



### Petition to Protect Whetstone Run – Action Needed

Last year Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA) petitioned the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to change the Water Quality (WQ) designation of an un-named tributary of Whetstone Run in the Darby Creek Watershed to High Quality. This tributary represents the last remaining higher quality stream reaches in our Watershed, but the DEP intends to reject our petition for changing the WQ designation for this creek in Marple Township of Delaware County for reasons that are flawed and will likely pave the way for a large scale development project.

The development project is proposed on 213 acres owned by the Archdioceses of Philadelphia for the past several decades in Marple Township – known as the Don Guanella property. The developer wants to build a commercial complex that is 8 acres larger than the Springfield Mall, and if he doesn't get a tax break, will build a large suburban sprawl housing development that will kill the entire forest area. This is not only devastating to one of the largest remaining forest areas in the Darby Creek Watershed in Delaware County, but past development of open space is a known cause of additional flooding and degradation of waterways downstream in the Watershed impacting flood-prone communities like Clifton Heights, Darby, and Eastwick Philadelphia.

Our initial petition was accepted by the State Environmental Quality Board in 2016 which directed PA DEP to conduct a study to evaluate the quality of the stream. The report of the DEP findings was recently released, and it is a bit disconcerting that in the finding document they mention a report prepared by others (a developer's consultant) but have not provided a copy to DCVA as petitioners, nor is it referenced or an attachment to their findings report. In addition, there was no inclusion of the data that DCVA provided in our petition (3 years of macroinvertebrate data), but DEP would mention a dissenter's report but not provide equal press for the data that a non-profit provided with the petition.

Not only does DEP report differently on "expert" reports, but DEP also has a flawed process. It compared the tributary to places like Sixpenny Creek which is in Berks County, not too far from Reading, in a limited development area over 50 miles away. There is an exceptional value stream less than 1,000 feet away that should have been used for comparison. DEP also sampled once last November which was early in the Benthos year, still cooling down from such a warm fall, and at a time when the bugs are really tiny, some may not have laid eggs yet or may have been just hatched.

This is the highest functioning stream DCVA has identified in the entire Darby Creek Watershed and losing it due an incorrect Water Quality designation will be a significant loss for the watershed. It is important for residents throughout Delaware County to understand how this will affect the community and that you can help to reverse this decision. Comments on the draft stream evaluation report originally ended Monday, August 13, but at DCVA and other partner's requests, the comment period was extended to October 15<sup>th</sup>. You can read the report and comment here - <https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/Comments.aspx>

Most importantly, people need to reach out to their state representatives to ask the PA Environmental Quality Board to direct DEP to go back and do a proper evaluation of the stream designation petition. <https://www.dep.pa.gov/PublicParticipation/EnvironmentalQuality/Pages/Membership.aspx> . **Please see list page.**

See below for the individuals serving on the PA Environmental Quality Board.

#### CHAIRPERSON

Honorable Patrick McDonnell, Secretary of Environmental Protection  
16th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building  
400 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
[pmcdonnell@pa.gov](mailto:pmcdonnell@pa.gov)

#### **BOARD MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES:**

##### Department of Health

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ALTERNATE</b>
Honorable Dr. Rachel Levine Secretary of Health Room 802, Health & Welfare Building Harrisburg, PA 17120 <a href="mailto:rlevine@pa.gov">rlevine@pa.gov</a>	Sharon Watkins Department of Health, Health & Welfare Building Harrisburg, PA 17120 <a href="mailto:shawatkins@pa.gov">shawatkins@pa.gov</a>

##### Department of Community and Economic Development

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ALTERNATE</b>
Honorable Dennis Davin Secretary of Community and Economic Development 400 North Street Keystone Building, 4th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17120 <a href="mailto:ddavin@pa.gov">ddavin@pa.gov</a>	Denise Brinley Department of Community and Economic Development 400 North Street Keystone Building, 4th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17120 <a href="mailto:dbrinley@pa.gov">dbrinley@pa.gov</a>

##### Department of Transportation

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>ALTERNATE</b>
Honorable Leslie Richards Secretary of Transportation Keystone Building, 8th Floor West Harrisburg, PA 17120 <a href="mailto:lsrichards@pa.gov">lsrichards@pa.gov</a>	Natasha Fackler Department of Transportation Keystone Building 8th Floor West Harrisburg, PA 17120

#### DEP STAFF

Robert "Bo" Reiley, Bureau of Regulatory Counsel  
Jessica Shirley, Director, Policy Office  
Laura Edinger, Regulatory Coordinator

#### BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION

Environmental Quality Board  
16th Floor, RCSOB  
P.O. Box 8477  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477  
(717) 787-4526

## Department of Agriculture

### MEMBER

Honorable Russell Redding  
Secretary of Agriculture  
Room 211, Agriculture Building  
2301 North Cameron Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
[rredding@pa.gov](mailto:rredding@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Michael F. Smith  
Department of Agriculture  
Room 211, Agriculture Building  
2301 North Cameron Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
[mfsmith@pa.gov](mailto:mfsmith@pa.gov)

## Department of Labor and Industry

### MEMBER

Honorable Jerry Oleksiak  
Secretary of Labor & Industry  
Room 1700, Labor & Industry Building  
7th & Forster Streets  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[wgoleksiak@pa.gov](mailto:wgoleksiak@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Andrew Sharp  
Department of Labor & Industry  
Labor & Industry Building  
7th & Forster Streets  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[andsharp@pa.gov](mailto:andsharp@pa.gov)

## Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

### MEMBER

Honorable John Arway  
Executive Director  
PA Fish & Boat Commission  
1601 Elmerton Avenue  
P.O. Box 67000  
Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000  
[jarway@pa.gov](mailto:jarway@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Heather Smiles  
Chief, Division of Enviro. Services  
PA Fish & Boat Commission  
595 E Rolling Ridge Dr  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
[hsmiles@pa.gov](mailto:hsmiles@pa.gov)

## Pennsylvania Game Commission

### MEMBER

Honorable Bryan Burhans  
Executive Director  
PA Game Commission  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797  
[bburhans@pa.gov](mailto:bburhans@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Michael R. DiMatteo, Chief  
Division of Environmental Planning & Habitat  
Protection  
PA Game Commission  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797  
[mdimatteo@pa.gov](mailto:mdimatteo@pa.gov)

## Public Utility Commission

### MEMBER

Honorable Gladys Brown  
Chairman  
Public Utility Commission  
Keystone Building, 3rd Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17105  
[gmb@pa.gov](mailto:gmb@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Andrew Place  
Vice Chairman  
Public Utility Commission  
Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[aplace@pa.gov](mailto:aplace@pa.gov)

## Historical and Museum Commission

### MEMBER

Honorable Andrea Bakewell Lowery  
Executive Director  
Historical and Museum Commission  
Room 501, William Penn Memorial  
Museum Building, 330 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[anlowery@pa.gov](mailto:anlowery@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Douglas McLearn  
Chief, Division of Archaeology & Protection  
Historical and Museum Commission  
Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 2nd Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[dmclearen@pa.gov](mailto:dmclearen@pa.gov)

## Governor's Office of Policy and Planning

The Director of the Governor's Policy Office serves as Executive Director of the State Planning Board, which holds a seat on the EQB.

### MEMBER

Honorable Sarah Galbally  
Secretary  
Governor's Office of Planning and  
Policy  
Room 238, Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[sgalbally@pa.gov](mailto:sgalbally@pa.gov)

### ALTERNATE

Sam Robinson  
Senior Policy Analyst  
Governor's Office of Planning and Policy  
Room 601, Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[sdrobinson@pa.gov](mailto:sdrobinson@pa.gov)

## Citizens Advisory Council

### MEMBER

Cynthia Carrow  
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
800 Waterfront Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
[ccarrow@paconserve.org](mailto:ccarrow@paconserve.org)

### ALTERNATE

James Schmid  
1201 Cedar Grove Road  
Media, PA 19063  
[schmidjamesa@gmail.com](mailto:schmidjamesa@gmail.com)

Terry Dayton  
430 Lippencott Run Road  
Waynesburg, PA 15370  
[tdayton@windstream.net](mailto:tdayton@windstream.net)

John St. Clair  
617 Hiner Road  
Homer City, PA 15748  
[jstclair18@gmail.com](mailto:jstclair18@gmail.com)

William C. Fink  
5714 Raystown Road  
Hopewell, PA 16650  
[wfink@cvff.com](mailto:wfink@cvff.com)

Jim Sandoe  
1181 Joann Avenue  
Ephrata, PA 17522  
[cisandoe@yahoo.com](mailto:cisandoe@yahoo.com)

Donald Welsh  
203 Wiltshire Drive  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
[donaldswelsh@gmail.com](mailto:donaldswelsh@gmail.com)

John Walliser, VP  
PA Environmental Council  
2124 Penn Avenue  
2nd Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
[jwalliser@pecpa.org](mailto:jwalliser@pecpa.org)

### General Assembly

MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Honorable Gene Yaw Senate of Pennsylvania Republican Chairman, Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee Senate Post Office Box 203023 Harrisburg, PA 17120-3023 <a href="mailto:gyaw@pasen.gov">gyaw@pasen.gov</a>	Adam Pankake Executive Director Senate (R) Environmental Resources and Energy Committee Senate Post Office Box 203023 Harrisburg, PA 17120-3023 <a href="mailto:apankake@pasen.gov">apankake@pasen.gov</a>
Honorable John T. Yudichak Senate of Pennsylvania Democratic Chairman, Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee Senate Post Office Box 203014 Harrisburg, PA 17120-3014 <a href="mailto:yudichak@pasenate.com">yudichak@pasenate.com</a>	Timothy Collins Executive Director Senate (D) Environmental Resources and Energy Committee Senate Post Office Box 203014 Harrisburg, PA 17120-3014 <a href="mailto:timothy.collins@pasenate.com">timothy.collins@pasenate.com</a>
Honorable John Maher Pennsylvania House of Representatives Republican Chairman, House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee House Post Office Box 202040 Harrisburg, PA 17120-2040 <a href="mailto:jmaher@pahousegop.com">jmaher@pahousegop.com</a>	Leda Lipton Legal Counsel House (R) Environmental Resources and Energy Committee House Post Office Box 202040 Harrisburg, PA 17120-2040 <a href="mailto:llypton@pahousegop.com">llypton@pahousegop.com</a>
	Richard Fox Executive Director House (D) Environmental Resources and Energy Committee House Post Office Box 202118 Main Capitol Building Harrisburg, PA 17120-2118 <a href="mailto:RFox@pahouse.net">RFox@pahouse.net</a>

Honorable John Maher  
Pennsylvania House of  
Representatives  
Republican Chairman, House  
Environmental  
Resources and Energy Committee  
House Post Office Box 202040  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2040  
[jmaher@pahousegop.com](mailto:jmaher@pahousegop.com)

The Honorable Michael B. Carroll  
Pennsylvania House of  
Representatives  
Democratic Chairman, House  
Environmental  
Resources and Energy Committee  
House Post Office Box 202118  
Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2118  
[mcarroll@pahouse.net](mailto:mcarroll@pahouse.net)

The Honorable Michael B. Carroll  
Pennsylvania House of  
Representatives  
Democratic Chairman, House  
Environmental  
Resources and Energy Committee  
House Post Office Box 202118  
Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2118  
[mcarroll@pahouse.net](mailto:mcarroll@pahouse.net)

Leda Lipton  
Legal Counsel  
House (R) Environmental Resources and  
Energy Committee  
House Post Office Box 202040  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2040  
[llypton@pahousegop.com](mailto:llypton@pahousegop.com)

Richard Fox  
Executive Director  
House (D) Environmental Resources and  
Energy Committee  
House Post Office Box 202118  
Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2118  
[RFox@pahouse.net](mailto:RFox@pahouse.net)

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## RAIN GARDEN WORKSHOP

Sponsored by DCVA and presented by Derron LaBrake, Master Watershed Steward

SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

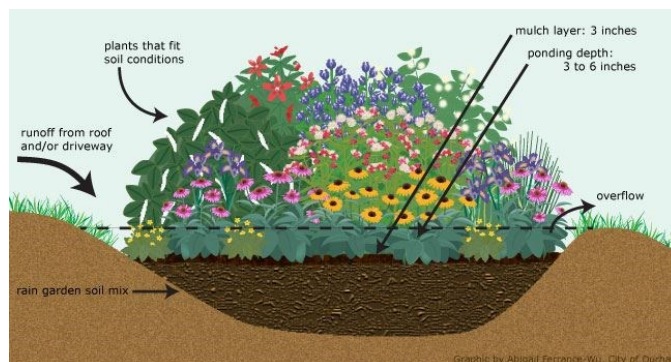
UPPER MAIN LINE YMCA

1416 Berwyn Paoli Road Berwyn, PA 19312

9 AM TO NOON

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS FREE EVENT

REGISTER AT <http://www.dcva.org/event-3054872>



# Invasive Removal Project (the hard way) at Collenbrook United Church

By  
Barbarann Keffer

In 2014, Collen Brook where it runs through the Collenbrook United Church property looked like this (see photo at right). The stream was completely covered with grape vines, ivy, multiflora rose and other invasives; its view was blocked from State Road in Drexel Hill.



Beginning in November of 2014 and continuing each Spring and Fall since, volunteers from Collenbrook United's congregation, the DCVA, Friends of Upper Darby Trails and the community have worked to clear out the area, removing the overgrowth with hand tools, chainsaws and elbow grease. During the 2018 DCVA Watershed Wide Cleanup, neighbor and local businessman Carl Hemphill, donated a dumpster for the cause.



Also during the 2018 watershed wide cleanup, DCVA member Tim Devaney donated four magnolia trees which were immediately planted. The congregation also provided lunch for the volunteers. It was a really great day! Progress is visible and the vegetation grows ***and we need your help to forge ahead...***

**See you on Saturday**

**October 20**

**9 am start-time**

## Recollections on the Zoning Meeting

### Stormwater Management at Drexeline Shopping Center

By Clyde Hunt

They want to tear down the market and put up a parking lot. When I heard of some grandiose plans for Drexeline, I imagined big change- There goes our neighborhood!"; "There goes the creek!!"- so I attended the May 31st zoning meeting, attended by about 200 area residents. If you ask me, the planned development is just more impervious surfaces leading to additional stormwater, which leads to higher flooding down-stream for our Darby Creek. I questioned the wisdom of this redevelopment.

MCB Real Estate, a Baltimore, Md., based investment company is proposing the redevelopment of Drexeline Shopping Center in the Drexel Hill section of Upper Darby Township, Delaware Co., PA. Darby Creek borders a large portion of the property. Plans include the expansion of the ShopRite Supermarket and Anthony's Ristorante, walking paths that connect to the Darby Creek Trail, improved access to SEPTA's Media trolley line, improved parking and walkways, a Wawa Super Store at Township Line and State Road and office and self-storage buildings. It is hoped that the redevelopment will help to reinvigorate the area.

We can't blame MCB Developers for previous stormwater shortcomings" Those were words I heard on the elevator before the meeting. "Nor for the four to five feet of flood water that Hurricane Floyd brought to the site in 1999." Stormwater control is a major issue in the development of this site. While the plan includes stormwater management, it is not at all clear that enough stormwater control has been included in the plan. For example, the MCB study team suggested a 190 car underground garage for this site. They had better fit that garage with watertight steel flood doors, if you like parking cars in an on-site water detention basin. Conversely, the nearby ACE Hardware, which as experienced previous flooding of their semi-basement floor, hopes to relocate upstream to Havertown.

The MCB study team appears to have done their homework with regards to traffic. They plan to direct traffic flow to allow shorts to safely exit onto surrounding busy roadways. However, parking is still an issue. After two hours of presentations by nine specialists with aerial photos, its clear that there are extra parking spaces near some empty stores, but they are too far from the vibrant stores and planned facilities to attract customers. In addition, these parking areas are not shaded to keep cars cool on hot, sunny days. The developers expert to reduce the most problematic areas of stormwater runoff so we won't see a repeat of Floyd once-in-a-hundred-year flood. However, as the session continued, I wondered....might there be a place for pervious pavement? Would green roofs be feasible? Could they raise the buildings higher? Could the parking lot above the retention basin be an above ground parking garage rather than a below ground garage that will flood? In the plan, there are groups of shade trees that will absorb rain and snow. Addition shade trees are needed on infiltration islands that will absorb snow melt water with less freezing over-the-pavement-runoff.

We can't expect runoff from all Drexeline's impervious areas to find its way into on-site, below ground, detention holding areas. Municipalities and homeowners upstream can install rain barrels, rain gardens, and catchment basins to help hold back the water. Further, trees whose leaves grab much of the first few minutes of rain to wet the leaves, stems, and understory organic materials can be planted (Note how little of summer rain actually gets through the tree leaves down into the canopy and reaches the tree soils. Even a cloud burst fails to soak into the tree root zone. Filtrexx Silt Sock can hold ten, twenty, fifty, even one hundred gallons of rain water/snow melt if properly installed and covered by mulch.

In conclusion, the developer cannot be held responsible for past poor planning. Too much water is currently going into the Darby Creek under Route 1. The MCB plan is an improvement over current conditions. Their posters depict a Creekside trail which is a nice addition to the site. There is still more that should be done, and can be done, at this site and all throughout the Darby Creek watershed.



# Help Save Delco's Historic Woodburne Mansion

**By Roy Perry**

The history of Delaware County's Darby Borough goes back to a time that predates the arrival of William Penn and the American Revolutionary War. In an effort to help preserve a piece of the county's distinguished history, a group of citizens is working to try to save the Woodbourne Mansion. Built 112 years ago by Edgar Thompson Scott and designed by world-famous Philadelphia architect Horace Trumbauer, Woodburne is a 55-room Gilded Age mansion located on county parkland, behind Little Flower Manor on Springfield Road. In the 1930s, the land and its buildings became property of the Sisters of the Divine Redeemer. Woodburne was renamed The Little Flower Institute and later became an orphanage, then a nursing home. The nursing home closed in 2005 and eleven years later the entire property was sold to Delaware County.

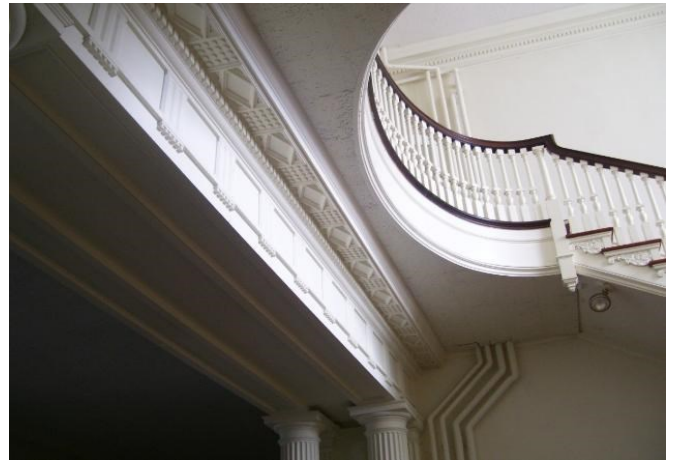
Today the mansion is deteriorating from within. Stolen copper flashing has allowed water to permeate the building causing significant damage. As an urgent first step, a new roof is needed to keep water out and prevent further decay. The rest of the to-do list is long, owing not just to natural deterioration but to shockingly destructive vandalism over the years. Sadly, woodwork, plaster, flooring and more have been destroyed by thoughtless intruders and will need careful repair. The hope is to use Woodburne's reconstruction as an opportunity to train residents for professional careers upgrading older buildings for modern use.

According to John Haigis Chair of the Darby Borough Historical Commission and a member of the preservation group Friends of Woodburne, "The County owns the building but is unsure what can be done with it, or how it can be funded, so the building's future is uncertain." He added, "Our group formed this year to help the county find an appropriate and feasible adaptive reuse for Woodburne Mansion so it doesn't just get torn down." Haigis also notes, "A small amount of work is urgently needed now to halt the Mansion's deterioration and buy time to talk to people in the community to develop a vision for Woodburne." John and his wife Jan, who also serves on the local Historic Commission, have a personal connection to the Mansion. "Jan and I are singers. We do musical performances under the name *Past Times Present*, and back in the 1990s we did our program at the nursing home. We are also historians and have been working with older buildings since 1985, when we started the Friends of the Blue Bell to save a historic (circa 1766) tavern in Southwest Philadelphia. These are important, solid buildings and losing them often is an unnecessary waste." Friends of Woodburne envision a bright future for the grand mansion of Woodburne and its grounds in which it becomes a valuable multifaceted resource for township and county residents.

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According to Haigis, there are many possibilities. The main building could be used as an event center appropriate for weddings, banquets, and conferences, with the second floor serving as office space, and the less-damaged kitchen wing being converted to a guest house. There's even room for an art center, he says, and maybe an environmental education facility in the property's barn. But big ideas and big transformations take lots of hands, lots of time, imagination, planning, and of course, money. Fundraisers are being discussed for the near future, and conversations with Delaware County officials are ongoing to determine the best use of this great asset. To stay up to date, find and join the "Friends Of Woodburne" Facebook page. Search "Friends Of Woodburne" at GoFundMe.com to help with a monetary donation. And read all about the history of Woodburne at [DarbyHistory.com/Woodburne](http://DarbyHistory.com/Woodburne). Let's save this unique treasure!



Woodburne Mansion Exterior (left) and Interior (at right) Photos used by permission from [www.darbyhistory.com](http://www.darbyhistory.com)

## Support DCVA

Dear Friends:

Darby Creek Valley Association has been making a difference since 1984, this upcoming year Darby Creek Valley Association will be celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> year and is continuing growing in leaps and bounds, and making a difference in our community.

Our Community is still facing an ongoing problem with stormwater runoff which is causing flooding and increasing the pollutants in our watershed. While we are making a difference within multiple area, we need your help to make our efforts go even further! You can help us. Your support is crucial to our efforts to protect Darby Creek and Cobb Creek Watersheds. if you're able, we'd love it if you could donate to help us achieve our mission and continue to work within the watershed.



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**Continued from previous page.....** Thank you in advance for your contribution. Your donation will go toward creating educational programs, workshops, monitoring streams for pollutants, rain gardens, riparian buffers and advising community members on best practices to help improve our watershed.

Here are the ways you can donate:

- Donate online at <http://www.dcva.org/donate>
- Send a check to DCVA P.O. 732 Drexel Hill, PA 19026
- Talk to your financial advisor or attorney about legacy donations



**Thank you!!**

The Darby Creek Valley Association

## **Environmental Assessment - A Brief Summary**

**By Carl DuPoldt**

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process of examining the anticipated environmental effects of a proposed project - from consideration of environmental aspects at design stage, through consultation and preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), evaluation of the EIAR by a competent authority, the subsequent decision as to whether the project should be permitted to proceed, encompassing public response to that decision. If you encounter one of these reports in your volunteer watershed work, look for the following structure as hallmarks of a thorough, well organized report:

- Summary
- Purpose and Need
- Proposed Action and Alternatives
- Affected Environment
- Expected Impacts
- Consultation and Coordination
- Implement the Plan
- Plan Evaluation
- Appendices

### **References:**

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Format and Content Process:** [https://www.boem.gov/EIS-Format-and-Content-Process/Key Components and Best Practices for Environmental Impact Assessments](https://www.boem.gov/EIS-Format-and-Content-Process/Key%20Components%20and%20Best%20Practices%20for%20Environmental%20Impact%20Assessments): <http://highseasalliance.org/sites/highseasalliance.org/files/HSA%20EIA%20Brief%20for%20PrepCom2%20FINAL%20pdf.pdf>

### **Strategic Environmental Assessments:**

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02688867.1992.9726853>

**Environmental Impact Assessment:** <http://www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/eia/>

**Introduction to Watershed Planning:** [https://cfpub.epa.gov/watertrain/pdf/modules/introduction\\_to\\_watershed\\_planning.pdf](https://cfpub.epa.gov/watertrain/pdf/modules/introduction_to_watershed_planning.pdf)

### **The Nine-Step Conservation Planning Process:**

[https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=nrcs144p2\\_015695](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=nrcs144p2_015695)

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# Watershed Protection - Making Key Upstream and Downstream Connections

## Compiled by Carl DuPoldt

The Delaware River watershed in which we reside is the source of our drinking water. The quality of the environment in the headwaters of the Delaware is obviously vital to the integrity of our drinking water. On the other hand, we are upstream of the communities and ecosystems in the Delaware Bay region. People who reside in the upstream portions of watersheds usually have different priorities for land management than do people who reside in downstream portions of watersheds. If upstream residents of the watershed do not properly manage the quantity of impervious surfaces and encroach on stream flood plains, it will cause excessive flooding and property damage to the downstream residents. In most cities, the reliability and integrity of water resources is inextricably linked to upstream communities, water management, and likewise cities have a responsibility to downstream communities to manage water responsibly.

People who live in downstream watershed areas are usually expected to bear the cost and risks of watershed management. Many citizens of both upstream and downstream areas have little understanding of the need for, or means of, watershed protection. **Integrated watershed management** is communication and cooperation between upstream and downstream residents and their municipal officials. There are many benefits to integrated watershed management:

- Increasing the resilience of the watershed to climate change including water shortages and flooding
- Enhancing the quality of life for residents and public health
- Optimizing local economic growth.
- Improving watershed health.
- Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of local government by coordinating regulations and working together to rehabilitate and modernize water infrastructure and buildings, roads, and open spaces.
- The creation of local jobs
- The development of communities that are more attractive for both residential and commercial development.

Water can serve as a focal point for coordination among departments within local government and across political jurisdictions within a watershed. Recognizing water management as a common thread that runs through all community planning and infrastructure decisions can help city governments achieve administrative and financial efficiencies. Some storm water best management practices (BMPs) can be implemented when first planning and building the home and designing the landscape. Others can be incorporated into day-to-day activities. Some BMPs are:

**Construction Phase BMPs:** Consider alternatives to concrete or asphalt paved surfaces. If you have a choice, consider more porous surfaces such as brick, gravel, wood chips, stone slab, or geo-textile materials. Keep paved areas to a minimum and design them to direct runoff onto grassy areas, not to storm sewers.

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**Day-to-Day BMPs:** Avoid overuse of pesticides and fertilizers. Don’t spread fertilizer onto paved surfaces that drain to the storm sewer. Follow recommended watering practices- avoiding excess watering and don’t sprinkle water onto paved areas. Avoid compacting yard and garden soils (for example, by driving and parking on them repeatedly) because compaction impedes water infiltration. Plant native plants– they require less fertilizers, pesticides, and water. Clean up hazardous material such as oil gasoline, antifreeze, and paints properly and don’t wash waste into the storm sewer. Store these substances properly in tightly sealed, leak-proof containers. Clean up oil or other vehicle fluid drippings including from cars, boats, and all-terrain vehicles. Wash vehicles at a commercial car wash or on a non-paved surface to avoid drainage to the storm sewer. Don’t allow pet waste to be dumped or washed into the storm sewer; properly bury or flush the waste down a toilet. Reduce or avoid areas of concentrated pet waste. Mulch grass clippings and leave these on the lawn for natural fertility or use the clippings for composting, but keep them from washing into the storm sewer. Collect water from downspouts in rain barrels for watering. Do not discharge sump-pump water onto paved surfaces that drain to the storm sewer. Mulch and seed bare soil as soon as possible to prevent the soil from eroding into the storm sewer. These are some of the many many methods known by which municipalities and citizens can ensure abundant clean water for themselves and downstream communities.

***We are all downstream (and upstream) of other people and ecosystems.***

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#### **References:**

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## **Update on Penn State Extension Master Watershed Steward And Master Gardener Programs**

**By Susan Miller**

Darby Creek Valley Association now has two Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards in their midst. Many may know that Derron LaBrake, among his other amazing watershed accomplishments, is also a Master Watershed Steward. As of August, Darby Creek Valley Association's Director Susan Miller is now a Penn State Extension Master Watershed Steward.

The Penn State Master Watershed Steward program was established to strengthen local capacity for management and protection of watersheds, streams, and rivers, by educating and empowering volunteers across the commonwealth.

Training and volunteer service are coordinated at the county level by extension staff, partners, and trained volunteers. Generally, 15-20 people are selected for the program each year. Those accepted to the program attend training classes that focus on a broad range of water resource topics, including groundwater, stream ecology, wetlands, invasive plants, water recreation and storm-water management.

Master Watershed Stewards work with the community to improve the health of our streams and river by: organizing educational and informational workshops for the public, students and municipal officials on topics such as rain barrels, wildlife, pollution prevention, stormwater management, and invasive plant control. They also volunteer by organizing and executing stream clean ups, designing and installing demonstration rain gardens, monitoring streams for bacteria, and carrying out stream bank restoration projects.

In 2019, Penn State Extension will be offering Master Watershed and Master Gardener training courses in Delaware County. If you are interested in participating, contact Meagan Hopkins-Doerr at 610-696-3500 or [mxh1135@psu.edu](mailto:mhx1135@psu.edu) to learn about the Master Watershed Stewards, Linda Barry at [lrb16@psu.edu](mailto:lrb16@psu.edu) or 610-690-2655 to learn about the Master Gardeners, or visit their website at <https://extension.psu.edu/programs>.

## Cricker's Corner by Thomas Roy Smith

This Cricker's Corner piece has been one I have wanted to share for some time. Just over the rear west wall of a long abandoned quarry near my boyhood home was the slope that headed down to the Swedish log cabin. All the old-timers I interviewed - some who birth pre-dated 1900 - called the cabin, the Addingham Cabin. (Addingham was the near hamlet name.) The cabin site and environs are well known; so I can recite that an old stone dwelling stands just beside the cabin. Well, the memory I wish to share relates to the wood fringe just south downstream from the white stone dwelling. The wood fringe in width – stretching between Creek Road and steep hillside - reaches hardly more than fifty feet. In my youth the wooded band area had more trees and was less weeded. Too, the canopy of trees held a morning humidity; helped by the adjacent nearness of the steep hill. A combined formed micro climate - in the area of lowest level. -- Yes, I remember clearly what I saw often in the micro environment. Hear me tell.

In morning time, when air was heavy with woody humidity, I liked to look over and into the fringe area...to look upon a green glow. Yes, a green glow. How so? Light beams meandered through the treetops. Hitting the lowest area the light reflected off ground and tree bark mosses. The rays beamed back off these and bumped - my word for it – off the thick humid air of the micro environment. The process caused an enchanting, charming, greenish glow. Which I never tired of looking upon. Others, if they were to write of the same experience might use different words; I hope I have described the memory in a way that can be understood. I add, I found real romance in Darby Creek valley in my youth. I became a lover of the valley. -- Some aspects have been changed by time; fortunately, via memory, I still “see” as I saw in my youth. Of my memories I treasure one most. The moss green glow memory. My precious dearest. I close. Thank you for listening.

### JOIN THE DARBY CREEK VALLEY ASSOCIATION TODAY!

*The Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA) is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of all of the watershed's resources, including water, wildlife, historical sites, and the floodplains. The organizations immediate goals are to prevent all forms of pollution in the Darby Creek and its tributaries, to prohibit dumping and construction on the floodplain and to expand our educational programs for all residents within the watershed. It Also seeks to improve water quality and maintain a debris-free stream through clean-ups and public education. DCVA works to preserve historic properties, such as the Swedish Cabin and the Blue Bell Inn. The Association would like to set aside the more than 30 miles of valley for use as a greenway for all residents to enjoy. We need your support. Help us continue to protect the environment for ourselves and our children.*

**We invite you to fill in the form below, check member category, and mail form with your check to:**

**Darby Creek Valley Association, PO Box 732, Drexel Hill, PA 19026**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual member.....\$25	Family member.....\$40	Corporate or Municipality.....\$100
Senior Citizen or Student.....\$15	Non-Profit Group.....\$40	Life Member .....\$275

**DCVA is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization– All Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.**

# CALENDAR

DCVA Board Meetings .....Third Saturday of each month Delaware County Peace Center  
Rain Garden Workshop.....September 22, 2018 Upper Main Line YMCA 9 AM-12 Noon

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