

# Cooks Current

*"To protect, preserve and improve the quality of water, land and life in the Cooks Creek Watershed"*

Volume I, Issue I

Newsletter of the Cooks Creek Watershed Association

Summer 2004

## 2004 CCWA Events

- **Regular Board Meetings:**  
Springtown Fire House 7:30 PM

Sept. 23, Oct. 28,  
Nov. 18, Dec. 16

*All are welcome! We appreciate your involvement!*

- **Our Annual Fall Dinner:**  
October 9th



See Page 4 for Details !!

**Cooks Current is a publication of the Cooks Creek Watershed Association.**

**Board Members:**

**President: W. Scott Douglas**

**Vice-President: Brad Schultz**

**Treasurer: Margaret McDonald**

**Membership Chair: Sherry Brodhead**

**Lois Oleksa**

**Jim Orben**

**Hans Reimann**

**Stephen Smith, MD**

## Welcome to our Newsletter..

We hope that you all enjoy our first newsletter! We give a heartfelt thanks to Heritage Conservancy for helping us get this started.

This year looks to be a year of great new things for the CCWA. The Board has been busy designing and editing a new website, again with help from Heritage Conservancy. We hope to have it up and running in the next few weeks. The address will be [www.cooks creekpa.org](http://www.cooks creekpa.org).

This will help to provide a whole new level of service to our members by providing up to date communication on important events, interesting information on the Watershed, and some technical links that will allow members to map the resources on properties throughout the watershed.

Of particular note will be the ability to begin our watershed stewardship program, Adopt-a-Reach. Once the website is up, there will be an opportunity to sign up for this program and be a volunteer Creek monitor.

On the lighter side, we are already planning our annual

**We're on the web!**  
[www.cooks creekpa.org](http://www.cooks creekpa.org)

harvest festival for October (coinciding with Durham Day) and hope to have an interesting presentation or two, as well as an opportunity for fellowship and sharing some really great food.

Look for a flyer announcing this event in your mail soon. As always, we would appreciate

your feedback on our new efforts.

Please feel free to email me at [symbio@fast.net](mailto:symbio@fast.net) if you have any comments, suggestions, or wish to get involved in any way.—

**W. Scott Douglas, President**



**Clean-up Day Volunteers**

Photo by: Kathleen Connelly

## Watershed Clean-up Day A Success!

The Cooks Creek Watershed Association held a watershed-wide roadside cleanup on Saturday, April 3. Over 65 people representing 14 different community organizations converged on the Springtown Fire Company on Saturday morning to assist in a spring cleaning of 25 miles of major and minor roadways in the communities

of Springfield, Durham, Kintnersville, and Lower Saucon.

Working from 9 in the morning until 5:30 in the afternoon, the group scoured the winter-trashed roads, removing over 40 cubic yards of trash, debris, broken road signs and tires. The Penn DOT worker on duty came with a 10 yard truck and

a 6 yard trailer, but had to return twice over the course of the day to remove all the trash. "The event was a resounding success," said Scott Douglas, the organizer of the event for the CCWA. "We'll be doing this again next year for sure."

# Mini-monster Mayhem IV

For the fourth year in a row, local area kids were treated to the CCWA's Mini-Monster Mayhem on Saturday June 19. Seventeen kids, ranging from preschool to fifth grade and their parents learned about water quantity and quality and the basics of stream ecology from our resident ecologist Scott Douglas.

After learning about the hydrologic cycle and making a bead bracelet to help them remember, they laughed over the surface water pollution model (an old toilet bowl) and marveled at the groundwater mod-



Mini-Monster Mayhem Participants Get Wet

el. The highlight of the morning's event was the walk to Cooks Creek to capture and examine mini-monsters, and to play in the Creek, of course.

The teams of children each had their own nets, collecting trays and vials to work with as they probed and prodded invertebrates from the riffles behind the Douglas' house in Springtown. Among the insect larvae found were stoneflies, mayflies, craneflies and beetles. All were amazed by the four-inch long dobsonfly

larvae, or hellgrammites; their long mandibles making them the scariest looking of the mini-monsters.

After the field trip, everyone took the Water Ranger pledge and received a wallet card to demonstrate their newfound commitment to protecting our precious natural resources. If you missed the Mayhem this year, don't despair, we'll do it again next year, on Father's Day weekend.

"After the field trip,  
everyone took the  
Water Ranger  
pledge..."

# Sprawl — Cause and Consequence

By Brad Schultz

"Sprawl" has become a very angry word among those of us who are concerned with land use issues. We see the consequences every day in prime agricultural land and open space forever lost, in increased property taxes, in burdens on the existing infrastructure, in increased automobile traffic and the drive for more and larger roads, and in the decay of our cities and inner suburbs.

The losses in the traditional Pennsylvania viewscape of villages surrounded by greenspace are also forever lost, and we seem headed toward becoming more fully a part of the northeastern megalopolis that extends from south of Washington D.C. to north of Boston. The listing of negative consequences could go on; add your own.

The Brookings Institution has recently completed an extensive study of the condition of our state and published a report, "Back to Prosperity", in which sprawl is shown to be a central issue in the interconnected web of Pennsylva-

nia's economic and social woes. The fact that we have economic and social woes cannot be disputed.

The Pennsylvanian land development pattern is not unlike lava oozing from a series of dying volcanoes, which once were the blazing centers of our economic and social life, and spreading unchecked over the land. The finite resource of the land is devoured, faster than that of most other states, and the cities and inner suburbs die slow deaths. All the energy has run out; reinvestment of energy in those centers has not kept pace. According to Brookings, we are 48th in population growth but 6th in the development of raw land.

As the centers lose their vibrancy, they no longer are attractive places for young people seeking to start their careers. State policy and practice, seen for example in spending for Department of Transportation, shortchanges investment in older cities and towns, where we are leaving behind well over 50% of our existing investment, in fa-

vor of major new road projects. These not only use up considerable open space but, worse, lead to more outlying development. Have we not seen that in our own area with Interstate 78 and routes 22 and 33? And that is hardly an exhaustive list.

The downward cycle continues: More roads, more sprawl, more abandonment of prior investments, less attractive town centers, a greater loss of college trained workers, increasing economic stagnation, and so it goes.

Government is clearly then part of the problem. Consider for example that Pennsylvania has 2,566 municipalities, making coordinated regional and statewide economic and land use planning very difficult if not impossible.

Government must also represent the solution. The Brookings Report stresses three key elements of a recovery plan for Pennsylvania:

Invest heavily in education and training

(Continued on page 3)

# The View From Laughing Springs

By Hans Reimann

The deer browse and buck rubbing of trees is becoming epidemic. My heart wrenches as I recall the American Chestnut tree, barely fifteen feet tall, girdled and now easier prey to the invasive organism waiting to strike. This life form, accidentally introduced into the North American ecology seven decades ago, attacks the bark of the Chestnut, killing the tree above ground after leaving the root stock alone to valiantly grow up more saplings.

This unnatural cycle of life has relegated the American Chestnut to a role as an understory tree scarcely reaching twenty-five feet in height. White-tailed deer, existing in unsustainable numbers, are unwilling partners to an invasive organism.

Bucks girdling young trees and deer eating tree, shrub and wild flower buds interrupt the natural regenerating powers of the forest. The unnaturally large concentration of deer on Kohlberg Hill and nearby environs should be a call to action for all landowners here.

Can anyone standby while the Mountain Laurel, our state flower, is ravaged and made to slowly disappear by deer herds, when as landowners, we could unite in principle and purpose to meet the threats to our forest's health and work together to eliminate them?

A recent Saucon News article on deer management is promoting the thinning of dense forest to create better feeding conditions for deer, thereby relieving pressure on landscape & garden

plants around homes. This policy will only work in conjunction with a private hunting initiative covering hundreds of contiguous acres. An invasive plant management plan would also need to be implemented at the local level to keep non-native plants from encroaching into the new openings in the forest canopy.

A regional approach with neighboring municipalities cooperating together with farmers and owners of large tracts of land will be the key to a successful deer management plan. But the most important thing for all citizens to remember is our civic duty to convince & vote into office, local & state officials who will work with us to improve our environment & hence our standard of living.

## Bat News...



Don't be surprised to see cars and trucks with strange looking antennas racing around the area during the middle of the night. They are actually part of an ongoing bat telemetry project tracking the flight and roosting and foraging patterns of, *Myotis lucifugus*, or "Little Brown" bats, from the hibernaculum in Durham Township.

The tracking program began in May with the capture and banding of 7 fe-

male bats from the Durham hibernaculum. These bats were fitted with special electronic radio transmitters to allow them to be monitored by radio signal receivers that can track the signal by air and by automobile.

Numerous agencies and volunteers are participating in this project, which will help foster a better understanding of bat behavior in this region.

Once the analysts are able to learn where the bats live over the summer months, conservation programs to help protect

their habit areas can be developed.



Bat with Transmitter

## Sprawl—Cause and Consequence...

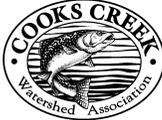
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with promotion of key new industries especially those that would help revitalize older communities.

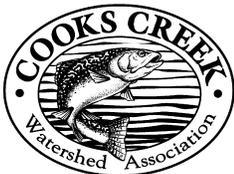
Become a world leader in the development of policies and practices leading to the redevelopment of cities, towns and townships.  
Examine and improve our governance

practices at all levels with a view toward enhancing coordination throughout the state.

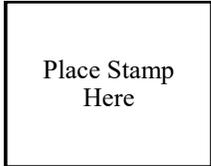
The full report is well worth reading and is available on-line at <http://www.brookings.edu/urban>

# Please Join Us...

<p>All of us who live and drive through Springfield and Durham Township enjoy the beauty of Cooks Creek. Most of the township lands are actually the watershed that feeds this creek and the trout that live in it.</p> <p>Those of us who are fortunate enough to live here are dependent upon this watershed not only for the beauty of the creek but our wells, the wetlands, the wildflowers and all of the beautiful landscapes of our townships.</p> <p>It's up to all of us to protect this treasure. The Cooks Creek Watershed Association asks that you become a member and help in the task of protecting this special watershed.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Cooks Creek Watershed Association - Membership Form</b></p> <p><b>Name:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Address:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> _____ <b>E-mail:</b> _____</p> <p align="center"><b>Interests:</b></p> <p>Newsletter: ___ Website: ___ Roadside Cleanup: ___ Event Planning ___</p> <p>Christmas Tree Sale: ___ Providing Speakers: ___ Fund Raising: ___</p> <p>Stream Studies: ___ Weekend Seminars: ___ Maintaining Open Space: ___</p> <p>Individual Membership Fee: @ \$ 15.00 per year _____</p> <p>Family Membership Fee: @ \$ 25.00 per year _____</p> <p>Donation: _____</p> <p><b>Total</b> _____</p> <p>Please detach and mail to Cooks Creek Watershed Association , (CCWA) P.O. Box 45 Springtown, PA 18081. <i>THANK YOU !</i></p> <p><i>Checks can be made payable to Cooks Creek Watershed Association. CCWA is a 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) non-profit organization.</i></p> 
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**Cooks Creek Watershed Association**  
**P.O. Box 45**  
**Springtown, PA 18081**  
**[www.cooks creek pa.org](http://www.cooks creek pa.org)**



Mailing Address Line 1  
Mailing Address Line 2  
Mailing Address Line 3  
Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5