



Newsletter

Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (UCCWA)

June 2024

Greetings from UCCWA

Summer is upon us, and I hope you all have the opportunity to spend time outside enjoying the many gifts provided by nature. Sometimes, when I find myself driving along our country roads here in Washington County, I'm awed by the depth and breadth of green that is all around me and, if I'm lucky enough to pass over one of our many bridges or drive alongside one of our beautiful waterways, I'm reminded of why I'm willing to put in the many hours of effort needed to protect and preserve our watershed.

I encourage you to go out and enjoy the nature that is all around, and I challenge you to find something new to you: a new park, state game land, hiking or bike trail, fishing hole, or even a yard that you never noticed before but that you find particularly welcoming or beautiful. Then, I further challenge you to learn the name of three species of flora or fauna that live there and my last challenge to you is to introduce your new "find" to a friend or family member, share your knowledge with someone you care about and see it again through their eyes.

Don't forget to post on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages about what you find.

Virginia McAnulty
President UCCWA

Schedule of upcoming events:

UCCWA and WCWA will be at Washington Farmers Market, Thursday, September 5, 2024

Fall Water Monitoring will be held beginning in the month of October

Peters Township Library Volunteer Fair

February 27, 2024



Washington County Watershed Alliance and Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association shared a table at the Volunteer Fair in February. The goal was to bring awareness of volunteer opportunities within the organizations and to reach out to other non-profits and gain contacts.

Both goals were accomplished with several new sign ups and new contacts. Contacts included the Peters Township Parks & Recreation Department, Peters Township Community Television, and Peters Township Environmental Quality Board.

NST Fishing Derby

May 19, 2024

It was a beautiful day for a youth fishing derby at Canonsburg Lake where a good-sized Carp appeared to be the biggest catch of the day. For those needing a break from fishing, the Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed tent was a popular spot.

Displays of invasive species, plastic pollution and macroinvertebrates covered the tables and led to discussions on the importance of keeping our watershed healthy. Roger Shaw, Kathleen Martincic and Ed Callahan were on hand to talk about the stream critters and explain their importance to a healthy ecosystem.

For the youngsters the crayfish and other small macros including mayflies and riffle beetles piqued their interest, and for the littlest ones coloring the traveling mosaic fish was quite popular.

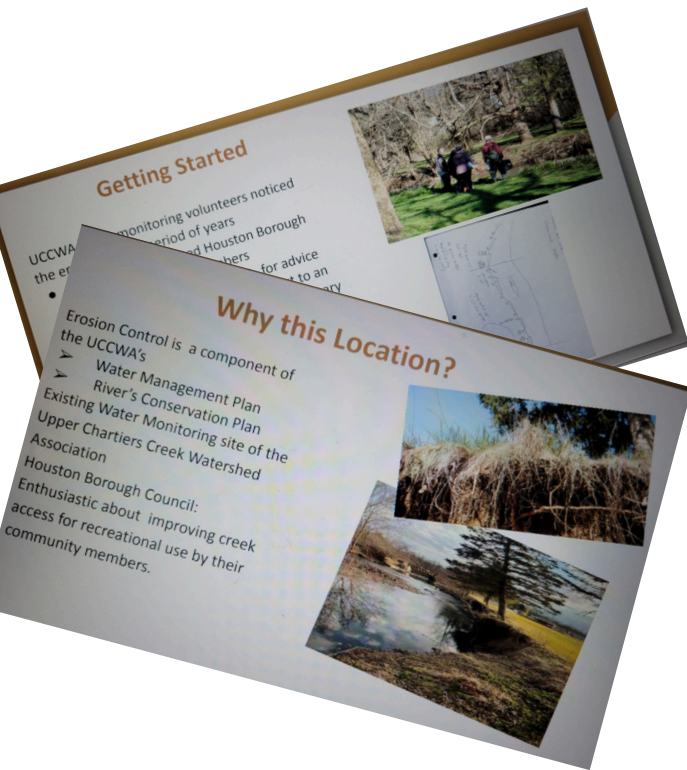


3RQ Roundtable

January, 2024

Members of Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (UCCWA) had an opportunity to participate in a three-part virtual series to learn about the research, conservation and education-based efforts being undertaken by Three Rivers Quest (3RQ) member organizations and partner researchers in the Upper Ohio River Basin.

As a current recipient of a Generating Awareness for Project Success (GAPS) grant, UCCWA was invited to send a representative to a virtual roundtable hosted by 3RQ focusing on erosion and stormwater projects. At January's session, Virginia McAnulty gave a brief presentation on Chartiers Creek, UCCWA and the erosion study being conducted in the Chartiers Creek at the site of the baseball field located in Houston Borough. GAPS is a collaboration between the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds (FPW) and 3RQ.



Discovery Walk

April 13, 2024



On a beautiful day in April Ian Reinstadtler, and Jeffery Kim of Washington County Conservation District and Dr. Jason Kilgore, Ph.D. of Washington and Jefferson college, joined members of UCCWA as we explored Peters Lake Park as a possible location for our annual wetlands walk. Unfortunately, the location does not meet our requirements for a public walk, but we had a wonderful time (as we always do, with Dr. Kilgore) exploring and learning how to identify a wetland, what are hydraulic soils and wetland plant identification.

If you get a chance, head out to Peters Lake Park to see what you can find. You surely will not be disappointed. In the meantime, UCCWA will keep looking for our next wetland walk location.



Spring Water Monitoring

Although the weather delayed our Spring water monitoring this year, once we were able to get to the creeks, the results were for the most part positive. This spring we also completed a sample monitor of 10 Mile Creek for the first time. We were all excited to find a couple snailcase maker caddisflies that construct a portable case that closely resembles a snail shell. The case is actually a tube composed of sand and small rock particles formed in a helical coil.

We had great turnout from our volunteers this season, which made the outings fun and easy. Thanks to everyone that came out to help.

Station #	Site Description	Stream Name	Date Sampled	Rating
1	American Legion	Chartiers Run	4/22/2024	Good
2	Houston Park	Chartiers Creek	4/20/2024	Poor
3	Linden Creek / Linden Road	Little Chartiers Creek	4/27/2024	Good
4	Scotty's	Chartiers Creek	5/13/2024	Fair
5	10-Mile Creek below Dam	10-Mile Creek	4/26/2024	Good



Educational Corner: Flood Control Tips for Homeowners

With the flooding we've had in the area recently, we thought it would be a good time to talk about its causes and what an individual homeowner can do to help. The residential and commercial development in our watershed has led to more impermeable surfaces, surfaces that do not allow storm water to soak into the ground. These include roofs, driveways, roads, and parking lots. These structures are usually designed to drain water quickly to our streams, not allowing water to be absorbed into the ground. Also, the shallow roots of turf grass and compacted soils of lawns limit rainwater absorption.

Other contributors include steep hillsides that are created when land is graded for development, which can be seen behind many of our commercial developments. These slopes will not hold water during storms. Our watershed has also seen loss of forested areas both from new building and pipeline installation. Trees are very effective in holding and absorbing water. Leaves slow down water falling to the ground, and the roots allow better water infiltration into the soil, as well as reducing erosion. We have also lost wetlands, which play an important role in mitigating flooding. The EPA estimates that a single acre of wetland can store 1 to 1.5 million gallons of water. You can find our local wetlands by Googling 'National Wetlands Inventory'.

Next time it's raining, put on a raincoat and see where the rainwater is going. To limit the water going to our streams, 'slow-water' techniques can be used to hold the water on your land a little longer, allowing it to be absorbed into the ground or evaporated.

These 'slow-water' methods can include:

1. Rain barrel or cistern. The water can be used for gardens or released after flooding danger is over.
2. Rain Garden. Use a low spot in your yard or create a new one to collect water, plant with water loving plants to hold the water there and aid absorption.
3. Pavers. If you are installing a patio or other structure, consider pavers that allow water drainage rather than cement.
4. Disconnect or Redirect downspouts. Rather than directing water to impermeable surfaces, send it to areas where it can be absorbed into the ground.
5. Plant trees. Their leaves allow more surface area for evaporation, and the roots take up water and improve soil infiltration.
6. Reduce turf lawn. If there are parts of your lawn that are not used for anything, allow them to grow or plant with native species.
7. Riparian Plantings. If you are lucky enough to have a stream on your property, plant water loving plants next to them to absorb and slow the water runoff.

Many resources for these techniques can be found online. The Penn State Master Watershed Stewards and the Nature Nurture Center offer a program to certify your property as Watershed Friendly and have many ideas for various property sizes. Information on the program can be found at [Watershed Friendly PA Certification – Master Watershed Steward Program \(psu.edu\)](#).

Information source from Penn State Extension and EPA sources.

Contact Information

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Please reach out with questions, concerns or ideas for improving our watershed.