

The logo for the Washington County Watershed Alliance features a dark green, stylized leaf shape at the top. Below the leaf, the text "WASHINGTON COUNTY WATERSHED ALLIANCE" is written in white, uppercase letters. Underneath the text are several blue, wavy lines that resemble water ripples, extending across the width of the logo.

**WASHINGTON COUNTY
WATERSHED
ALLIANCE**

The title "2023 Annual Report" is displayed in a large, bold, white font. Below it, the subtitle "Our 26th year and still flowing" is also in a bold, white font. The text is set against a dark, semi-transparent background that has a wavy, water-like texture.

2023 Annual Report
Our 26th year and still flowing

Visit us! wcwalliance.org

 [@WCWAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/WCWAlliance)

Fellow Members & Friends,

After multiple years at reduced capacity due to covid restrictions and separation, in 2023 WCWA was truly able to get flowing again.

Our introspection and work during the downtime paid dividends and set us up to secure funding for detailed strategic plans to guide this organization into the future. When it comes to thinking about improvements to the organization and shaking things up, we left no stone unturned. We've focused on building internal and external partnerships to broaden and deepen the impact of WCWA.

There's still internal work to be done within the organization, but I'm hopeful that the work we've put in in 2020-2023 will enable us get back out into the field in 2024 and beyond.

*Sincerely,
Sam Carroll
President*



WASHINGTON COUNTY
WATERSHED
ALLIANCE

THE MISSION

Through a watershed-based approach, will: provide a collaborative framework to support the efforts of all local watershed associations; encourage responsible utilization of air, land and water resources; support sound agricultural activities; encourage sustainable land use and the protection and preservation of agricultural lands; and promote the protection, preservation and enhancement of the county's natural resources, biodiversity and ecological health - for the benefit of current and future generations.

THE VISION

Clean, healthy water for all of Washington County and beyond.

BOARD of DIRECTORS

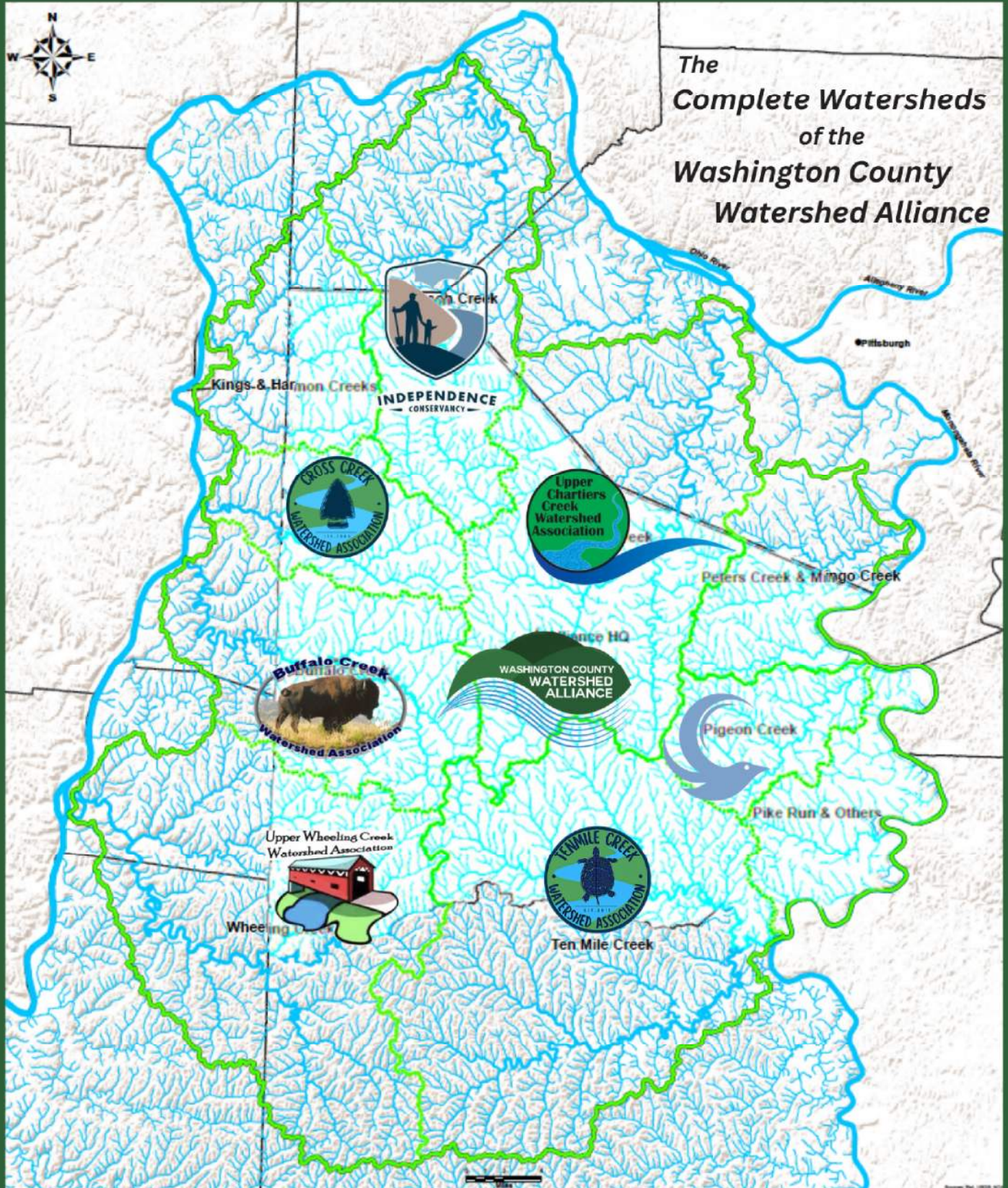
Sam Carroll
President
Vicki Bryan --> Virginia McAnulty
Vice President
Carrilee Hemington --> Terri Gladus
Secretary
Jennifer Dann --> Terri Gladus
Treasurer
Vicky Michaels
Ken Maglietta
Kathleen Martincic
Kitty Gardner
Jason Fillhart --> Jordan Witmer

Our ripples reach beyond us



"What happens in Washington County doesn't stay in Washington County."

Watersheds don't stop at political boundaries, and neither does the work of the Alliance. Washington County is comprised of the headwaters of many major creeks that flow into our area's rivers. Because of this, we have the unique opportunity to have complete control over the quality of waters leaving our County and affecting those who live downstream of us.



A year of Introspection



It is said that you can never step in the same river twice. Like a flowing river, the passage of time wears upon all things. How has the Alliance held up after 25 years of existence? What can we do to set the course for the successful future?

That was the focus of the Annual Meeting in March when Kimberlie Gridley of Earth Integration presented “The Strategic Plan and the Future of WCWA,” the result of a year-long planning process between her firm and WCWA’s Executive Committee and made possible by a capacity building grant from Washington County Community Foundation, the Alvin W. & Carol L. Berthold Fund, John R. Duskey Fund, and the Roy R. Gillespie Fund.

This plan would make the Alliance more efficient by streamlining its organization to a more centralized structure that is less dependent on the Washington County Conservation District, which is going through changes of its own.

Since its inception, WCWA has relied on WCCD for administrative assistance, grant writing, and institutional knowledge. Now, WCWA will need its own staff to compensate for this loss.

The Board’s composition would reflect this change. Watershed Associations would become Watershed Standing Committees that no longer needed separate officers or social media presence and no longer automatically got a seat on the Board. This would allow the Board to bring in talents beyond just dedicated environmentalists.

In this new format, Chairs of Watershed Committees would make recommendations to the Alliance Board regarding local projects. Funding dedicated to specific watersheds would continue, but membership would now be to the Alliance only. The area within the Alliance’s concern would increase, so that like a watershed, it would not be hindered by political boundaries but continue to its natural outflow into the Lower Monongahela / Upper Ohio Rivers (LM/UO Watersheds).

Needless to say, even though the plan was approved in September, discussions regarding the details and merits of this new system continued.



A Year of Learning



The year began with improvements to the Alliance website, new brochures for WCWA, TMCWA, and UCCWA, a new TMCW map. Planning for new Water Trails, Story Maps and Next-Gen Stream Crossing Signs drew enthusiasm. And a focus group for the new Pigeon Creek Watershed Association came into being.

The Alliance and member Associations filled the calendar with educational opportunities and watershed-related activities as experts from around the area taught us how to be better stewards of the land:

Jonathan Hoeflich continued with his *Mudpuppy Survey* in Buffalo Creek for the Pennsylvania Amphibian & Reptile Survey (PARS) and the PA F&BC;

Dr. Jason Kilgore and students from W&J conducted UCCWA's annual "*Wetlands Walk*" along little Chartiers Creek near Canonsburg Lake in April;

Dr. James Wood of West Liberty University took the time to explain, in layman's terms, the "*Water Quality Assessment for the Buffalo Creek Watershed*" in May;

Roger Shaw, Master Naturalist from UCCW, challenged us to get "*Wild about Watersheds*" in June and then in August had us "*Investigating Invasive Plants*" so that we would never look at our local woods in the same way again;

Alysha Trexler, Watershed Project Manager from WPC, **DeAnne Martin**, Director of Washington Park and others led us through the "*Riparian Buffer Workshop*," reminding us that "*Trees Do More Than You Think*" in June;

John Flannigan and others from UCCWA took us "*Birding at (Canonsburg) Lake*" in July;

Laurie Barr from the PA Chapter of Save-our-Streams told of the many "*Lost, Orphan and Abandoned Wells*" in the area in September;

Vicky Michaels of the Independence Conservancy tirelessly worked to teach us how to make this world a better place at September's "*Community Tire Collection*" in Mount Pleasant Township.



A Year of Volunteering



Volunteers connected with the public at events throughout the county: beginning with the inaugural TenMile Creek Regatta; followed by the Kid's Fish for Free Day at Dutch Fork in May; to Ag Days in April; to the Washington Farmer's Market in July; to the North Strabane Township's Kid's Fishing Derby and the Washington County Fair in August; to the Hughes Covered Bridge Festival in September.



Volunteers came out in force for cleanups around the county. March saw over 30 volunteers collect more than 2500 lbs of garbage for the Ramps and Roads event. Several cleanups happened in April, including 11 tons collected along Ten Mile Road in West Bethlehem Township for Earth Day; and 2000 lbs at the North Franklin Waterside Park, 7th Ward, 8th Ward, and Washington Park for the Parks & Playground event. The Watershed Wash-up in May resulted in 35 volunteers collecting 6000 lbs of garbage along Catfish Creek. WCCD and Range Resources were joined by members from W&J College and TMCWA to collect 18.9 tons and 746 tires from along Marianna's 'Dump' Road.



A year of monitoring & restoring



The Alliance continued to pay attention to stream health through: the Winter Salt Watch with the Izzak Walton League; Electrofishing study with PA F&BC; Macro and Stream Chemistry Monitoring; and Bacterial Survey, all along Chartiers Creek.

Buffalo Creek Watershed steeled itself for the coming of more long wall mining with a new Flow Meter purchased with a grant from Center for Coalfield Justice.

Minigrants from Range Resource Penalty funds provided partial support for a new walking trail in Morris Township and for a Study of Potential Kayak Launch sites, both along TenMile Creek.

Plans for streambank stabilization for the Houston Ballfield are in the works thanks to a partnership with WV Water Research Institute.

Streambank restoration projects are also moving forward along Chartiers Creek in North Franklin Township and TenMile Creek in West Bethlehem Township, funded by Growing Greener Grants.

With the assistance of the WCCD, WCWA continued its partnership with Keystone 10 Million Trees, providing 1250 trees to 47 landowners in order to strengthen riparian zones and enhance public spaces.



The Alliance joined the Southwest PA Water Network in June; and attended the Statewide Watershed Conference hosted by PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR) and PA Environmental Council in October.



By the Numbers



2000 miles of streams flow through Washington County*

60 percent of streams in Washington County are impaired from acid mine drainage, agriculture, and storm runoff. Chartiers Creek and its tributaries are 93% impaired. Only Little Chartiers Creek and unnamed tributaries in the watershed reach attainment*

3 streams in the County are in good shape:*

- Kings Creek
- Middle Wheeling Creek
- Mingo Creek

6 most impaired streams in the County:*

- Dutch Fork (100%)
- Huston Run (100%)
- Peters Creek (100%)
- Chartiers Creek (93.12%)
- Raccoon Creek (85.37%)
- Maple Creek (81.57%)

6 active Watershed Associations work to improve water quality. Activities included cleaning trash from local streams, improving riparian buffers, and stabilize streambanks.

- Raccoon Creek / Independence Conservancy - **IC**
- Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association - **UCCWA**
- Ten Mile Creek Watershed Association - **TMCWA**
- Upper Wheeling Creek Watershed Association - **UWCWA**
- Buffalo Creek Watershed Association - **BCWA**
- Cross Creek Watershed Association - **CCWA**

69 members of WCWA

1250 trees planted

35.15 tons of garbage collected

Most liked facebook post:



Since 2013, WCWA has participated annually in the Washington County Community Foundation's *Day of Giving*, which supports local charities. In 2023, we received \$9196.50 from 41 generous donors. This earned the Alliance \$630.26 in Bonus Funding bring our **2023 Day of Giving Total to \$9,826.76**. WCWA is grateful to our donors and to WCCF for the \$41,735.83 of support over the past 11 years!

*<https://washingtonish.com/impaired-streams/>

Thanks to You!

Thank You!

We are grateful for all our members and volunteers,

without whom
there would be
no Alliance.



And to our partners and sponsors,
whose support allowed us
to do the work to protect
our natural resources



And especially to
Dr. Jason Kilgore
who donated so much
time and energy
while on sabbatical
from W&J College
to lead our hikes
and give us guidance.



WCWA is a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization created to provide a resilient structure to address water issues on a county-wide basis. The Alliance is comprised of individual Watershed Associations that focus on their particular area of the County. The Alliance currently has active groups in Ten Mile Creek, Wheeling Creek, Buffalo Creek, Cross Creek, Raccoon Creek, and Chartiers Creek. A focus group is forming to create a new Pigeon Creek Watershed Association. The Alliance supports its Associations by maintaining 501(c)3 status, managing Association funding, obtaining an annual financial audit, and assisting with grant applications and organizational management. The Alliance also maintains data bases and conducts its own programs throughout the County.

Our gratitude goes to outgoing board members, Vicki Bryan, Carrilee Hemington, and Jason Fillhart for their dedication and service.

Vicki joined the Alliance Board after retiring from the Wasington County Planning Commission, serving from 2015 to 2023 and was Vice President and a member of the Exectutive Committee when she retired from the Board. She tries to keep up with the WCWA through meeting emails, the website, and Facebook.

Also a member of the Ex Comm, Carrilee brought with her a background in Urban & Regional Planning, joining the Board and serving as Secretary for over ten years. She says time flew. She still shows up at meetings and events, ready to share her wisdom, energy, and encouragement with all.

Vicki and Carrilee both contributed greatly to the latest Strategic Plan which was developed by the Alliance Executive Committee.

Jason is the Watershed Project Manager for West Virginia Water Research Institute and joined the Alliance Board six years ago because of his strong commitment to water quality and hydrology. He says he enjoyed learning about each of the watersheds and meeting the people who really cared about them.

Join us on the path to a restored environment.

LAKE SHORE TRAIL

*Like the watersheds we represent, we are sustained by the flow of support from many small sources throughout Washington County and beyond.
Thank you !*



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