



2024 Accomplishments

Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (UCCWA)

A note from our President

2024 proved to be a year of cementing old friendships and forging new ones and 2025 promises to be a year of continued growth and opportunities. From creating new partnerships in the creek to walking with old friends in the wetlands, 2024 will be a year to remember! But as much as I'd like to linger and remember the fun we had at the North Strabane Fishing Derby or the fascinating truths we learned on our tour of the Washington/East Washington Joint Authority wastewater treatment facility, - and yes, it really was fascinating - it's time to look towards the future. Already, we are planning our first ever community fundraiser, a birding walk led by local expert John Flannigan, and a tree identification walk with Master Naturalists Jean and Byron Black. And that is just the beginning of the list!

As I begin another year as UCCWA president, I continue to be introduced to many people right here in our community that care about our environment and are willing to put their time and effort into learning about our natural resources as well as preserving and protecting them. And even better news? They are willing to meet us where we are, share their knowledge with us and help make us better, more knowledgeable stewards of our watershed! So, I encourage you to make 2025 the year you speak up for the watershed you call home and help us keep our creeks both clean and vibrant. Come out and join us at one of our events and learn with us as we experience the beauty of Washington County and its waterways.

Thank you for all that you do for our community. We each can make a difference and together we can move mountains.

Sincerely,

Virginia McAnulty
UCCWA President

Promoting our Watershed

One of our key purposes within UCCWA is to disseminate information pertaining to the natural resources of our watershed. With this purpose in mind, we participated in educational events in 2024, including having tables at both the Peters Township Library Volunteer fair and the North Strabane Youth Fishing Derby. The library event focusing on volunteer opportunities within our organization and reaching out to other non-profits. The fishing event focusing on education and fun for our younger watershed public. Displays of invasive species, plastic pollution and macroinvertebrates covered the table at the fishing derby and led to discussions on the importance of keeping our watershed healthy.



Studying Natural Resources:

Spring and Fall Water Monitoring: UCCWA continued to monitor stream water quality through chemical testing and macro invertebrate studies. In fact, we have been monitoring the creeks within the Chartiers Watershed since 2001. That's 23 years of data to learn from!

The four sites remained: Chartiers Run behind American Legion in Houston; Chartiers Creek main stem at Houston Ballfield and Scotty's Ice Cream; and Little Chartiers at Linden Road and Linden Creek Road. This year we also completed water monitoring on 10 Mile Creek where we found a very cool Caddisfly. Although not in the Upper Chartiers Creek watershed, it is a watershed within Washington County and an organization within the Watershed Alliance.



Gathering the Macros



Stonefly Nymph



Measuring water flow



A few of our many volunteers this monitoring year. Thank you!

2024 Results: Stream	Date	Rating	Date	Rating
Chartiers Run	4/22	Good	10/26	Very Good
Chartiers Creek- Scotty's	5/13	Good	11/2	Fair
Little Chartiers	4/27	Very Good	10/8	Good
Chartiers Creek - Houston	4/20	Poor	10/5	Good

Wetlands Discovery Walk: Wetlands are a home to many species of migratory and resident birds, reptiles and amphibians, fish, insects, and plants. They also serve as a beneficial natural resource by storing floodwaters, filtering pollutants, and serving as a carbon sink.

On our April Discovery walk with Washington County Conservation District staff and Dr. Jason Kilgore, Ph.D. of Washington and Jefferson college, we explored a wetland, learned how to identify a wetland, discovered what makes up hydric soils and identified wetland plants. We are hoping to find an appropriate wetland walk location for 2025. We'll keep you posted.



Fishing Survey: As reported in our 2023 Annual Report, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission biologist Mike Depew completed a survey on fish populations within Chartiers Creek. This was completed in collaboration with the US Department of Environmental Protection and Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed. We received the results of this study in 2024 and are sharing some of the results below. We still await the final report. In the meantime, we have sent these results to the University of Pittsburgh for further analysis.

The numbers reported below are fish counts rolled up across all locations surveyed within both Washington and Allegheny County. Chemical results were also recorded, as well as sizes of Bass by location. We will be sharing this additional information on our website in the near future.

Fish Species	Counts	Fish Species	Counts	Fish Species	Counts
Banded Darter	44	Fantail Darter	291	Rock Bass	50
Bigeye Chub	14	Freshwater Drum	7	Rosyface Shiner	1
Black Crappie	1	Goldfish	1	Sand Shiner	1372
Blacknose Dace	243	Green Sunfish	136	Sauger	2
Bluegill	702	Greenside Darter	3460	Silver Shiner	41
Bluntnose Minnow	7559	Johnny Darter	957	Silverjaw Minnow	851
Central Stoneroller	2119	Largemouth Bass	25	Smallmouth Bass	691
Channel Catfish	4	Longnose Dace	2	Spotfin Shiner	19
Channel Shiner	7	Mimic Shiner	124	Spotted Bass	2
Common Carp	57	Northern Hog Sucker	1204	Stonecat	4
Creek Chub	1741	Pumpkinseed	2	White Sucker	6202
Emerald Shiner	286	Rainbow Darter	1252	Yellow Bullhead	45

Collaborating with local communities and businesses

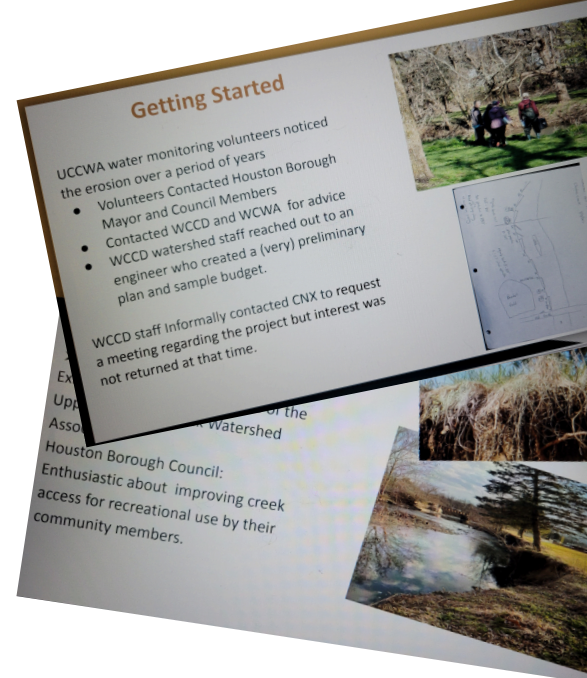
Erosion Study with Houston Borough: During the summer of 2022, UCCWA volunteer, Carrilee Hemington, noticed that erosion was occurring on the banks of Chartiers Creek adjacent to the Houston Borough Baseball Field. Ms. Hemington is not one to sit on her hands, so she decided to approach Houston Borough Council to offer them the assistance of UCCWA to solve the problem. Borough Councilman Nick Galbraith saw the advantages of a collaboration and was able to gain the support of the borough council. Once we had the “go ahead” from the borough, UCCWA was able to connect with Rachel Spirnak of the West Virginia Water Research Institute who recommended we apply for the Generating Awareness for Project Success (GAPS) assistance program - a collaboration between the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds (FPW) and Three Rivers QUEST (3RQ) to help watershed groups secure the technical assistance they need to complete real world projects.



Through the GAPS assistance program, UCCWA was able to receive all the technical assistance, supplies, and training we needed to complete an erosion study at that location. Our volunteers did a fantastic job staying on top of the data collection for the study and submitted all the data that Rachel needed to complete a report that Houston Borough was later able to use to support two Local Share Account grant applications totaling approximately \$188,000 for streambank restoration and erosion control measures. And as an extra bonus WVWRI also created a beautiful story map of the study which can be found here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b1f0a0cf37d747daba8f8ba9b05e7246>.

Thank you all who helped bring this project together. No one of us could do it alone but together we made it happen!

3RQ Roundtable: Members of 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 McNulty 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.



WEWJA facilities tour: On September 10, 2024 the Washington – East Washington Joint Authority (WEWJA) waste water treatment plant hosted UCCWA on a tour of their facilities. Board members plus a few others attended and enjoyed the extended walk through the plant, including a tour of their surprisingly technical monitoring room. Discussions on water quality, stories on previous flood events and a charming tale of their resident duck population gave us a better picture of the challenges and rewards of working at the facility. The size of the operation and number of steps taken in wastewater treatment was a surprise to many of us.



Tours, such as this one, teach us all about different aspects of our watershed, which in turn helps us to better understand how we can keep improving it. We thank the WEWJA for collaborating with us on this tour.

Odds and Ends

A pop up cleanup was held on November 5 behind the Chartiers Houston American Legion. This location is one of our water monitoring sites and recently received a "very good" rating upon finding some sensitive macroinvertebrates! After we collected 5 bags of trash, a bunch of random metal, and maybe part of a urinal, the outside stream banks match the water quality. Thank you to our volunteers and special thank you to the American Legion for allowing us to use their dumpster!



Finally, we are deeply proud and grateful to have Carrilee Hemington as our current Vice President. The Washington County Conservation District has honored her with a Volunteer Award in recognition of her 20 years of devoted service to our area. We extend our sincerest gratitude and congratulations to Carrilee Hemington for her remarkable 20+ years of service.



2024 Officers and Board Members

Virginia McAnulty, President
Carrilee Hemington, Vice President
Kristene Shaw, Secretary
Summer Voelker, Treasurer



Become a dual member of Washington County Watershed Alliance and Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association to support our mission!

Go to <https://www.wcwalliance.org/plans-pricing>
or scan QR code

Contact Information

Email: chartierscreekwa@pawccd.org

Website: upperchartierscreek.org

[Facebook.com/UpperChartiersCreek](https://www.facebook.com/UpperChartiersCreek)

[Instagram.com/upperchartierswatershed](https://www.instagram.com/upperchartierswatershed)