as it does here. So I mentioned the problem to people who I knew would be concerned. (I also pointed out potential grant opportunities.)

This newsletter, our website and our soon-to-be-available t-shirts are all ways to introduce friends to the work of WSWA and thus to enhance awareness of and concern about problems and opportunities in the watershed. Please help us extend our effectiveness by sharing these sources of information with potential new members!

WSWA Partners with Town of Bath

WSWA has had a very busy spring: if we weren't planting trees around town we were counting them. 2014 has seen a growing relationship between WSWA and the Town of Bath, in particular with the Tree Board and the Greenway Cemetery Corporation. It is clear that this partnership is a mutually beneficial one: as we help the town plant trees and the cemetery implement green stormwater management practices, both the town and Warm Springs Run are winners.

Starting on April 29 and stretching over a three-day period due to rain, the Town of Bath Tree Board, with the help of WSWA and other organizations, planted 84 trees at three locations around town: along 522 North by the Post Office and Train Station, the area between the library parking lot and Ice House, and at the old hospital (The Pines). The tree planting was supported by a WV Chesapeake Bay Forestry grant with help from the Cacapon Institute. In addition to the tree planting, WSWA has been assisting the Tree Board with a tree inventory of all the trees on town property, as well as recommending

where additional trees could be planted. This effort will result in a tree-inventory management plan.

As a result of the NFWF Pushing Up Daisies grant awarded at the end of last year, WSWA and the Greenway Cemetery Corporation sponsored a Tree of Heaven eradication workshop. Ben Kunze of the WV Division of Forestry taught approximately a dozen WSWA members, Master Gardeners and other interested people how to identify and then safely kill the Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus*) using Roundup. Because of the nature of its root system, the only effective way to control this extremely invasive tree is with an herbicide. The tree, often mistaken as a sumac, does provide effective protection for birds so its removal should be countered with the planting of native trees, especially with larger tree removals. A second workshop will be held on August 16; see our website for details.



Volunteers plant trees between the library and the Ice House. Photo by Anne Beckley

WSWA Signs up 49 New/Old Members at Plant Fair!

The Plant Fair turned into a very successful membership drive for WSWA. In addition to signing up 49 old and new members, WSWA raffled off five field guides and provided samples of cattail salad to help attract attention to our booth, as well as advocating the Plant Fair's theme of Edible Plants. Winners of the field guides were: Kris O'Brien, Robin Hall, Joyce Belqis, Abbie Brown, and Melissa Stover.

Thanks to all members for signing up!!

<http://warmspringswatershed.webs.com/>

We are forgoing the calendar to encourage you to go to the new website to see the new features, including the calendar and the option to pay dues and make donations with PayPal online (we are Going Green by Going Paperless) and to encourage you to register on the site. Staying connected with our membership is critical and we believe the new format of our website will make that happen.

Sign Up Now

The Board of Directors generally meets every 4th Wednesday of the month at 5:00pm at the Extension Office. All members are urged to attend and participate.

Any date or time changes will be posted as blogs on the website.

Stream Monitoring is finally underway. Results to date show surprisingly low numbers and lack of diversity among the macroinvertebrates. A final analysis will be provided in the 4Q newsletter. A demonstration stream monitoring is being planned for August. Stay tuned for details.

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