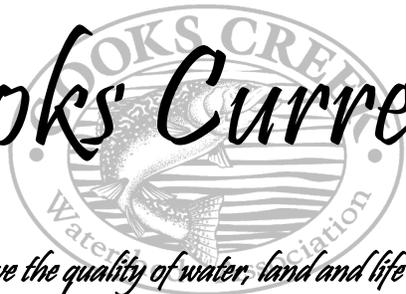


# Cooks Current



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

Volume 3, Issue 3

Newsletter of the Cooks Creek Watershed Association

Summer 2006

## 2006 CCWA Events

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

Sept 28, Oct 26  
Nov 16, Dec 21

*All are welcome! We*  
*appreciate your involvement!*

*October 14—Fall Fellowship*  
*Dinner*

*November 4—Fall Cleanup*



See Page 12 for Details !!

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

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

### Board Members:

#### President:

W. Scott Douglas

#### Vice President:

Hans Reimann

#### Treasurer:

Margaret McDonald

#### Membership Chair:

Sherry Brodhead

#### Recording Secretary:

Lois Oleksa

Jim Orben

Stephen Smith, MD

Pat Raynock

Ellie Scheitrum

#### Layout & Graphic Design:

Karyn Oleksa, Lois Oleksa

## From Across the Board...

Deluges and heat waves notwithstanding, the summer has been great. But, all too soon it's time to get ready for back to school, harvest dinners and fall cleanup. Some important summer highlights are that we (finally) received contract paperwork on our Adopt-a-Reach funding. I will have information on the reaches, monitoring sites, equipment and training at the Fall Dinner. Part of the funding will be used to purchase a groundwater model that we hope can be used to help educate municipal officials, as well as children on the importance and fragility of our groundwater resources. Given that we have two new Board members (Ellie Scheitrum and Pat Raynock) who are both teachers should make the children's education an easy matter – we'll see about the rest....Speaking of kids, our 6<sup>th</sup> annual Mini-Monster Mayhem was a success, with a dozen or so intrepid explorers braving the riffles to bring back hellgrammites, crane fly larvae and stonefly naiads. I also presented a more advanced version of the mayhem at the Trout Unlimited/Heritage Conservancy flyfishing clinic at the Thompson preserve in Springtown that was attended by 30 or more adults and older children.

Durham and Springfield have held public meetings on their Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, respectively. Both feature the CCW prominently and the importance of keeping it clean and healthy. If you've read these documents, and see references to the CCW



Photo by W. Scott Douglas

Protection Plan – and wonder what's in it – check out the website, [www.cooks creekpa.org](http://www.cooks creekpa.org); it's now available there. I am very excited to report that representatives across the watershed have been meeting to discuss a Regional Stormwater Management Plan. Although the major floods will always find their way into the headlines, little storms (less than 2 inches) make up over 90% of the rainfall we get. If stormwater is not managed correctly, those little storms add up to big damage. The team is exploring innovative new strategies that, if enacted, will help to get the water into the ground, and keep it out of the Creek. If you are making up your calendars, please make plans to attend our Fall Fellowship Dinner at the Springtown Rod and Gun Club on **October 14** (see insert). We will have guest speakers on

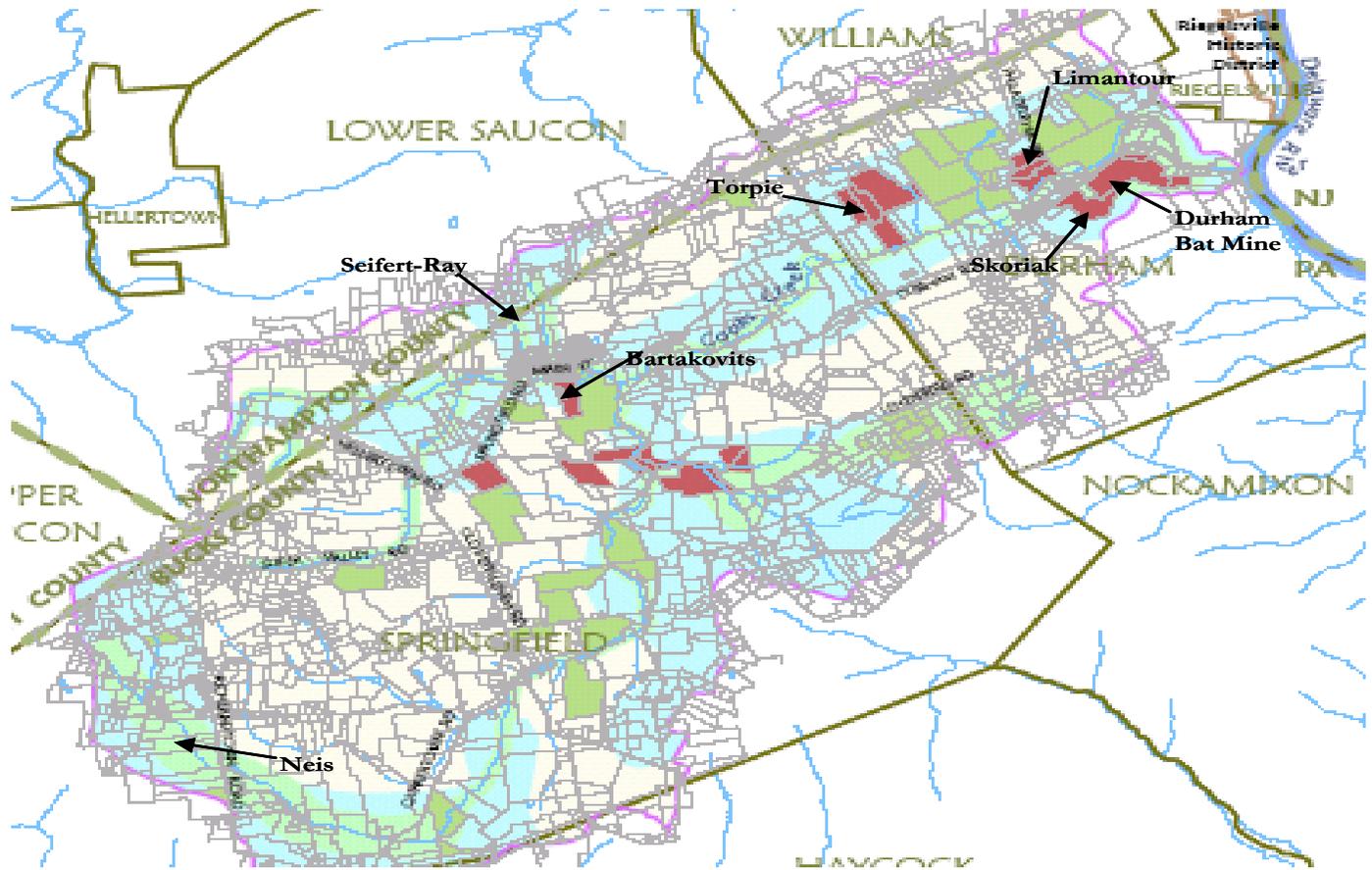
the topic of native plants and streambank restoration. It's a lot of fun, and you'll be sure to learn something, too. We'd also love to have your help at our semi-annual roadside cleanup on **November 4**. Send us an email if you're interested: [info@cooks creekpa.org](mailto:info@cooks creekpa.org).

Yours in conservation,

W. Scott Douglas  
President

# Working Together to Preserve the Cooks Creek Watershed

By: Laura Baatz—Heritage Conservancy



In 2001, Heritage Conservancy identified the Cooks Creek Watershed as one of its Lasting Landscapes. Through its Lasting Landscapes initiative, the Conservancy identifies significant landscapes that contain a critical mass of both natural and historic resources and then develops and implements protection techniques that sustain their integrity. The Cooks Creek Watershed is one of seven designated Lasting Landscapes.

In naming the watershed as a Lasting Landscape, the Conservancy committed to preserving its unique natural and historic resources. With the cooperation and assistance of many partners, we have permanently preserved nearly 600 acres in the watershed, and our work continues.

Our recent successes range from the Limantour property in the northeast

portion of the watershed to the Neis property in the southwest. In between lay the Torpie and Bartakovits properties.

The largest of these, the Torpie property, contains approximately 125 acres of rolling farm fields, forested steep slopes, and riparian corridor, along with magnificent scenic views. The property is adjacent to several large farms that were previously preserved, so placing a conservation easement on the Torpie property resulted in the permanent protection of over 700 contiguous acres. The diversity of this property, which is what makes it so special, also made it more challenging to preserve—some funders are more interested in preserving farmland, while others focus on critical habitat. Working with the Bucks County Natural Areas Program (BC NAP) and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR), Heritage Conservancy devised a plan that enabled the Torpies to preserve both the woodlands and farmlands on the

property.

The 46-acre Limantour property contains woodlands, farmlands, and 1500 feet of frontage along Cooks Creek. It also connects two large areas of land preserved by Durham Township and the Bucks County Agricultural Land Preservation program. Mrs. Limantour and her two sons, Julio and Jose, all agreed that the property should be preserved. With funding help from BC NAP and PA DCNR, the Conservancy was able to achieve the Limantours' preservation goal.

Nestled on 23 acres on the outskirts of Springtown, the Bartakovits property affords spectacular views that overlook the rolling foothills and farmland in the area. It provides a diverse habitat for wildlife and is adjacent to 112 acres of protected land. Its placement under

*(Continued on page 11)*

# Important Referendums

## Lower Saucon Township

Lower Saucon Township will have an Open Space Referendum on the November ballot. If approved they will be able to reap the benefits of state and county matching funds to preserve open space. Maintaining open space will have a positive effect on our taxes and our quality of life.

Land utilized for residential development causes the average household tax bill to rise in order to pay for additional fire, police, and especially school services required. This tax burden increases over time and remains permanently. Additional benefits of open space preservation include the protection of water quality and quantity, the preservation of wildlife habitats and scenic views, increasing property values and helping to alleviate storm water runoff problems.

Voters are asked to support an additional .25% earned income tax for the next five years for land preservation. The funds will enable us to protect sensitive natural areas such as woodlands, stream valleys, wildlife habitats, as well as our remaining farmland, future recreational areas, and historic sites that define the unique character of the Township.

We are running out of time to save our disappearing countryside. By approving the referendum, we can protect our valuable resources before they disappear forever!

## Springfield Township

Several years ago, Springfield Township voters supported a referendum authorizing an additional .25% earned income tax designated entirely for land preservation. The resulting approximate \$300,000 received annually has helped us to protect over 600 acres of beautiful farmland and other properties with unique natural features.

In July, the Springfield Supervisors unanimously voted to again place a question on the November ballot to better utilize these funds by authorizing debt to be incurred up to Five Million Dollars to finance the acquisition of open space. The loan payments would be paid from the existing .25% earned income tax—there would be no additional tax increase.

The question to be submitted to the voters in November is

*“Shall debt be authorized to be incurred as debt approved by the electors in the sum of Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) for the purpose of financing the acquisition of open space; for the purpose of acquiring Agricultural or Conservation Easements”*

The following are the most commonly asked questions about this Referendum and their answers:

**Question: If the voters decide to permit this borrowing, will it mean a tax increase for Springfield Township residents?**

**Answer:** NO...If the voters favor this Referendum, the current .25% EIT Tax revenue designated for Springfield Township’s Open Space Fund would pay all debt associated with this proposal without any tax increases.

**Question: What can this proposed money be utilized for?**

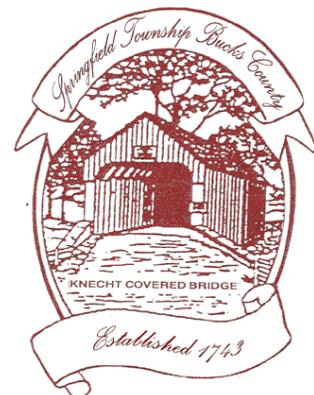
**Answer:** ONLY for financing the Open Space acquisition of Agricultural or Conservation Easements.

**Question: Why is this being considered at this time?**

**Answer:** Springfield Township is at a crossroads. We are ahead of many surrounding townships in that we have an established fund in place for land preservation. However, urban sprawl will soon be here as development pressure from all of our surrounding areas will definitely increase. If the majority of residents like the rural appeal of Springfield Township, the time to act is NOW. The Township receives approximately \$300,000 annually for our Open Space fund from the .25% Earned Income Tax. This tax is paid by each working resident and therefore, is not a burden on our retired residents. Permitting the Township to borrow funds to preserve properties as they become available will help us to better utilize funds we now collect.

**Question: How can we keep Springfield Township beautiful and scenic?**

**Answer:** Help us get the word out to Springfield voters that they hold the solution by helping the Township utilize the current taxes in a much more POWERFUL way. Funds readily available to preserve open space will help alleviate rising school taxes and ever increasing traffic on our rural roads—both a direct result of development.



## Streamflow, stormwater and riparian buffers – putting it all together

Our beloved Cooks Creek does more than provide a place of beauty to humble our spirits, it is also providing services that we largely take for granted. After the flooding this summer, no one doubts the power of water to disrupt our lives and destroy homes, villages and communities. The papers have been full of articles decrying sprawl and impervious surface as the reason for flooding. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, I don't think that development (or lack thereof) has any significant connection to the kind of extreme events that result in widespread flooding and damage that we have seen recently. These have more to do with larger environmental issues that we may or may not be causing. What the flooding does clearly show us is, however, that there are limits to what our green infrastructure can do.

My observations on the Creek tell me that the really big floods do relatively little damage to the system (not to say they don't damage property). However, the long term cumulative effect of rapid runoff from many small storms causes considerable damage. Specifically, streambank erosion, increased sedimentation and reduction of benthic habitat and increased temperature, to name a few. Take a walk from Durham up the mainstem and you'll see what I mean: deeper and steeper streambanks, older trees being undercut, more muddy pools containing suckers and other warm water fish. We need to stop this trend now, before our Exceptional Value status is threatened.

The question that we all need to answer is this: what are the limits and how can those limits be translated into sound policy and planning decisions that will protect our quality of life, and our precious Creek. The first step in answering these questions is to understand the system and its response to change. The CCWA has spent the last several years monitoring streamflow. We have two stream gauging stations in the watershed; one at Red Bridge Rd and one behind the Thompson property in Springtown (Brunswick). Every hour, a tiny computer records the level of water in the Creek. Every month I go to the stations



Undercut Shagbark Hickory Photo by: W. Scott Douglas

and download data into my laptop and record the velocity of water across the stream. This information is entered into our Watershed Monitoring System software and a hydrograph, or stream flow record, is calculated. You can see these on our website at [www.cooks creekpa.org](http://www.cooks creekpa.org). Figure 1 on page 5 is the 2005 flow (in cubic ft/second) at the Red Bridge Station.

The software also calculates the amount of

stormwater in each event relative to the amount of groundwater or baseflow. The ratio of these two amounts indicates the overall health of the watershed. Ratios close to 1 are the most desirable. As the ratio goes down, damage from stormwater goes up, *regardless of the size of the storm*. If you look at the ratios over the last several years, you can see that things are not getting any better

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)  
 (Figure 2 below). We need to act now if we are going to maintain our Exceptional Value status.

What can we do? Preserve open space, maintain forests in as natural a state as possible, preserve wetlands and floodplains, and most important of all: maintain vegetated buffers along both perennial and intermittent streams. Springfield recently adopted zoning ordinances that provided a 125 foot buffer for all streams. This was a major victory for sound planning. Unfortunately, the revised draft ordinance reduces the protections for intermittent streams down to 50 feet. These intermittent streams are actually seep corridors that provide direct pathways for seasonal high groundwater flows to the Creek. These spring flows help ensure that the Creek stays cooler longer in the spring. In summer, the same corridors provide natural infiltration basins that help to maximize the amount of stormwater that recharges the groundwater. The greater the buffer, the better the infiltration. In extreme events, these dry beds also become natural stormwater conduits, transmitting excess

water much more slowly than manmade swales or pipes. Those living around these intermittent streams are best advised to let them operate with as little change as possible. Trying to bury them or removing natural vegetation around them will only result in water going where we don't want it to go, as well as harming the Creek.

The CCWA will be using the data we have collected to support a strong zoning ordinance and a modified subdivision and land development ordinance in the near future. If you want to help, please send your comments to Barbara Lindtner, Chair, Springfield Township Planning Commission, 2320 Township Rd, Quakertown, PA, 18951.

Figure 1

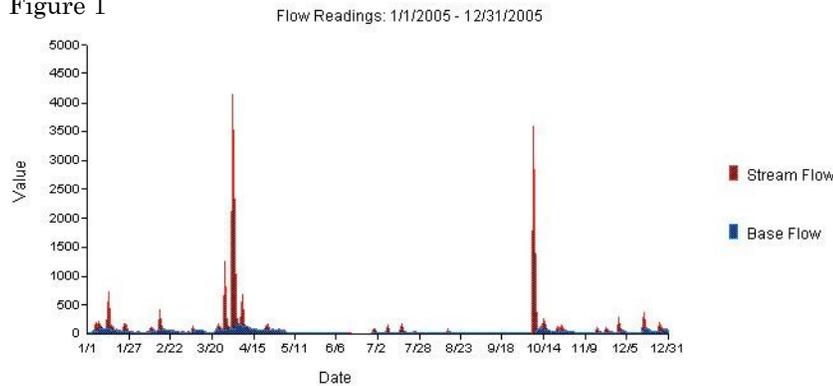


Figure 2

Year	Brunswick Gauge	Red Bridge Gauge
2000	No data	0.52
2001	No data	0.74
2002	0.15	0.58
2003	0.21	0.48
2004	0.14	0.30
2005	Not available	0.43

# On a Summer Evening

By: Jim Orben



Photo from [www.google.com/images](http://www.google.com/images)

In early August, on a warm clear night there is beauty to be seen in the sky. Each year our earth passes through a cloud of debris left behind by the passing of a comet. This debris is really dust and very small particles created in the early years of the universe, and left behind for our pleasure. These pieces of the cosmos collide with the upper atmosphere and become the streaks of brilliance we call shooting stars. Humans have always been fascinated with the night sky, explaining its wonders in ways that reflected just how much was known of the nature of the heavens. Some cultures taught that stars were the campfires of vanquished warriors or that falling stars should be "wished upon". We now know what meteors are and where they come from but there is still great magic in their appearance, causing awe in those who see them. This year, on the night of August 11, the waning full moon rose at about 9:00 pm, and its brightness made the Perseid Meteor Shower of 2006 hard to see, but they were there, none the less, streaking through the sky. The trail of dust left behind by Comet Swift-Tuttle is broad and meteors can be seen through much of the month of August, so don't despair, if the peak night is cloudy or the moon is bright. An August evening under the stars, musing on their true nature, will give you pleasure with or without meteors.

# Making a New Paradigm Happen, One Step at a Time

By: Jim Orben



The first challenge of the twenty-first century is to recognize the legacy left to us by previous centuries, and the paradigm that legacy has created. We live in an industrial society based on cheap energy from fossil fuels. As a result of this energy use we have dramatically increased the amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the air, covering our earth like a blanket. The second challenge facing us is to accept the responsibility to do everything we can to create a paradigm shift away from nonrenewable fossil carbon based energy sources to renewable solar, wind and vegetable based energy sources. The task seems daunting. The numbers are so large as to make any one person's efforts feel insignificant. Therein lies our true challenge. How do we convince ourselves that each one of us can do enough to make a difference. Luckily the first steps are small and cost little. Compact fluorescent bulbs can be used in almost every fixture designed for incandescent bulbs. These bulbs use only a fraction of the power and last much longer than the ones they replace, making them almost free. Our freedom is expressed in our mobility. We go where and when we wish. With proper planning we can combine these travels, do many errands on each trip and in this way save energy, money and time while emitting less CO<sub>2</sub>. These first steps are small changes with noticeable results.

CO<sub>2</sub> savings can be had in numerous other ways as well. Turn off lights, televisions, stereos and other electronic devices when they are not in use. Install a programmable thermostat so you can lower the temperature of the whole house when you are asleep or not at home and adjust the set-points a little higher in the summer and a little lower in the winter. Put a timer on the water heater to make water hot only when it is needed and set the water heater to 120 degrees. Advocate for changes in your workplace that reduce energy consumption. There are kudos to be won for increasing profitability while decreasing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as a secondary effect. Contact your local government officials and insist that they join the growing number of America's cities and towns in pledging to meet the Kyoto Accords (a global warming treaty that our federal government refuses to ratify).

Many of us have already taken some of

these first steps in CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and are anxious to make our households even more "fossil carbon neutral". The deregulation of the electricity supply system has made it possible for us to buy electricity from sources other than the company that owns the wires connected to our homes. Because all electrons are the same, and everyone draws from the common pool of electrons in the regional grid, it is the Renewable Energy Certificate (REC), not the supply company, that determines where the electricity each of us uses comes from. If you buy an REC that covers your average monthly use, you are paying for enough renewable electricity to be delivered to the grid to match or exceed the amount of electricity you are taking from it. And you own the REC to prove it. Thus you are buying 100% renewable electricity. What you pay for the certificate constitutes the difference in cost between conventional electricity and renewable electricity. Companies like Energy Cooperative Association of Pennsylvania offer REC's for sale to individuals.

Our modern society has chosen to disperse its population over broad areas that were once fertile farmland. The result of this choice is that much of our food must be transported over long distances to reach the processor and transported again to reach us, the end user. This choice demands fossil carbon-derived energy whose use creates pollution, traffic and large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>. We can reduce this source of CO<sub>2</sub> by buying from local producers and planting our own vegetable gardens.

In addition to lowering our thermostats in the winter we can use wood (modern carbon) to heat the central areas of our homes where we spend most of our time, allowing the rest of the house to be cooler and using significantly less fossil carbon as a result. By using our imaginations we can find many ways to create less CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil carbon. If your home is heated with oil you can switch, from the number 2 fuel oil you are probably using, to bioheating oil. This alternative is a blend of fossil oil with vegetable oil that burns cleaner and emits much less fossil carbon as CO<sub>2</sub>. If you drive a diesel car or truck, biodiesel fuel is an ideal substitute for the fuel you now use, and its use offers the added advantage of a more pleasant smelling exhaust. As our cars and appli-

ances wear out and require replacement we should look to alternative equipment and methods that can perform the same functions for our households. Instead of having three four-wheel drive vehicles in your fleet, cut the number of vehicles to two and make one a smaller more fuel-efficient hybrid or diesel car. This can save money as well as reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The largest energy user in our homes after heating is the electric water heater. It costs over one thousand dollars annually to have hot water at our beck and call. A solar water heating system can be paid for by savings in only five years and go on supplying hot water free for decades. Since reduction of fossil carbon emissions is almost always accompanied by energy use reduction there is the added benefit of cost savings to spur us on in our quest to return the earth and its systems to balance.

The paradigm of resource exploitation and unlimited growth must be replaced by one of sustainable use of renewable resources. The creation of a living paradigm of stewardship, integrity, simplicity, equality and peace allowing life on planet earth to flourish for many centuries beyond the twenty-first is the rightly ordered next step in the evolution of our human society. The alternative is dark, but the future can be bright if we begin now. Join me in the first small steps, buy a few new light bulbs and let the momentum carry you on to even greater CO<sub>2</sub> reductions.

Resources to help each of us reduce our fossil carbon footprint:

1. Compact fluorescent bulbs can be purchased at most grocery stores and home improvement stores.
2. Water heater timers are available at local hardware stores and home improvement stores.
3. Thermostats that automatically set back the set-point at preprogrammed times can be purchased from and installed by your heating contractor or fuel supplier.
4. Local farmers' markets are in operation across the area. Check with your local newspaper for locations and times.
5. Biodiesel is available from Moyer

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Making a New Paradigm Happen

(Continued from page 6)

Plumbing & Heating Co. in Kutztown, PA 610-683-7364. Contact your current supplier and ask if they can supply it to you. Also check the Energy Cooperative Association of Pennsylvania at [theenergyco-op.com](http://theenergyco-op.com).

6. For REC's, the Energy Cooperative Association of Pennsylvania is on the

web at [theenergyco-op.com](http://theenergyco-op.com).

7. Diesel cars are made by Volkswagen and Daimler/Chrysler. Many manufactures offer larger diesel vehicles if that is your need. The most fuel efficient hybrid cars are offered by Honda and Toyota.

## Why Should We Care? By: Jim Orben

Why should the Cooks Creek Watershed Association and its members worry about global warming? The polar icecaps are far away and the Atlantic Ocean is nowhere in sight. What difference does it make to us? Global Warming may be the wrong name for what is happening. Perhaps if the phenomenon were called America Warming or Pennsylvania Warming or maybe Durham Warming, the name would catch and hold our attention. Global sounds so big. The problem

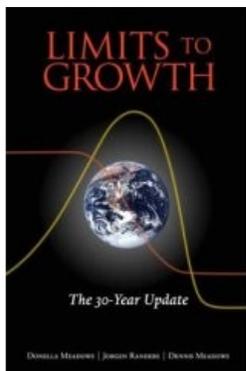
is that the problem is big, effecting not only polar bears in the arctic but honey creepers in the mountains of Maui and people living on the banks of Cooks Creek in Durham too. Is the drowning death of one polar bear or one home destroyed by flooding or one species of bird becoming extinct the result of a warmer environment? Any one of these events taken in isolation is not conclusive but when these events are taken together and can all be explained by applying the same theory, the answer to the question

becomes clear. For life as we know it to continue we must apply the genius and ingenuity that built the pyramids or put a man on the moon to this present and even bigger problem. The inconvenient truth of our time is that the earth is warming due to increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and we have to do something about it or face the consequences.

## Book Review

By: W. Scott Douglas

**Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update by Donella Meadows, Jorgen Randers and Dennis Meadows**



As the title suggests, this is an update to a popular book from the 1970's, when the back-to-earth movement was in full swing. The original book painted a bleak picture of our future if we did not reduce our impact on the world. Back then, many promptly dismissed the book as hippy alarmism and communist propaganda. Some might feel the same about this one as well, but it's worth reading, especially if "An Inconvenient Truth" struck a chord with you. Meadows *et al.* have used modern modeling tools and a restrained hand in painting a picture of human society on the brink of disaster brought on by waste, greed and overpopulation. They are serious scientists and business people who earnestly

walk through the proof that we are in ecological crisis and the reasons for it. Because their first book was not taken seriously, the authors are almost apologetic in their presentation of what, to many observers, is simply the truth. I found this distracting, but understandable. There are many detractors who believe that if the premise of growth limits had any merit at all, then society would have already collapsed. However, the authors profess that our survival has not changed their original prediction of impending collapse one bit. Our failure to act has simply allowed us to move further toward the break point before feeling the negative effects. And the smarter we are at using technology as an excuse not to act, the greater our population will become, and the harder the inevitable fall. More and more people are beginning to admit that this is true, but like the crew of the Titanic spotting the iceberg, it's too late to avoid the hit. Not a pretty picture, but the authors don't preach, use gratuitous statistics, indulgent examples or photos of cute animal babies to make their point. The message is actually quite clear: we cannot destroy the planet, but we are going to make it much more difficult for us to live here and we are likely to see a decline in quality of life *in our lifetimes*. What we all need to do, and

quickly, is to lessen our ecological footprint. Buy local produce, eat less meat, drive less, recycle, and consume less of everything. What really struck home for me was their reasoning for preservation of natural systems. Nature gives us many things for free (water and wastewater treatment being two biggies) and we need to preserve these systems as long as we can, even in the face of inevitable development. The industrial capital of the world simply cannot sustain the quality of life we now enjoy if we all switch to built infrastructure to provide these services. Sustainability is not simplistic nirvana, but making sure that we meet the needs of the present society without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It's a message we all need to remember and spread.

**Published by Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT.**

## A Convenient Solution

By: Sherry Brodhead with Ellis Walentine

Global Warming is a hot topic these days! We are all concerned but I, like most of us, feel a bit helpless as to ways to implement changes that can make a difference. I recently heard about a program that helped me to see clearly how I personally contribute in both harmful and positive ways to the environment and most importantly, what to do about it. I actually thought my household was doing quite well until I stumbled upon a web site called **NativeEnergy.com**.

We are currently very dependent on the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heat and transportation, all of which contribute to global warming by polluting our upper atmosphere with carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). CO<sub>2</sub> traps heat resulting in climate change. Each of us creates our own individual "carbon footprint", a representation of the effect one has on the climate in terms of the total amount of greenhouse gases one produces effecting the warming trend.

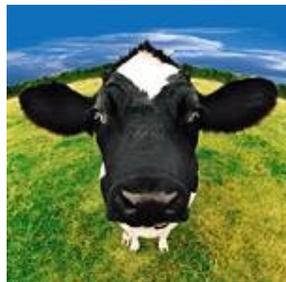
As individuals, how can we go about taking the necessary steps to offset the damage produced by our own carbon footprints? Some things are easy to do, like converting to high-efficiency fluorescent light bulbs, adjusting the thermostats on our air conditioners and on our heaters, driving fuel-efficient cars and recycling. But, despite our best efforts, there is always more we can do.

On the **NativeEnergy.com** web site there is an easy-to-use calculating system - the Carbon Footprint Calculator - for determining the amount of carbon dioxide that each household is responsible for. By taking into account your travel fuel consumption, your home energy costs and the number of people in your household, this system calculates the approximate number of tons of carbon dioxide you emit into the atmosphere each month. In other words, this is your "footprint," your debt that needs to be offset by counterbalancing it with an equivalent amount of CO<sub>2</sub> from a renewable energy source. This is where the shock factor revealed itself in regards to our household! It seems we have a travel addiction and our jet fuel consumption

put the Brodhead name on a very deep and toxic footprint! We have some repentance to do!



Buying "offsets" is a way for you to compensate for the CO<sub>2</sub> pollution you create by driving, flying, heating your home or using electricity. **NativeEnergy.com** offers multiple ways in which to do this. Since it is not practical or affordable for each of us to own and operate our own power-generating windmill, **NativeEnergy**, through its "Cool Home" program, makes it easy for us to support the production of wind farms by purchasing *renewable energy credits*. These funds will contribute to increasing development and production of wind farms to deliver clean, renewable electricity on your behalf, displacing electricity that would otherwise be generated by burning fossil fuels.



Na-

**tiveEnergy** has also teamed up with

Clean Air – Clean Planet's CoolDriver Campaign for purchasing automobile-specific "offsets."

[www.cooldriver.org](http://www.cooldriver.org).

These funds are now being allocated to the Rosebud Sioux tribe's St. Francis Wind Farm in South Dakota.

Also at the **NativeEnergy.com** web site, you can read about the Schrack Family Farm methane project in Pennsylvania (nicknamed "remooable energy") that supports dairy farm methane projects that produce electricity and heat from manure!

I encourage you to visit the **NativeEnergy.com** website to learn how you can contribute. Or, for more information contact:

**NativeEnergy LLC**, PO Box 539, Charlotte, VT 05445

Phone: 800-924-6826

Email: [info@nativeenergy.com](mailto:info@nativeenergy.com)

Following is a list of well-known leaders who are fighting global warming with **NativeEnergy**:

Aveda, Ben & Jerry's, Clif Bar, Seventh Generation, Dave Mathews Band, Guster, Timberland, Co-op America, Utne Reader, Green Mountain Coffee, Stoneyfield Farm, NRDC, Paramount, Warner Brother

This is what you get  
**Click here!**



Photos from [www.NativeEnergy.com](http://www.NativeEnergy.com)

## Genetically Engineered Trees

By: Hans O. Reimann Jr, The View from Laughing Springs

Forest industry scientists have been quietly engineering tree species to be faster growers and insect and disease resistant in order to maximize corporate profits. The Vermont based 'Stop GE Trees' campaign has cautioned that GE (genetically engineered ) trees could reduce many forests to tree plantations. These woodlands would only yield a small range of tree species, effectively silencing the forest as plant and animal diversity plummets to unsustainable levels. Unfortunately, the first GE tree

approved for use in the U.S. (after passing all regulatory hurdles the U.S. Agriculture Department's animal and plant inspection service required) a Hawaiian papaya has been found to have spread its genes to native papayas and organically farmed papayas thereby tainting their marketability.

As a result, new regulations are being formulated, but the forest industry knows that public opinion is the most powerful tool we all have to keep them

honest. Even though the Sierra Club has endorsed the concept of GE with proper regulatory oversight, they also warn that once out in the world "genes are free, as free as pollen on the wind - to invade nature, and can't be recalled". The current stand of the Sierra Club is that they oppose any outdoor release of genetic technologies.

## Highlighting this quarter's INVASIVE PLANT: Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*)

By: Hans O. Reimann Jr, The View from Laughing Springs

This plant is the fastest spreading invasive species in our watershed today. Although stilt grass is an annual, seed production from each plant can number in the hundreds, guaranteeing its return at least three springs in a row since seeds remain viable that long. In our watershed, man and animal (deer) are helping to spread the seeds to new areas, with disturbed areas most prone to infestation. Places as diverse as stream banks, moist forests, lawns and gardens are at risk. Storm water runoff can also spread stilt grass seeds to new areas. When a patch begins to take hold, its dense growth habit begins crowding out native wetland and forest vegetation in both full sun and deep shade habitat.

The plant is easy to pull, but be careful to remove roots because broken stems still rooted can grow again. Resembling a delicate bamboo, this grass can grow to about 2-3 feet with lance shaped pale green leaves about 3 inches in length. As with most grasses, seeds are produced usually on the tips of the plants, but sometimes stems can produce seeds. So the best time to weed out this invader is before the end of summer, before



Photo by: Jim Orben

seeds are produced.

In our watershed this plant can sometimes be found growing together with other bad plants such as garlic mustard and other Asian kin such as Japanese wineberry or honeysuckle. I am researching this new phenomena of invasives, growing together in cozy

relationships. More about that at a later date. Good Hunting!

## Children's Backyard: Noisemakers other than whistles

By: Lois Oleksa

Almost everyone has heard and tried whistling through a blade of grass, but have you tried popping the flower buds of hostas, morning glories, or Canterbury bells? Many garden plants can be popped or snapped, or made to squeak and squawk.

To whistle with a blade of grass can be difficult - try it. Place a broad leaf of grass between your side-by-side thumbs, holding it taut, and blow on it. Hear the harsh crow sound?

A privet leaf (*Ligustrum vulgare*) from

Photos by: Karyn Oleksa



(L) Privet Leaf

(R) Folded Privet Leaf



Tender Leaf Jewel Weed



the hedge can make a nice squeaky instrument. Simply fold the leaf in half so the pointy ends are on top of each other. Blow into the top where the fold is, and pull at the bottom points to make the squeak!

Rose petals and other tender leaves, such as Jewelweed, can make a popping noise when placed over your lips while strongly inhaling. Imagine you're blowing a bubble into the inside of your mouth; you have to create suction. When they pop, hear the explosion!

*Sedum spectabile* can be turned into a balloon and popped. Carefully squeeze



Popping the Jewel Weed leaf!



Leaf of the *Sedum*

the leaf until it becomes a dark green. Patience, patience, patience! Even the slightest tear in the leaf membrane will ruin a good balloon. Squeeze the leaf until the membrane can be separated from the inner leaf tissue. Now, blow into the stem to create a balloon, and pop!

Another noise maker is the pumpkin leaf stalk horn. The longer stems produce deep tones like the "moo" of a cow, while the shorter stems sound like bawling calves. Cut a stem of pumpkin or squash, with the leaf attached. The cut end will be hollow. Now cut the leaf off, high enough up from its stalk so that the opening is obstructed. Make a slit in that end about 1 inch long. Scrape off the prickles around the slit, and blow. Let me know how it works as I no longer have squash or pumpkins - the flood demolished a good portion of my garden.



*Sedum* Balloon



*Sedum* Balloon

### Working Together to Preserve the Cooks Creek Watershed

*(Continued from page 2)*

conservation easement made an important contribution to the overall preservation of the rural and scenic quality of this exceptional area in the Cooks Creek watershed. Our partners on this project, BC NAP and Springfield Township, contributed to the funding, and the Bartakovits family has established a trust that will provide for the ongoing maintenance of the property for many years to come.

The Neis property, at the southwest portion of the watershed, encompasses 28 acres of woodlands and meadows and contains a portion of Cooks Creek. It provides a diverse habitat for the many species of wildlife in the area and, like the other projects, is close to other permanently preserved land. Once again, the Conservancy partnered with BC NAP, PA DCNR and Springfield Township, all of which provided funding that enabled this important property to be preserved.

Our most recent project, which is still in progress, is the preservation of the Seifert-Ray property. This project is unique in that it spans two townships and counties and involves a partnership among Heritage Conservancy, PA DCNR, two county funding programs (Bucks and Northampton Counties' Open Space Programs) and both Springfield and Lower Saucon townships. The property is also located in the well-head protection area for Springtown and contains some of the

headwater tributaries of Cooks Creek. We expect to complete this project in the fall of 2006.

Of course, funding and implementing preservation projects such as these requires a supportive community of taxpayers and neighbors. In addition to funding partners, Heritage Conservancy also works with many other organizations and groups in the Cooks Creek watershed, such as the Cooks Creek Watershed Association, Trout Unlimited, Durham Township and the Cooks Creek Conservancy, who advance the cause of preservation by educating the public about the importance of land preservation and engaging them in our shared work. Successful preservation is truly a team effort!



### New Tax Laws

In an exciting new development on August 17, new tax incentives for private land conservation were signed into law. The provisions raise the maximum deduction for donating a conservation easement from 30% of adjusted gross income (AGI) in any year to 50%; they allow qualified farmers and ranchers to deduct up to

100% of their AGI; and they increase the number of years to take deductions from 6 years to 16 years. We are optimistic that these provisions will encourage even more landowners to partner with us in preserving their land for future generations.

## Local Government Meetings

### Springfield Township:

[www.springfieldbucks.org](http://www.springfieldbucks.org)  
610-346-6700  
2320 Township Road  
Supervisors: 2nd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM  
Planning Commission:  
1st Wed. @ 7 PM  
Supervisors/Planning Commission Work Session: 3rd Thurs. @ 7 PM  
Environmental Advisory Council: 2nd Thurs. @ 7:30 PM  
Historic Commission: 3rd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM

### Durham Township:

[www.durhamtownship.org](http://www.durhamtownship.org)  
610-346-8911  
215 Old Furnace Road  
Supervisors: 2nd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM  
Planning Commission: 1st Tues @ 7:30 PM  
EAC: 3rd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM

### Lower Saucon:

[www.lowersaucontownship.org](http://www.lowersaucontownship.org)  
610-865-3291  
3700 Old Philadelphia Pike  
Council: 1st and 3rd Wed. @ 7 PM  
Planning Commission: 2nd Mon @ 7 PM  
EAC: 1st Tues @ 7 PM

### Williams Township:

[www.williamstwp.org](http://www.williamstwp.org)  
610-258-6060  
655 Cider Press Road  
Supervisors: 2nd Tues @ 7 PM  
Planning Commission: 3rd Wed @ 7 PM  
Land Preservation Board: 3rd Mon @ 7 PM

### Richland Township:

215-536-4066  
1328 California Road  
Supervisors: 2nd and 4th Mon @ 7 PM  
Planning Commission: 3rd Tues @ 7 PM  
Preservation Board: 2nd Tues @ 7 PM  
Rivers Conservation: 3rd Tues @ 3PM

## Please Join Us... Cooks Creek Watershed Association - Membership Form

All of us who reside in the area enjoy the beauty of Cooks Creek.

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 in our townships.

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 resource.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other household members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interests: (circle)**

Newsletter	Website	Roadside Cleanup	Event Planning
Membership	Fundraising	Stream Studies	Wherever I'm Needed

**Individual Membership Fee:** @ \$ 15.00 per year \_\_\_\_\_

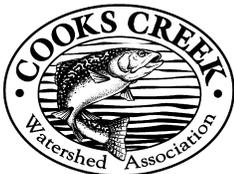
**Family Membership Fee:** @ \$ 25.00 per year \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please detach and mail to Cooks Creek Watershed Association , (CCWA)  
P.O. Box 45, Springtown, PA 18081. *THANK YOU!*  
Checks can be made payable to Cooks Creek Watershed Association.  
CCWA is a 501 ( c ) (3) non-profit organization.**

Be sure to list *info@cooks creekpa.org* as a favorite in your e-mail account if you wish to receive last minute updates. CCWA does not share your e-mail address with any other organization.



Cooks Creek Watershed Association  
P.O. Box 45  
Springtown, PA 18081  
www.cooks creekpa.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
STANDARD MAIL  
DURHAM, PA 18039  
PERMIT NO. 6