



2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

UPPER CHARTIERS CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION (UCCWA)

As with most years our annual report is something that we like to use to highlight those achievements that we have had over the past year. This past year (2021) was highlighted with some highs and lows. We have had some successful activities despite the lingering pandemic, one of which was the annual wetlands walk. This event is always well attended and this past year was no exception. Another high was an uptick in the general overall interest in the watershed which is always great to see. This, however, came with a couple of the lows associated with two major spill events affecting our precious resource. These events just go to show us how fragile our natural surroundings are and the effects on everything that uses them.

This would be a great time to personally thank the volunteers who have given so much of their time to monitoring, planning and running events through the year. Without your help and passion so much would be left undone. The continued support of our current and future members and volunteers is greatly appreciated and needed to continue the work we do to protect the outdoor activities and environment we all love and enjoy so much. I would like to wish you all the best for what 2022 has to offer and leave you with one of many favorite quotes.

“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make.”

—Jane Goodall

Josh Dunkle, President

UCCWA is an all-volunteer organization, formally organized in 1999 as an association representing the upper Chartiers Creek Watershed in Washington County, Pennsylvania. UCCWA is a member of the Washington County Watershed Alliance (WCWA), a nonprofit, umbrella organization designed to coordinate and enhance the efforts of individual watershed associations.

Our mission is to enhance, protect, and develop the ecosystem of the watershed by undertaking activities to:

1. Study the natural resources of the watershed;
2. Develop a program to improve and maintain the water resources of the watershed;
3. Promote local interest in natural resource conservation;
4. Involve local support to correct conditions that cause problems for the watershed; and
5. Identify federal, state, and local programs (financial, technical, and scientific) that would benefit the watershed.

Studying Natural Resources:



Volunteers collecting macroinvertebrates



Virginia McNulty does chemical tests

UCCWA citizen scientists continued to monitor stream water quality. Spring and fall chemical testing and macro-invertebrate studies were conducted at four sites: Chartiers Run behind American Legion Post 902 in Houston, Chartiers Creek main stem at Houston Ballfield and Scotty's Ice Cream shop, and Little Chartiers at Linden Road and Linden Creek Road. The data will be posted at [3 Rivers Quest](#).

Winter Salt Watch - This year, with leadership from the Washington County Watershed Alliance, UCCWA recruited volunteers to participate in the Izaak Walton League Winter Salt Watch. While salts spread on roads, parking lots and sidewalks help keep us safe in winter, too much salt can pollute our streams. By using the free IWL test kits and posting their data to the IWL on-line [story board](#), volunteers can share their data. We hope that both private and public property owners will use this information to improve water quality and save money unnecessarily spent on salt.



Sam Carroll demonstrates Salt Watch testing



Promoting Interest in Natural Resource Conservation:

Beyond Fish and Birds: Macroinvertebrates at Peters Lake Park – Volunteers displayed macroinvertebrate samples and explained their important role in the ecosystem as food for fish and excellent indicators of water quality.



Annual Wetlands Walk - On a beautiful fall day, Dr. Jason Kilgore of W & J College led a group walk in the North Franklin Wetlands where he explained what a wetland is, the types of wetlands present, wetland soil and biology and the important role of wetlands. The North Franklin Township, owner of the site, is preparing a Waterside Park Master Site Development Plan and has plans to do streambank restoration there.



Action to correct conditions that cause problems for the watershed

Clean-ups – UCCWA volunteer Summer Voelker helped organize three clean-ups this year:

- Two on Catfish Creek with W&J students recruited by Dr. Jason Kilgore and
- One near Canon-MacMillan High School with students recruited by high school student Sienna McAnulty.



Canon-Mac student clean-up



W&J clean-up crew



W&J Student Trash Brigade



Little Chartiers is classified for protection as a High-Quality Warm Water Fishery.

Significant Fish Kill on Chartiers Creek -

In mid-July, Sam Carroll, President of Washington County Watershed Alliance and a member of Chartiers Creek Watershed Association, learned of a significant fish kill on Chartiers Creek. A fisherman, he immediately went to the area to see for himself and photo document the scene. Through testing water samples, DEP determined that there had been a fungicide spill. As the year ended, DEP was still investigating how the fungicide got into the water. UCCWA will continue to follow what happens.

Gasoline spill on Little Chartiers -

In mid-December, volunteers monitored macroinvertebrates on Little Chartiers Creek downstream from a gasoline spill and fish kill that had occurred on November 28. Fortunately, the results showed no deterioration in water quality from monitoring done at the same location on November 1, 2021.

Identify federal, state, and local programs (financial, technical, and scientific) that would benefit the watershed

10 Million Trees – UUCWA recruited landowners who received and planted free trees on their properties in fall 2021. Landowners were also recruited and have placed orders to receive and plant free trees in spring 2022.

Canonsburg Fishing Enhancements - At the request of Canonsburg Borough Police Chief, UCCWA arranged for a study by the Allegheny Land Trust John Hamm Intern of Chartiers Creek within the Borough to support improvement of fishing sites.

2021 Officers and Board Members

Josh Dunkle, President
Carrilee L. Hemington, Vice President/Treasurer
Virginia McAnulty, Secretary
Summer Voelker

Communications

Website: Washington County Watershed Alliance
Email communications: Virginia McAnulty
Facebook and Instagram editor: Summer Voelker
Newsletter & Website editors: volunteers needed

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Become a member of Chartiers Creek Watershed Association to support our mission!

Go to <https://www.wcwalliance.org/chartiers-creek-watershed-associati> and click on Become a Member.