

THE RE-CAP

Watershed Alliance of York's (WAY) quarterly newsletter about the implementation of the County wide Action Plan for clean waters



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WAY BOARD



Since the last reCAP newsletter, the WAY Board of Directors have been sharing the revitalized WAY mission, vision, and values, especially over the Watershed Week event. We spent time at, and lead several of the events that were featured this year. We also continued to diligently work on the CWA 50k Trash Challenge. The last cleanup of the year was the 3rd Annual Plastic Purge where partners and volunteers removed about 5 tons of trash over a weekend in October on the Lower Susquehanna. If you have not already heard the good news - the goal was met! Read on to learn more about both exciting topics! Happy Holidays!!

WAY

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'Tis the season for reporting and reflection! CAP annual reporting is due 12/31. The CAP Leadership Team and I worked on annual updates to the report as well as the narrative. Not much has changed since we are well into the implementation phase of our plan which is going into its third year. Reflecting on this last year, we have made serious progress with our many partners and continue to position WAY as a powerhouse partner in water quality. WAY obtained a substantial amount of grant money this year both on our own and in the position of grantee sponsor. The next few years are shaping up to be intense implementation years due to our grant ask successes this year. We are very excited. We also made crazy goals this year – like picking up 50,000 pounds of trash! Looking back to March, we thought we might have been crazy to make this a goal but everyone rallied around and we made it happen. We hosted a five-part summer series of Tap Talks at Collusion Tap Works featuring an array of speakers and trivia, too. The 20th Annual Watershed Week event might have been our biggest year yet with number of events, turnouts, and sponsorships. As the Keystone 10 Million Trees partner, we assisted in the distribution of ~7,000 trees across the County. Next year we are looking forward to more success and bigger goals being achieved. We hope you'll stick around with us!

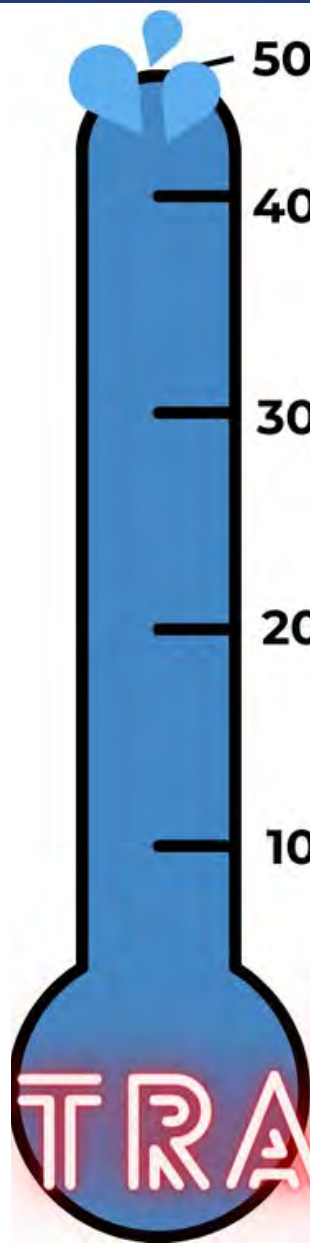
Rachel Stahlman
CAP Coordinator
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The CWA50k Trash Challenge

On a sunny spring morning in March of 2022, York County partners in the likes of Master Watershed Stewards, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, the Conservation District, and Watershed Alliance of York, gathered to work on cleaning up a 40 year old illegal dumping site in Southern York County along a dirt and gravel road. The cleaning of this illegal dump is quite extensive. There are portions of it that are feet deep and there were treasures to be found like old glass bottles. As the day was nearing the end, we realized that in just a of couple hours a handful of people were able to remove so much trash that around 8 pick-up truck loads were taken to our 20 yard dumpster and it was filled to the brim. We found out a couple days later that 3.6 tons of trash was removed from the illegal dump. The shock of the amount paired with the determination of these partners sparked an idea...let's clean-up 50,000 pounds of trash in honor of the 50th year of the signing of the Clean Water Act. The race was on from there.

To make this epic goal attainable, partners planned monthly clean ups throughout the year and rallied community volunteers each time to join us. We ended the quest of the CWA50K Trash Challenge goal with the 3rd Annual Great Plastic Purge of the Lower Susquehanna in mid-October. Partners joined in the fun and helped to expand our efforts into Lancaster County, too. The Conestoga River Club, Lancaster Conservancy, and Shanks Mare Outfitters all contributed to this epic goal with tons (literally) of support. With each passing month, clean-ups were steadily garnishing over 1.5 tons sometimes as much as 5 tons! We are proud to say that we met and exceeded our goal by removing 56,840 pounds of trash from our waterways this year – all inspired by the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Clean Water Act.

The CWA50K Trash Challenge



CWA50K TRASH CHALLENGE

Brought to you by...



Master Watershed Steward Program



TRASHOMETER





WAY and Partners celebrated the 20th Annual Watershed Week event September 15 - 25 with many events across the County. Take a dive into some of the highlights from the best week ever! Thank you to all who enjoyed the week, our volunteers, partners, and sponsors - Especially our Watershed Warrior sponsors, HRG Engineering and Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Tap Talk: New Weather Norms - We kicked off the 20th Annual Watershed Week on September 15, 2022, with a Tap Talk featuring Jason Swartz, Grants Manager for Wild Earth Allies and Treasurer of Watershed Alliance of York. During the presentation at Collusion Tap Works, Jason talked about climate change and possible future extreme weather conditions. He emphasized that although our climate in the future looks troublesome, we can work together to reduce the climate impact and build resilience. About 35 people attended. As usual, trivia, talk, food, and brews were involved! We partner with Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association and Watershed Alliance of York to present Tap Talks, a great way to learn and network with others striving to improve water quality.



Bantz Park and Kiwanis Lake Rain Garden Work - On September 22 we weeded and planted some more native plants at the Kiwanis rain garden. Then, we moved to Bantz Park to plant in some openings in those rain gardens.

The 4th Annual Dam Bridge Challenge, held at Shank's Mare, Wrightsville, was sponsored by Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association (LSRA) as a fundraiser for their organization. The event celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act and highlighted the beautiful Susquehanna River. The Challenge featured three races along the Susquehanna River, on Lake Clarke, starting and finishing near the Lock 2 Recreation Area. Contestants used kayaks, canoes, or stand-up paddleboards. Master Watershed Stewards set up educational activities. There was food, music, and more. Fun event!



Poorhouse Run History Talk and Panning - Master Watershed Steward, Mark Lentz, led the group on a history talk and walk along Poorhouse Run. Mark took us down into the creek and demonstrated how to pan for iron cubes, which occur naturally in Poorhouse Run. The group had a joyous time finding treasures and learning some cool local history!





Fly Fishing and Tying Essentials at Hopewell Fish and Game – There was a huge turnout for the fly fishing and tying essentials lessons. Life-long fly anglers covered the basics to help newcomers get started in the fly fishing world! We watched demonstrations and got to handle delicately made and intricately tied flies. One lucky attendee went home with an essentials kit to kick start a new passion!

York County 18th Pawpaw Festival - This event is hosted by Horn Farm Center. Watershed Alliance of York has happily been attending with our educational booth for a couple of years. Held at the Horn Farm Center, 4945 Horn Rd, York, the festival featured local food vendors, artisans, and community organizations. Visitors took tours of the farm and pawpaw orchards. Pawpaw fruit, pawpaw trees, and pawpaw-related items such as cookbooks and t-shirts were available for purchase. More than 2,000 people came to the PawPaw Festival this year!

Stream Study at Wallace-Cross Mill. Cindy Pizziketti and Duane Hyson, with help from Rob Winslow, led a study of macroinvertebrates in Rambo Run. Macroinvertebrates are important indicators of stream health; the run held many species of macroinvertebrates and good numbers of each species. Rambo Run provides food and clean water for native fishes, especially Brook Trout. It is one of York County's Exceptional Value/High-Quality Cold-Water Fisheries and supports the breeding of wild trout in the Muddy Creek Watershed.



Heartwood Nursery: Conservation Conversations and Tour – Tony Campisi of Campisi Property Service talked with attendees about sustainable landscaping and easy ways to start incorporating it into gardens. Sue Hunter, owner of Heartwood Nursery, Felton, PA, lead a tour of her propagation greenhouse, gardens, meadows, and more. Sue has transformed her land from a corn field into a native plant nursery and demonstration gardens. If you've never visited Heartwood Nursery, take a trip and check it out!





Yoga with Caroline at Highpoint Scenic Vista in Wrightsville – Caroline Newberger with House of Yoga, York, PA, led the group on an easy yoga session while overlooking the Susquehanna river at sunset.

Rain Barrel Workshop – Master Watershed Stewards presented a virtual rain barrel workshop. Participants joined from all over PA. They then picked up their rain barrels at the Native Plant Sale. People came from as far away as Aaronsburg and Lewisburg to buy barrels.



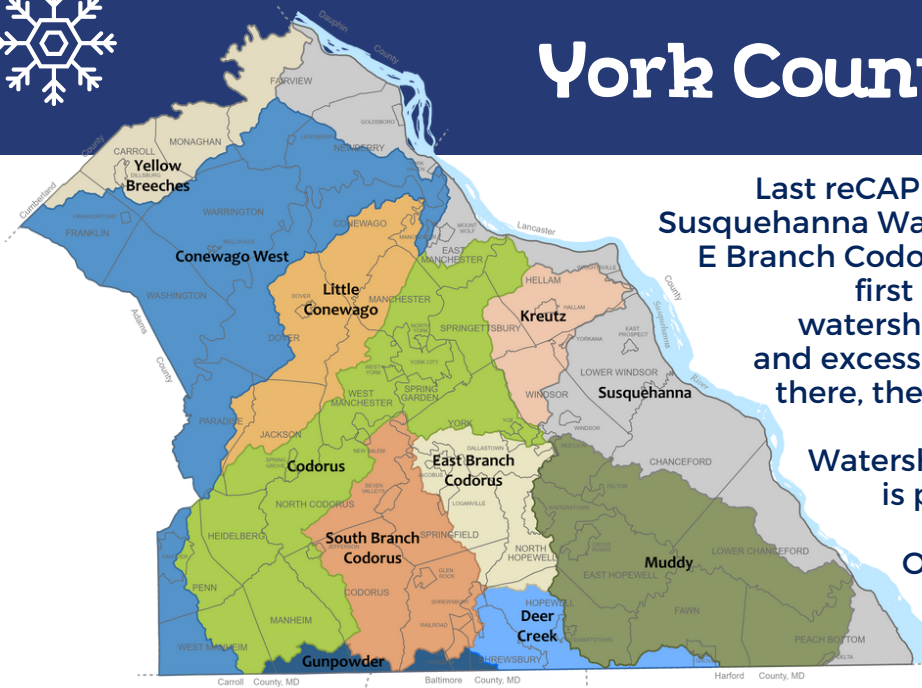
Water Quality Monitoring Demonstration by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) - Leaders and scientists from the York County Planning Commission, the U.S. Geological Survey Pennsylvania Water Science Center, and the Chesapeake Bay Program presented a Water Quality Monitoring Field Day on September 21 at the Goldsboro/Fishing Creek monitoring site. Attendees included Planning Commission and Conservation District Staff, Commissioner Wheeler, EPA, DEP, Choose Clean Water Coalition, ALLARM, Master Watershed Stewards, and other agencies. Working stream-side, USGS experts demonstrated York County's state-of-the-art water quality monitoring program. United States Geological Survey (USGS) owns/operates six continuous water quality monitoring stations in York County. They are located at the mouths of Conewago Creek, Codorus Creek, Muddy Creek, Fishing Creek (near Goldsboro), Fishing Creek (near Craley), and Kreutz Creek (near Wrightsville). These stations monitor temperature, flow, depth, specific conductance, dissolved oxygen, pH, turbidity, nitrogen and phosphorous. The real-time data provides verifiable trends in our county's water quality.

Greener Codorus Initiative - Volunteers cleared brush from the banks of Codorus Creek. This Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association initiative keeps herbicides from being sprayed on the banks of the Codorus from College Ave to the train trestle downstream of Philadelphia St. Volunteers are needed and appreciated!





York County's Watersheds

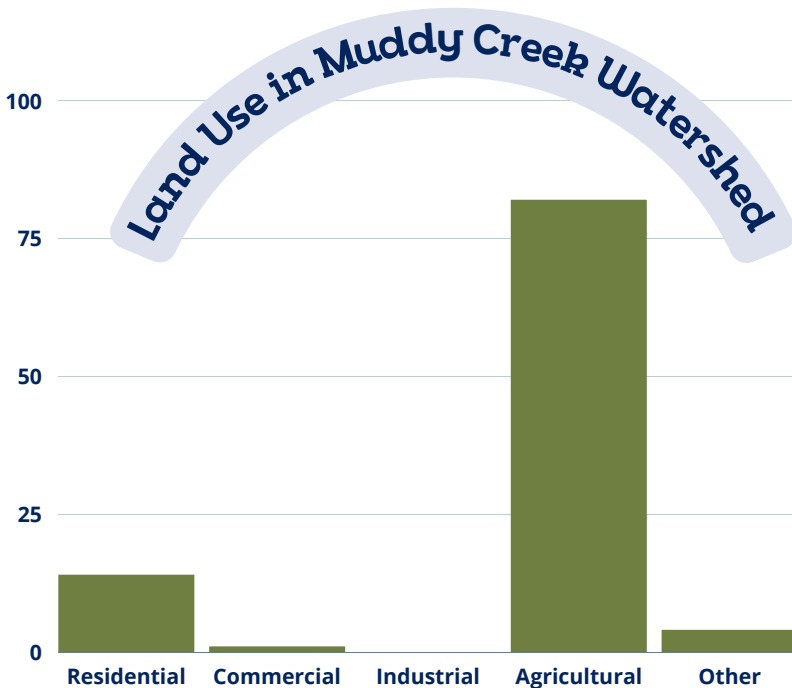


Last reCAP we dove into the Little Conewago and the Susquehanna Watersheds. This edition we will examine the E Branch Codorus and the Muddy Creek Watersheds. But first a quick synopsis of what is a watershed. A watershed is an area of land that channels rainfall and excess water to creeks, streams, and rivers. From there, the water eventually flows to larger bodies of water like reservoirs, bays, and the ocean. Watersheds can be all different sizes. York County is part of the Lower Susquehanna Watershed and includes many watersheds within it. Over the next year we are going to dive into the 11 main watersheds of York County.

Muddy Creek Watershed

- The 5th least populated watershed in York County. ~25,000+ people live here.
- 4th largest watershed in York County (137 square miles)
- Miles of streams- 267; 3rd highest

Restoration of an Unnamed Tributary to Bald Eagle Creek in Fawn Grove Borough is currently in the design/permitting phase and planned for construction in 2023. The project includes 2,157 LF of stream restoration, 1.25 acres of wetland restoration, and 4.31 acres of riparian reforestation. It will restore/realign the stream using two distinct stream restoration approaches. Additionally, stream fencing will be installed to limit cattle access to the restored areas and concrete panel stream crossings will be installed for agricultural use. It is estimated that this project will reduce 478,373 lbs/yr of sediment, 2,473 lbs/yr of nitrogen, and 553 lbs/yr of phosphorus.



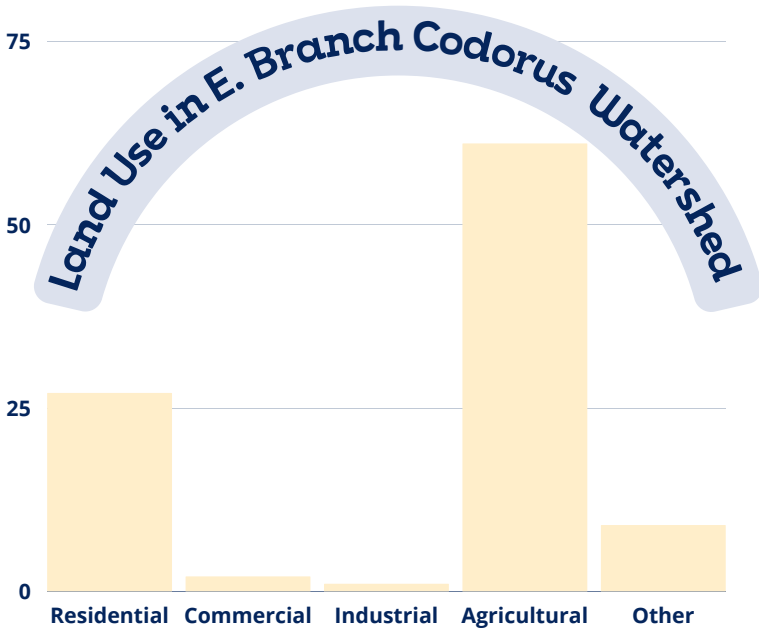


York County's Watersheds

East Branch Codorus Watershed

- 4th least populated watershed in York County. 20,000+ people live here.
- 4th smallest watershed in York County (45 square miles)
- Miles of streams- 82; 4th lowest

The Ensminger Drive Swale Rehabilitation project in Springfield Township stabilized an 800 LF swale. Stormwater from an up-gradient residential development, overtime, caused the swale to become deeply eroded resulting in sediment being discharged to the East Branch Codorus Creek. The swale was stabilized to a 4 foot width and permanently lined and seeded with a native shade tolerant grass mixture to prevent future erosion and improve water quality. Additionally, a subsurface storm sewer system was installed to convey the stormwater runoff from existing inlets to the down-gradient stream. This project reduces 20,110 lbs/yr of sediment, 302 lbs/yr of nitrogen, and 11 lbs/yr of phosphorus.



BEFORE



AFTER

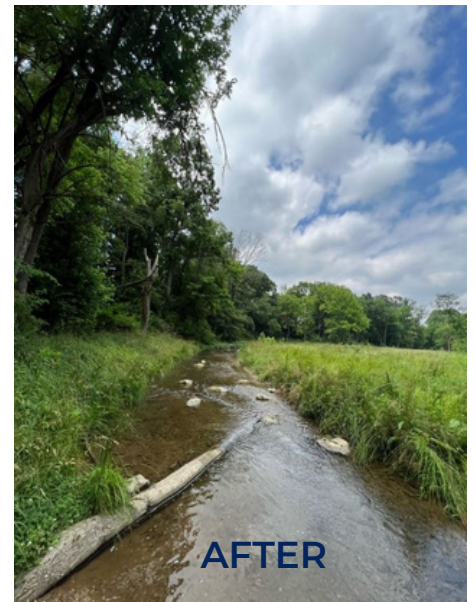
The Barshinger Creek Restoration project in North Hopewell and York Townships restored 1,955 LF of eroding reaches of the stream. The project also reconnected the stream with its functioning floodplain, restored floodplain and wetland connectivity, and installed a native riparian buffer on both sides of the stream. Aquatic, plant, and animal habitats were likewise improved. This project reduces 1,209,416 lbs/year of sediment, 782 lbs/year of nitrogen, and 250 lbs/year of phosphorus.



BEFORE



AFTER



AFTER

Projects around the County

S2C
Street to Creek



Master Watershed Stewards in York County held the 5th Annual Storm Drain Art Contest in York County in partnership with the City of York, Watershed Alliance of York, and the Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Assoc. The goal of the annual project is to increase public knowledge and awareness of the function and importance of storm drains and water quality via public involvement and artwork. The artwork around the storm drains raises citizen awareness and helps educate the public about the connection between storm drains and local streams. The trail of storm drain art starts in the center of the city near the Codorus Creek and ends at the Royal Square District, an art and shopping district in the city. As you walk the streets, you may stumble upon tangling octopus legs reaching out of a storm drain, an elegant egret vigilantly watching over a storm drain, a map of York County watersheds illustrating the meandering streams flowing into the mighty Susquehanna River, and more. The artwork adds a splash of color to the downtown area, but more importantly, each unique painting relays a message about keeping our streets and waterways clean. Our streams and rivers are worth protecting!

The Street 2 Creek Project received the 2022 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence and the 2022 Search for Excellence Award for Master Watershed Steward Projects across Pennsylvania. We look forward to expanding the project annually.

For more information on the Street 2 Creek Project, check out www.street2creek.org. This project was funded by the Street 2 Creek Partners, York Water Company, and Cornerstone Barbershop and Shave Parlor.





Projects around the County

The Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards have implemented various projects at Roof Park to help improve water quality in York County.

They recently received funding from Pennsylvania American Water to install a live stake nursery at Roof Park. On a cool, October morning, Master Watershed Stewards and an ambitious group of scouts planted the nursery. Live stakes are branch cuttings of native trees and shrubs that, when planted along stream banks, grow into new trees or shrubs. They are an effective, low-cost way to establish a root network along stream banks to help prevent soil loss and to rebuild eroded banks. Live stake nurseries consist of native shrubs that, when mature, provide live stakes (cuttings) to local conservation organizations and streamside landowners. They planted 60 native shrubs including 10 of each of the following species: buttonbush, silky dogwood, red osier dogwood, common ninebark, pussy willow, and elderberry. These shrubs will provide future material to protect streams and habitat locally.



You may have also noticed a rain garden planted along the walking trail in the park. Rain gardens are landscape features that an increasing number of homeowners, businesses, and local governments are installing to reduce the stormwater that flows off their properties. These infiltration basins come in many shapes and sizes, but all rain gardens collect stormwater runoff from roofs, parking lots, or other hard surfaces so some of this water will soak into the ground instead of flowing onto nearby properties or into municipal storm sewer systems. Rain gardens contain plants (natives preferred) that provide many functions and benefits. The plants absorb stormwater, remove runoff pollutants, provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, and beautify the places where we live and work. Penn State Extension has developed a rich collection of materials related to building, planting, and maintaining rain gardens. They can be found here: <https://extension.psu.edu/rain-garden-resources-from-penn-state-extension>.



Master Watershed Stewards also recently added two downspout planters at the upper pavilion in the park. They were planted with native perennials and will capture some of the stormwater from the pavilion roof. The plants will attract pollinators and add some beauty and character to the pavilion area. This project was funded by Giant.

Master Watershed Stewards are locally educated and managed volunteers who address conservation priorities in collaboration with a broad partnership of organizations including municipalities. The MWS Program recruits interested citizens from the community, provides them with formal classroom and hands-on, in-the-field learning, and then connects them with ongoing volunteer opportunities such as riparian buffer installation, water quality monitoring, and watershed education. The program is now offered in 42 counties throughout the state, with 776 volunteers, who have contributed over 100,000 volunteer hours since the program began in 2013. If you would like to learn more about any of these projects or how to get involved in the Master Watershed Steward Program, contact Jodi Sulpizio, Penn State Extension Master Watershed Coordinator at jrb143@psu.edu.



Calendar of Events

12/31- The deadline to submit your order for FREE TREES through the Keystone 10 Million Trees program. Visit www.watershedallianceofyork.org to order today!

2/25- Public Disco Porch presents: Burnt Sienna. Local musicians Public Disco Porch will bring us an evening of song and community. Tickets can be purchased through the Strand Capitol Theatre.



Contact us if:

- You have a water quality project and you are unsure if it's being counted for credit
- You want to be part of WAY or any of the Committees of WAY
- You have any questions



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The next WAY board meeting is scheduled for **December 15th** from 6:30-8:30 PM in person at 2401 Pleasant Valley Road, York, PA 17402. WAY meetings will be held the 4th Thursday of the month for 2022. If you wish to participate by Zoom, go to watershedallianceofyork.org.

The Watershed Alliance of York (**WAY**) is a group of volunteer stakeholders interested in improving local waterways for the betterment of the County and to meet clean water goals. If you would like to get involved, please contact Rachel Stahlman at rstahlman@ycpc.org