

Twin & Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy



www.twcwc.com

100 Walker Lake, Shohola, PA 18458 October 2003

A Letter from the President

Over 35 residents and non-residents attended the June 28 Septic System program at the Walker Lake Clubhouse. Bruce Fox provided an excellent overview of how septic systems operate and how to maintain them. The Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy feels it is important to educate watershed residents on topics like on-lot septic systems. These systems provide the majority of wastewater treatment in our watershed and can contribute nutrients to our streams and lakes if not properly installed and maintained. We are arranging to have Bruce present additional septic system information next June.

The Conservancy has submitted a grant proposal to purchase and install stream signs on Twin Lakes Road for the Twin Lakes Creek and Walker Lake Creek. Shohola Township will be installing the signs if the grant is approved. This will educate travelers through our watershed on the names of the streams. The Conservancy is also working with the Pike County Conservation District, Delaware Township and Bushkill Watershed Conservancy in developing a "Pike County Resident's Guide to Resource Conservation". A grant was received from the PA League of Women Voters Water Resource Education Network to assist in the printing of the guide. The guide will serve as an educational/awareness reference for Pike County residents on conserving and protecting both groundwater and surface water resources. The Guide will be formatted to be a handy, user-friendly reference to assist individuals, families, community associations and others interested in understanding what they can do to protect Pike County's water resources.

Unfortunately, the Conservancy did not receive approval of our 3rd Growing Greener Grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. This grant would have designed Best Management Practices to address non-point source pollution that has been identified as the greatest threat to the water quality of our lakes and streams. The Conservancy Board will be discussing what steps we can take to continue the work of protecting our watershed at our next Board meeting. We welcome any suggestions you may have. Please send them to the Conservancy at the above address.

If you care about the water quality of Little & Big Twin Lakes and Walker Lake and want to ensure that these lakes remain healthy and pleasant, then **we need you to become a member of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy.** Your membership support will assist the Conservancy in continuing to monitor the water quality of our lakes as well as protect the property values of our community. There is a membership application in this newsletter.

Peter Wulfhorst

The mission of the Conservancy is to promote a better understanding of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed and its ecosystems and to protect, restore and enhance the watershed through proper management and watershed stewardship.

Lake Monitoring

The lake monitors have been out in force this summer. They took samples on June 30, July 25, August 30 and September 28 that were sent to an analytical lab. They also measured the dissolved oxygen and water temperature of each lake using the electronic probe. Secchi disk readings were taken. Fecal coliform has been checked on a regular basis. Our consulting laboratory will analyze all the results for the season.

We are working to keep the lakes clean. We need to reduce run off and thus slow down the eutrophication process. T&WCWC has marked 25 sites where run off is severe enough to adversely impact the lakes. Our next grant would have begun the process to eliminate the worst of these trouble spots. Our work is on hold because our grant was denied. In the meantime you can help by not using fertilizers and making certain your septic system and oil storage tank are functioning properly.

If the eutrophication process can not be slowed down by these simple means there is no other choice but to resort to expensive measures like constructing basins at inlets to trap sediments, adding alum to inactivate phosphorous and mechanically harvesting aquatic weeds. A ban on all gas powered boats and vehicles on the lakes would need to be considered.

FX Browne is surveying the watershed to ascertain the impact of additional construction in our watershed. It is called a "build out analysis" Knowing the amount and location of available land, the type of soils present and the drainage it is possible to predict the effect the increase in population and in impervious surface will have on water quality.

Dr. Ralph Cioppa & Joyce Laudise

Knotweed the Nuisance

Japanese Knotweed is a large bushy plant you see growing along the road. It is especially noticeable in late summer when showy spikes of white flowers adorn the plant. Sometimes called Mexican Bamboo it was introduced into this country from Asia in the late 1800's. It has been used as an ornamental, for erosion control and landscape screening.

The truth is Japanese Knotweed is attractive but the problem is Japanese Knotweed is a nuisance that takes over where less aggressive native plants would normally grow. The viburnums, rhododendrons, witch hazel, alders and spicebush thrived here long before European settlers arrived bringing all sorts of seeds. We see fewer of these shrubs because of this nuisance plant. The plant is extremely adaptable growing in shade or full sun and where there is much or little water. It is now found all along the eastern US, some western states and even Alaska where few nonnative plants thrive.



If you have Japanese Knotweed on your property it is important to control the plant. It spreads by seeds and by underground stems called rhizomes. Destroy the flowers before seeds form and dig some up every year, but be sure to get all the roots and spreading underground stems. If not controlled this plant could be all we might see along our roadways and open fields. That situation would not be good for wildlife and would be boring for us.

Joyce Laudise

Wishing Washing Away

Certainly every one of us has wished washing would go away when faced with lots of laundry to be done and dishes to be washed especially after a weekend of a house exploding with guests. We can't make it happen but we can offer suggestions for cleaning up while at the same time being kind to your septic system. First you can limit the amount of water entering the septic tank by not doing all the work at once. Save some of the laundry to do a few days after the guests have left. Read a good book or have cocktails with a neighbor, the laundry will wait. You need a break and your septic system needs a rest from all that flushing and showering. When you do get to the wash always make certain you have a full load before starting the washer. Second you probably know that phosphorus is the nutrient most likely to stimulate plant growth in a lake. One way to keep phosphorus out of a lake is to use no or low phosphate detergents.

To help you find no or low phosphate detergents Peg Bruton did a random check of detergents on the shelves at the Grand Union in Milford. All clothes washing products, both liquids and powders, are labeled "No Phosphate" and/or safe for septic systems. Dish washing detergents again have no phosphates but dish washer detergents are another matter. All contained some phosphate. Palmolive Clean Rinse Formula had the least amount (1.6%) compared to Powder Cascade which had the most (6.4%). Dishwasher detergents without phosphate can be found in local health food stores. If you must use a phosphate containing dishwasher detergent use less by cutting it with a Tablespoon of baking soda.

As for all other cleaning, baking soda and vinegar are readily available, inexpensive to use and gentle on your septic system. For the bathroom, including the toilet bowl use baking soda and water. Kitchen counters and floors look great after cleaning with 1/2C vinegar to 1 gal warm water.

Taken from Twin Sails, August 2003 - Joyce Laudise

Twin/Walker Creeks Update Meeting - October 25

The Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy has for the last 4 years been involved in many activities to insure that our waters remain healthy and pleasant. Our next membership meeting, **Saturday, October 25** at **9 am** at the **Walker Lake Clubhouse** will address these activities. Speakers will include Shandor Szalay, our consultant, who will present an update on the watershed assessment plan, Joyce Laudise, on lake & stream monitoring, PD McCullough, on bathymetric lake mapping and Ralph Cioppa, septic system information.

We encourage the residents of the Twin/Walker Creeks watershed to attend the meeting to see and hear what has been taking place in your watershed.

Conservancy Board Seeking Changes to By-Laws

The Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy Board at their September 5, 2003 meeting discussed the final draft of the Twin/Walker Creek Watershed Conservancy by-laws. The final changes included consistency of time line notices for nominations and elections, meetings and amendment of the by-laws.

Past-President Ralph Cioppa with valuable input from Conservancy member Paul Steinberg has revised the current By-laws and made the appropriate changes. According to the current By-laws Article XVII, Section a, amendments may be considered by the Executive Board and recommended to the membership for their consideration.

The proposed amendments will be voted upon by the membership at our October 25 membership meeting. If you would like to review the by-laws, contact President Peter Wulfhorst at 570-296-2244 for a copy. Once the By-laws are amended, they will be posted on our website.

Peter Wulfhorst

Twin & Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy
100 Walker Lake, Shohola, PA18458

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Next Meeting 9 am - October 25, 2003
at the Walker Lake Clubhouse

Resident
RR 1
Shohola, PA 18458

2003 CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I am concerned with the future quality and quantity of the water resources in our neighborhood and would like to support the conservation efforts of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy through membership.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

I am interested in learning more about volunteer monitoring efforts

Check type of membership

Senior/Student - \$5.00 Individual - \$10.00 Family - \$15.00 Corporate - \$40.00

In support of the Conservancy's efforts, I would like to provide an additional gift in the amount of \$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Mail this form with check payable to:

**Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy
100 Walker Lake Road, Shohola, PA 18458**