

Cooks Current

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

Volume 8, Issue 3

Newsletter of the Cooks Creek Watershed

Fall 2011

2011 Events

Regular Board Meetings:

Springtown Fire House- 7:30PM

Nov. 17, Dec. 15

All are welcome! We appreciate your involvement!

Special Events:

Nov. 12- Fall Clean Up



See back for details!

We're on the web!
www.cookscreekpa.org

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

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From Across the Board...

Without question, this has been the wettest hydrologic year since I've been monitoring water levels. Our creek is finally at a healthy baseflow, and groundwater levels are waaay up. However, this does not mean that we've made up for years of low water, nor does it mean that we won't see the baseflow drop back down again quickly once the rain stops. Unless, of course, this wet year is a trend toward more rain long term. It also doesn't mean we can accommodate more withdrawals in the watershed. Consider all this water another form of reprieve from the long term impacts of development – the other being the economy. Planning for a return to the status quo (hydrologically and economically), CCWA continues to support strong ordinances that encourage smart, sustainable development and protect our water resources. We recently supported the Delaware Riverkeeper's efforts to pressure the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) to slow down the process of adopting new ordinances for hydrofracking in the Delaware basin (which our watershed is part of, by the way). If you too are interested in ensuring that the mining of natural gas happens safely and without compromising our



Scott Douglas and Hans Reimann at Springfield Community Day

water resources, check out the Delaware Riverkeeper's website and consider joining them on November 21 for a rally at the Trenton War Memorial. The DRBC will be taking up this issue at their meeting on that day.

We've been busy locally, as usual. Hans Reimann conducted a rain barrel workshop in conjunction with the Springfield Township EAC on September 18. We still have 55-gallon barrel kits available; to order yours just drop us a line at info@cookscreekpa.org, now at the ultra low price of \$35. Rain barrels not only help conserve water, they temper the flow of stormwater off your roof – for years like this one. Get two!

Our annual dinner was a success as usual, but I

would have liked to see more of you there. The food was great, the conversation scintillating, and we had a GREAT speaker. Kirk Brown, a local legend in horticulture, came in the character of John Bartram – 18th century Quaker botanist and farmer. (See page 10 for picture.) Kirk stayed in character for the whole event and was really entertaining. John certainly had his opinions about everything from science and religion to politics and, of course, botany and stewardship. Both John and Kirk encouraged us to keep up the good work and not to be afraid to get our hands dirty (literally and politically). I was particularly intrigued with his quotes from found-

(Continued on page six)

Creature Feature: Fishing Spiders and Long-Jawed Orb Weavers

By: W. Scott Douglas

Number 19 in a series on the fauna of the Watershed

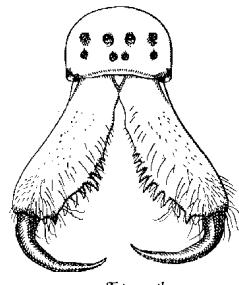
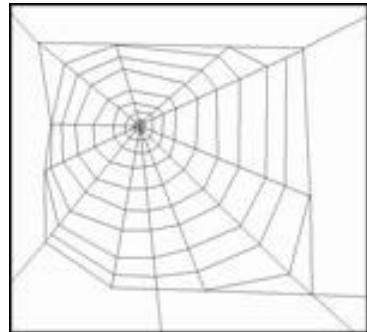
Nothing seems to stir up our primal fears more than spiders. In honor of our fall issue, I researched two of the more common and important spiders to the riparian ecosystem of our creek: fishing spiders and long-jawed orb weavers. The former group has some of our largest spiders in the region; the latter group has the largest fangs – the perfect pair to feed our Halloween nightmares.

Let's start with large and hairy. Despite their appearance, fishing spiders are not wolf spiders, but they are closely related. And no, they aren't related to tarantulas. Fishing spiders are members of the family Pisauridae, of which we have a number of representatives. The largest of these is *Dolomedes tenebrosus*, the hairy, brown and black spider that hangs out under rocks and logs and often finds its way into our basements and crawl spaces. Its body is often an inch long or more, and the female can have a leg span of 3 inches. While these guys are certainly large enough to deliver a painful bite, they are not poisonous.

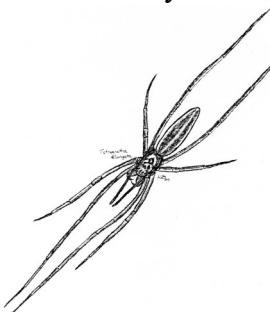


Like their wolf spider cousins, fishing spiders are ambush predators. Unlike wolf spiders though, fishing spiders are capable of catching minnows and aquatic insects by clinging to vegetation that overhangs the water. *D. tenebrosus* is large enough to be able to capture and eat small frogs! If threatened, fishing spiders can actually dive into the water, breathing from the air bubbles that are held by their

ample body hair. Another escape tactic is to simply run across the surface of the water, using the long hairs on their legs to spread their weight out over the surface tension of the water like a water strider. Another of the unique characteristics of these fascinating spiders is their maternal behavior. Like many ambush predators, they carry their egg sac around with them. When the eggs are ready to hatch, the female makes a “nursery” by folding some leaves and binding them with silk. The egg sac is placed inside this web and the female guards it until the spiderlings hatch. Like Charlotte’s babies, the spiderlings are capable of fending for themselves once they eat up the egg shells and silk and venture out of the nursery for a meal. Because of this behavior, some scientists call these arachnids “nursery-web” spiders.



Tetragnatha



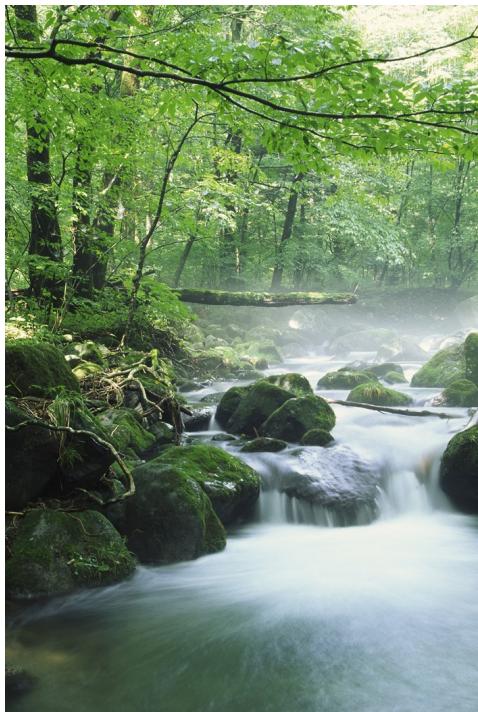
Another important creek side predator is the long-jawed orb weaver, family Tetragnathidae, of which we have several species. These spiders can have almost as large a leg span as fishing spiders, but their bodies are long, slender and lightly colored, making them much less intimidating at first glance. However, they do tend to build their webs in colonies, and many of them can be found under a single overhanging branch.

(continued on Page six)

Creature feature (continued from Page two)

Since they are long-legged, a bunch of these guys running over your arms and torso when

The View from Laughing Springs



By the time you peruse this article, the Spring and Summer of 2011 will have been fully engaged by the natural world around us. Hopefully, with broods fully raised, the Wood Thrushes and Baltimore Orioles are safely back in their winter home areas, young ones in tow. Having waited anxiously this past spring for their return to the family nursery woodlands, I now, once again, with uniquely human emotion, lament their need to migrate away. But, migrating songbirds need insects and arachnids to feed their young while living here at Laughing Springs and the greater Cooks Creek watershed. And our winters require adaptations for survival which Cardinals, Titmice, Blue Jays and others have made over the Millennia. Birds truly are the barometer of a healthy ecosystem, so when natively-biodiverse forests support native insects, the birds that depend on them have a healthy menu to choose from.

Here are some bird friendly actions you can engage in to help them feel at home and at the same time, enhance the character of our lovely watershed: 1) Reduce or eliminate pesticides and herbicide use. 2) Plant native plants to provide fruits and seeds, for native flora is home to tasty bugs and spiders. 3) Identify the invasive non-native plants in our area, and work to remove them for they create a false echo in the food chain. 4) Let your yard get a little untidy! Leave snags for nesting places and form brush piles with downed tree limbs to provide cover for birds and chipmunks when they need shelter from storm or predators. And guess what! Snags and brush piles also create another habitat for insects and spiders that birds eat! 5) Create and protect water sources in your own backyard habitat.

If you have a stream corridor on your property, let the native riparian area plants grow to shade the waters. Imagine this; if you don't cut that lawn all the way to the stream, you create more habitats for birds to live in, and yes, more insect and spider food for all! But what of the benefits of stream habitat to our human sense of consciousness? We need just to listen to the water move through its courses. Your sense of wellbeing can flow in joyful parallel to our stream's symphony of waterfall music. Perhaps a Water Thrush will dance and call at streamside, or green frogs will serenade. Many of you readers are stewards of streams on your properties, so, maybe you will find the time to listen, hear, and absorb the soothing, calming "water music". Invite family and friends to share the experience. Because the exact water volume, path, and streambed landscape naturally change from season to season, I am always curious to sense the changes in "stream sounds" as I close my eyes, listen, and hear.

Regards,

Hans O. Reimann Jr.

Children's Backyard: Leaf People

By: Lois Oleksa

Leaves come in many shapes and sizes. Here are five common leaves. Can you identify them? (*Answers on the bottom of page five*)



1



2



3



4



5

Feel free to gather different types of leaves when you walk outside. You can press and preserve them by placing them between pages in a magazine and putting a weight on top.

Once the leaves are flattened and dried, with a little glue you can use them to make some interesting art work like the leaf lady shown in the following picture.

(continued on page five)

(continued from page four)



1) Press the leaves in a magazine or old phone book.



2) After the leaves have been pressed they are laid out ready to make a leaf person.



3) A Leaf Person!

Answers to leaf Identity on page four:

5) Tulip tree leaf is broad. 4) White Oak leaf with rounded lobes. The acorn is ready to sprout. 3) Northern Red Oak leaf with spiny pointed lobes and acorns with shallow caps. 2) Maple leaves. Silver Maple leaves are deeply 5-lobed. 1) Sassafras with 2- to 3- lobed leaves looking like mittens.

branch ducking around the shoreline can be a bit disconcerting. On closer examination, they have disproportionately large jaws and fangs, which give them a very nasty appearance. They are not aggressive however, and do not bite humans. They do catch a large number of aquatic insects, draping their webs in great numbers along streams where there are large hatches.



Jim Orben and Hans Reimann are picking up dragonfly beady eyes.



The kids made dragonflies at Springfield's and Durham's Community Days from twigs, maple winged seeds, and beads for eyes. The wings were then painted with glitter glue.

From Across the Board... (continued from Page One)

ing father

James Madison, who believed that those who own land must also care for it. I couldn't agree more.

For upcoming events, be sure to check out the upper left hand corner of each newsletter, as well as our Facebook page, and check your email for special event notices. If you are not getting email notices, send me a note and I'll be sure you are added to the database, or update your email address, as appropriate. Our next event is scheduled for November 12 and will be our roadside cleanup. We usually meet at 9am at the corner of Gallows Hill and 212 in Durham. Let me know if you want to help.

Yours in conservation,

W. Scott Douglas



*Cooks Creek Rain Barrel
at Springfield Community Day*

PA: No emerald ash borers in Bucks!

Posted: Wednesday, October 12, 2011 12:00 am | Updated: 6:17 am, Wed Oct 12, 2011. By Christina Kristofic Staff Writer, *Intelligencer*; re-printed with permission.

Ash trees in Bucks and Montgomery counties are safe. For now. The state Department of Agriculture, which set up traps and surveyed the area this summer, found no trace of the emerald ash borer. The federal and state departments of agriculture are watching the movements of the emerald ash borer, a metallic green wood-boring beetle that attacks and kills ash trees. This summer, they found the beetles in Huntington, Sullivan, Union and Wyoming counties. "It's certainly continuing its march east across the state," said Nicole Bucher, spokeswoman for the state Department of Agriculture. "It's definitely something we're still concerned about because it affects a huge portion of our hardwoods industry." About 3 percent to 4 percent of all trees in Pennsylvania are ash trees. Sven-Erik Spichiger, the entomology program manager for the state Department of Agriculture, said in June that about 20 percent of the trees in Bucks County are ash trees.



The emerald ash borer is a metallic wood-boring beetle from Southeast Asia, which was first found in the U.S. in Detroit, Mich., in 2002 and has traveled across the country. The nearest sighting to Bucks County and Eastern Montgomery County was in the suburbs of Baltimore, Md., on June 6.



Many of the ash trees Pennsylvania timber workers cut down are eventually made into Louisville Sluggers. The emerald ash borer comes from Southeast Asia. It was first found in the U.S. in 2002 in Detroit, and it has traveled across the country from there. It was found in the Baltimore suburbs on June 6. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the state Department of Agriculture have been hanging traps across the state, including in Bucks and Montgomery counties, for several years. The traps usually are purple or green boxes or funnels made of corrugated plastic. Spichiger said the plastic emits a wavelength of light that tricks the beetle into thinking the trap is an ash leaf. The department of agriculture also puts manuka oil, a cosmetic oil that has the same compound as ash bark, on the traps to attract the beetles. The insects fly to the traps, rest for a little while and become stuck in a layer of glue — like a large fly trap. You might have seen them hanging in trees in Bucks County this summer; they looked kind of like kites. The state Department of Agriculture checks the traps twice a year. When officials find an emerald ash borer, they set up a survey grid within 150 miles of the sighting, and hang the traps 2 miles apart.

Spichiger said in June that officials believe they can treat and save some ash trees if they catch the emerald ash borer early enough. The state also could introduce parasitic wasps to attack the emerald ash borers.

Spichiger said the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation of Natural Resources also has been collecting and preserving ash seed so it can plant new trees if the beetles kill all the existing trees.

Even though the state did not find any emerald ash borers this summer, officials still advise against moving wood — especially firewood. Spichiger said, "That's how this spread around faster than it needed to. There are hundreds of thousands of other pests out there in foreign lands that could become established here. You never know what you're moving around when you move around a piece of wood."

Christina Kristofic: 215-345-3079; email, ckristofic@phillyburbs.com; Twitter, @CKristofic



Green Tip # 16: Ready for Fall?

Clean the roof gutters and make sure downspouts are pointed away from the house. Now would also be a good time to install a rain barrel ... rather than allow water to drain into one spot, a rain barrel would allow you to direct the water to where it's most needed.

We still have 55-gallon barrel kits available; to order yours just drop us a line at info@cookscreakpa.org, now at the ultra low price of \$35.



All the leaves are brown and the sky is gray.

From the Mamas & Papas "California Dreaming"



Ecology News at Palms

Another year has started in our WIP (Watershed Integration Project) at Palms and the WIP students are charging full speed ahead into the local environment. They have visited and tested the Haycock Run and two sites on the Cooks Creek (the Douglas property on Route 412 and the Klingbeil property on Church Hill Rd.) Leaf packs were placed and will be analyzed as part of the Leaf Pack Network Project. Students will produce extensive data posters, and copies of these are sent to the property owners as well as to Scott Douglas for Cooks Creek. They have also been to Hawk



Mountain for the study of raptors. Speaking of birds, the camera and computer set-up for the rooftop kestrel box is up and working and a nest can be seen in the box. Look at the nest on the link on the Palisades Middle School web site, WIP team: <http://www.palisadessd.org/6063417121081/blank/browse.asp?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=56093>.

Cooks Creek will again be contributing student memberships to all students in the WIP program this year. This has been part of the organization's continuing outreach program.

Palm's native garden is also moving forward. Ms. Arlia's and Mrs. Heilig-Trexler's students have been working in the garden. Mother Nature provided a bit of a set back with the huge amounts of water in the native garden, but it has finally dried up enough to work with. The students would love some donations of native plants. If you are separating plants in your garden and would like to donate some to the native garden project, please call one of the above staff members at 610-847-5131.

Land Ethics Symposium Speakers Leave Impression on Audience Members *By: Hans O. Reimann Jr.*

John Bartram



John Bartram played by Kirk Brown, Oct 8, Fall Dinner Photo by Jim Orben

Last winter Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve sponsored their annual Land Ethics Symposium for creative approaches to ecological landscaping. The Preserve is listed on PA's historic resource list, the native plant populations are that important to our natural heritage. Their 11th annual symposium held down in Langhorne's Sheraton Hotel featured five interesting speakers and subjects. Also, a special presentation was made; the 2011 Land Ethics Award to the Bucks County chapter of Trout Unlimited and Buckingham Twp. The award recognized a 100% volunteer effort on 1500 feet of riparian restoration along Watson Creek. Project highlights included dam removal, bank stabilization and re-establishing native plants and fish.

One of the speakers at the symposium, Christina Kobland, spoke of a project she oversaw that incorporated building native biodiversity as a best management practice. A Plymouth Whitemarsh High School wet meadow area and PECO power line stream crossing was what made this project so interesting. Wow! A power company and school district cooperating on native plant initiatives.

Another speaker at the symposium, John Eric Schneider, presented an interesting perspective on culturally historic landscapes. He elaborated on historic estates and grounds that through a combination of stonework, hardscaping, fountains, and historic plantings retain the sense of community for a

(Continued on page eleven)

(Continued from page ten)

given area.

Another presenter speaker, Mark Gutshall of Land Studies, also spoke on historic landscapes and their community perspective. This presentation highlighted the numerous mills that used our local streams to power the making of flour. Legacy sediments have been the result of the mills' usage of dams and millraces altering a stream's natural flow, resulting in an unnatural layer of sediment on many miles of stream bottom.

A pair of speakers, Carrie Wiles of North Creek Nurseries and Claudia West of Germany offered a fresh outlook on Natural Color Theories of vegetation. They put forth the idea that our perception of color and beauty in the wild evolved from how the natural world supported our lives in prehistoric times. Since green leafed plants helped us to survive, we see more shades of green than actually exist. Our adaptation to our environment allows us to interpret plant textures and shapes of leaves as different shades of the same color. Fascinating concepts on humans' innate abilities to recognize certain important plants in our distant past.

The most important speaker of the day, however, was a Lehigh Valley resident and landscape professional. Kirk Brown, who portrayed the 18th century botanist, John Bartram at CCWA's annual event, spoke well at the symposium to his chosen subject: Reconnection-Ensuring Our Future. Mr. Brown gently challenged the audience to engage in a life style that embraces our inter-connectivity to the native biodiversity around us. From reducing our love affair with alien turf lawns, to practicing sustainability at work, at home and at play, his message was most important. The impression he left on my psyche caused me to realize that he was a kindred spirit. After sharing a lunch table at the symposium, I knew enough about him to invite him to be our speaker at our annual Cooks Creek Watershed Association dinner. So, with the Wild Flower Preserves' well organized land ethic event behind me, I looked forward to Mr. Brown's message to manifest in our Watershed through his portrayal of John Bartram.

P.S. Water-Native Plant Factoid: Las Vegas, Nevada pays residents \$1.50 for each square foot of lawn they rip out and subsequently replace with Nevada Native water thrifty vegetation. This has resulted in an annual water use savings of 7 billion gallons of water!



When will the rain STOP!



High water at Cooks Creek

Recycle!

Local Recycling Information

Durham Township Recycling Center

Location: Municipal Building, 218 Old Furnace Rd, Durham

1st Saturday of every month (2nd Saturday if 1st Saturday is on a holiday weekend)

Hours: 9:00AM – 12:00 noon

Accepting newspapers, magazines, junk mail, phone books, glass, tin, plastic, aluminum and cardboard.

Please note that this facility is available to all, not just Durham Township residents!

Contact Joe Kulick at the township building for more info. 610-346-8911

Springfield Township

Location: Township Building, 2320 Township Road

Paper Recycling Bin Available at Township Building.

A Recycling bin was recently placed here and is available to anyone. Cut down on trash and help the township earn extra money. You can drop off: Magazines, Shopping Catalogs, Phone Books, Newspapers, Office and School Papers, Mail.

Please do NOT include: Plastic, glass, metal, trash

Hours: Anytime ; See website: www.springfieldbucks.org or call (610) 346-6700.

Blinderman & Son

Location: 1320 Whitaker St, Hellertown. 610-838-9221

Hours:
7:30AM – 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday

7:30 AM – 11:30AM, Saturday

Accepting cardboard and most metals

City of Bethlehem Theis/Cornfeld Recycling Center

Web site: www.bethlehem-pa.gov/recycle/services/theis_cornfeld.htm

Location: 635 Illick's Mill Rd, Bethlehem

Phone: 610-865-7082 Hours: Weekdays: 10 AM to 4 PM, Saturday 9 AM to 4 PM, Sunday 11AM to 3 PM

Accepting glass, cans, plastics, newspapers, all books, magazines, catalogs, cardboard, mixed office paper, met-

als, textiles (clothing, shoes, etc) large appliances (certified freon-free). Call or go to the web site for specifics.

Bonus!! They provide FREE on site shredding services for businesses and private individuals. If you have 4 or more boxes, call 610-865-7082 to schedule an appointment.

City of Bethlehem Compost Center

Location: 1480 Schoenersville Rd., Bethlehem

Non-Bethlehem residents are not allowed to drop off materials at the composting center but the mulch and compost is available for free to anyone if loading services are not needed. They actually produce much more than what they can distribute, so they encourage anyone to take as much as they would like! Loading services are provided for a fee of \$10/cubic yard in the spring and fall. Call 610-856-7082 for hours.



Schedules of Local Government Meetings

Springfield Township:
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
610-346-8911
215 Old Furnace Road

Supervisors: 2nd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM
Planning Commission:
1st Tues. @ 7:30 PM
EAC: Quarterly on the 3rd Tuesday of January, April, July, October @ 7:30 PM

Lower Saucon:
www.lowersaucontownship.org

610-865-3291
3700 Old Philadelphia Pike
Council: 1st and 3rd Wed. @ 7 PM
Planning Commission:
3rd Thurs. @ 7 PM
EAC: 1st Tues. @ 7 PM

Williams Township:
www.williamstwp.org
610-258-6060
655 Cider Press Road

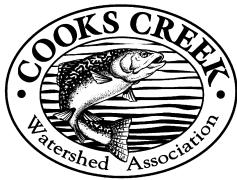
Supervisors: 2nd Wed. @ 7 PM
Planning Commission: 3rd Wed. @ 7 PM
Land Preservation Board:
3rd Mon. @ 7 PM

Richland Township:
www.richlandtownship.org
215-536-4066
1328 California Road

Supervisors: 2nd and 4th Mon. @ 7 PM
Planning Commission: 3rd Tues. @ 7 PM
Preservation Board: 2nd Thurs. @ 7 PM

Hickory Horned Devil





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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage PAID
Lehigh Valley, PA 18002
Permit No. 603

Or Current Resident

If you hold precious the beauty that surrounds us in the Cooks Creek Watershed area and would like to be actively involved in its preservation, then consider joining our association as a member. Reach out to your community! We would love to hear from you! Please drop us a line at info@cookscreekpa.org

CCWA is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

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 wild-flowers 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** _____

Student Membership Fee: **\$ 10.00 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.

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