APRIL FEATURE: Award-Winning Triple Divide Watershed Coalition

Members of the Triple Divide Watershed Coalition hard at work.

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."
- Henry Ford

Weeks after being applauded as a national model for protection of treasured watersheds, 2011-2012 WREN Grantee, the Triple Divide Watershed Coalition based in Potter County, has been awarded the prestigious Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence in the "Building Community Partnerships" category. Department of Community & Economic Development Secretary Walker said at the award ceremony,
"Your communities are fortunate to have dedicated individuals whose commitment helps create better places to live and work."

When natural gas companies moved into Potter County in north central Pennsylvania to begin drilling, many residents and officials were in a quandary. The jobs and economic promise of the industry were welcomed. However, excitement was tempered with concerns about the impacts of industrialization on the county's rural character, outdoor lifestyle, and threats to local water resources from poorly managed gas development and hydraulic fracturing.

Read more about this award-winning drinking water protection coalition in our April Feature.

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State Seeks Stream Cleanup Strategies
Written by: Robert Swift, Harrisburg Bureau Chief for Times-Shamrock newspapers which publishes The Citizens' Voice in Wilkes-Barre and five other newspapers in Northeastern Pennsylvania

Preventing small streams from becoming destructive torrents during floods is becoming a priority issue in Harrisburg.

The damages caused by the worst flooding in 40 years in the Susquehanna River Basin are prompting lawmakers and state and local officials to look for solutions.

There's a widespread recognition that gravel bars, fallen trees and man-made debris made last fall's flooding in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee worse than if floodwaters had flowed unobstructed.

The floods deposited new layers of debris in the small streams and tributaries that flow into the Susquehanna River.

Strategies to lessen the threat from swollen streams were explored at a joint hearing by the House Environmental Resources and Energy and Finance committees.

Click here to read more.

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Clearfield County Uses Social Marketing Approach to Abandoned Mine Drainage

With the use of focus groups, attitudes, barriers to change, messaging and encouraging behavior change through Facebook, Clearfield County Senior Environmental Corps completed a nonpoint source pollution prevention project on watershed education outreach. A "Clean Water Clearinghouse" was created online as a social marketing technique. The project leaders identified a behavior they wanted to change (apathy regarding acid mine drainage) and changed it (active participation in acid mine drainage cleanup efforts). Partners for this grant project included the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and Clearfield County Conservation District. For others creating similar resources, tying the website into the official county website will allow residents to find it more easily.

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The Green Streets Movement
An idea gaining ground across the country is rethinking streets as a way to improve our built environment. Re:STREETS is a new project that re-envision streets to be for living, not just driving. This project is under development with resources available on the website including exciting ideas for using green infrastructure to create environments for people. An eBook is being created to serve as a resource including both tried and true and experimental methods. Sign up for email updates to keep informed.

Check out local Pennsylvania examples of rethinking streets including Philadelphia's Green Streets Program, the Lancaster Alleys Project, and Ohiopyle Borough Green Streets project at the gateway to the Laurel Highlands.

For more general information on Green Streets, check out the book, Living Streets: Strategies for Crafting Public Space or click on the EPA Green Streets webpage.

We came across this beautiful example of a rain barrel along a street in Lancaster and just had to share it!

Chestnut Hill Cafe's owner, Doreen Landis (pictured left with Mike Musser of The Village Green), bought the brightly painted rain barrel - a Libby Modern original and says:

"It just gets the word out there because it is so beautifully painted and colorful that it attracts a lot of attention ... I think it's creating an awareness."

Our thanks to the Save It! Your Water. Your Money. Your City campaign sponsored by the City of Lancaster in partnership with LIVE Green.

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Imagine! 12,000 Rain Gardens!

An exciting venture is happening in Puget Sound. Stewardship Partners and Washington State University Extension have embarked on a remarkable campaign to install 12,000 rain gardens in the Puget Sound area in Washington State by 2016. This exciting collaboration now connects an environmentally conscious Puget Sound to another passion - its coffee.

In support of the 12,000 Rain Gardens campaign to reduce flooding and runoff pollution into Puget Sound, Caffe Vita has officially released the 12,000 Rain Gardens Blend. Vita is donating 10% of the purchase price of each bag of this organic coffee towards the installation of 12,000 rain gardens in the Puget Sound. Also in support of this project, in all seven cafes, customers can watch a video of homeowners building rain gardens. (Photo courtesy of Caffe Vita)

Also in Washington, a neighborhood...
in Puyallup allowed the City to install seven free rain gardens in their yards. The response was so enthusiastic that they installed fourteen more! The neighbors then encouraged the City to apply for a Washington Department of Ecology grant for creative rain water infiltration solutions, which was approved. Construction is expected to begin summer of 2012. Read more about the new green street.

Signage and brochures are all produced to look the same to unify the project.

Funding Resource Helps Reduce Polluted Runoff

The three largest causes of stream impairment in Pennsylvania are now identified as coming from nonpoint sources: runoff from farms, urban stormwater from hard surfaces like roads and roofs, and mine runoff. Fortunately, funding to help address these challenges is now available through PENNVEST. A good example of a recent Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) - funded project through its Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program is the Sam Zook Farm in Lancaster County. The project also illustrates how different organizations can work together to create solutions that result in significant water quality improvements.
When Team Ag, Inc. visited the Zook Farm in December 2010 to perform the initial field work for a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) report, they found a dairy milking operation with 46 milking cows, 12 heifers, 10 calves, 8 mules and 3 horses. Inadequate manure storage at the site meant manure was being spread eight times a year; often on frozen fields, with little concern about timing for best nutrient utilization. Another issue was stormwater from heavy use areas and roofs which ran off interacting with manure before being directed to the stream. Compounding the impact, a lack of stream fencing and unimproved animal trails resulted in erosion and additional nutrient pollution.

Click to read more about how the Lancaster County Conservation District applied for a PENNVEST NPS Program grant and received $199,536 for this project in an article by Terry Fisher, PENNVEST NPS Application Developer.

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Saving a Stream? There's an App for That!

An exciting new iPhone application was developed by IBM Research to allow citizens all over the world to monitor and report their watershed conditions. Creekwatch provides data for local water authorities to track pollution and better manage water resources. The app can be downloaded for free from the Apple Store. Once downloaded, users will take a photo of a waterway and submit information on water level, flow rate and presence of trash. This effort is an example of crowdsourcing, where individuals are encouraged to become engaged with their environment. All of the reports submitted are available online. The app is used in 25 countries so far. Watch the video to learn more.

According to its March 2012 Newsletter, the Primrose Creek Watershed Association in Bucks County is piloting the new iPhone App.

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New Tool Assists Preservation Efforts

The Official Map: A Handbook for Preserving and Providing Public Lands and Facilities offers a method to help protect valuable water supply and water resource lands. The handbook outlines use of Official Maps as a tool to preserve public lands and facilities. There are approximately 64 municipalities and one county in Pennsylvania with adopted official maps as of early 2011.

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New Webpage for Community Grant Resources

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is making it easier for communities to access its community-based grant resources. The Agency now presents a calendar of upcoming 2012 grant opportunities to help communities address environmental challenges. This page will be updated
periodically to reflect upcoming EPA grant programs. In addition, EPA is offering a Grants 101 Tutorial to assist communities in understanding the grants process.

Watch

- Green Cities Clean Water (short video) - a 3-minute look at how Philadelphia is working to address combined sewer overflows and manage stormwater compliance by putting green before gray.
- PBS Video of 12,000 Rain Gardens Campaign in Puget Sound Washington
- View videos of Stormwater Case Studies in Pennsylvania at StormwaterPA
- Video: Pennsylvania Water Supplier wins 2012 U.S. Water Prize - Philadelphia Water Department for its innovative plan to manage stormwater with green methods!
- View 1-minute Video: iRecycle App
  Now available from the folks at Earth 911, iRecycle App can tell you how, where and when to recycle just about anything. Using your current location, ZIP code, address or city, get access to vital details for collection points, such as Web site, phone number, directions, hours of operation and other materials collected.

Quick Links

- Earth 911
  An excellent resource on where to dispose used oil, batteries, electronics, etc. You can enter your zip code and find specific places where to dispose.
- Groundwater Protection Council Webinar Presentations - Using Clean Water Act Funding for Source Water Protection 1/19/12
- Savett Lancaster Website
- Susquehanna River Basin Commission Low Flow Protection Policy released for public comment by May 16, 2012
- 2012 Chesapeake Bay Program Conservation District and PA Agency Staff Meeting Materials
- The Economics of Green - article in Stormwater Magazine Blog
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolkit: Surveys & Evaluations
- U.S. EPA Green Infrastructure Program
- Wunderground Launches New Local Climate Change Section

Natural Gas Links

- Federal Rules to Disclose Fracking Chemicals Could Come with Exceptions
- FracFocus - Hydraulic Fracturing Chemical disclosure website
- Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Comparative Analysis & Commentary on Act 13 of 2012 (Oil & Gas)
- Obama Administration Announces New Partnership on Unconventional Natural Gas and Oil Research
- PA DEP Act 13 of 2012 Website on new Marcellus Shale law - Recorded webinars, FAQs, etc.
- PennFuture Plain Language Guide & Analysis of Act 13 of 2012
- USGS Fact Sheet: Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas Resources of the Devonian Marcellus Shale of the Appalachian Basin Province

Save the Date

Act 13 Model Ordinance Review Workshops presented by PA State Association of Boroughs

May 3, 2012 Lycoming
May 14, 2012 Crawford
May 15, 2012 Butler
April 28, 2012  10am - 2pm
4th National DEA Drug Take Back Program

May 2-4, 2012
PA-AWWA 64th Annual Conference
Lancaster, PA

May 3, 2012
Webinar by EPA: 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm EDT - EPA Webinar and Q & A Public Comment Period ending May 17, 2012 on: Draft "National Water Program 2012 Strategy: Response to Climate Change"

Released by EPA on April 2, 2012 for a 45-day public comment period. Web Conference to provide opportunity to pose clarifying questions to EPA on aspects of the draft 2012 Strategy document prior to the end of the public comment period on May 17, 2012. For more information and how to participate in the web conference, visit http://water.epa.gov/scitech/climatechange/2012-National-Water-Program-Strategy.cfm

May 3, 2012
American Groundwater Trust Geothermal Technology and Applications Education Class
Philadelphia, PA

May 8, 2012
American Groundwater Trust Geothermal Technology and Applications Education Class
Philadelphia, PA

May 9, 2012
Triple Divide Watershed Coalition Meeting - Galeton, PA

May 10, 2012  10:00 am - 11:00 am
Webinar: Delaware River Basin Source Water Protection and Economic Worth.
In celebration of National Drinking Water Week, a free informational webinar presented by Jerry Kaufman, University of Delaware, highlighting the economic benefits provided by clean sources of drinking water, and how water protection ordinances and GIS mapping can assist in the effort. Other speakers include Vicky Binetti of US EPA Region 3, and Ed Hallock, Delaware Division of Public Health.

May 10, 2012  7:00 pm
Hughesville Library, 146 Fifth Street, Hughesville, PA
Black Hole Creek Watershed Association Meeting
Presentation by Mark Stephens, Professional Geologist with the PA DEP and Megan Lehman, Environmental Planner with Lycoming County Planning Commission about the North Central Source Water Protection Alliance and its efforts to protect regional public water supplies from contamination at the Black Hole Creek Watershed Association Meeting - Open to the Public.

May 10, 2012
Hydromania - Lehigh Valley Water Suppliers, Inc.
Cedar Crest College, Allentown, PA

May 11, 2012 - Lebanon, PA
Soil, Stabilization and Stormwater Symposium sponsored by Lebanon County Conservation District

May 11, 2012
Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Round #5 Applications Due (requests may be up to $25,000)

May 16, 2012
Deadline for written comment to Susquehanna River Basin Commision on proposed Low Flow Policy

June 4-6, 2012
Choose Clean Water Conference
Marriott Lancaster at Penn Square

June 12-13, 2012
WREN Grantee Meeting - by invitation

June 28, 2012
North Central Source Water Protection Alliance Meeting - Eaglesmere, PA
October 12, 2012
Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Round #6 Applications Due (requests may be up to $25,000)

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