



# Newsletter

Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (UCCWA)

March 2023

## Greetings

I look forward to another amazing year here with the Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association as we continue to put our minds and hands to work for the benefit of our community. It's with deep appreciation that I thank our dedicated UCCWA volunteers for all the creativity, passion and commitment that they bring. It's only through the dedication of our volunteers that we are able to offer the programs, projects and events that have become our hallmark. 2023 also brings the promise of new faces as we grow our membership base, new partnerships as we reach out to community entities and new projects as we seek out new solutions to old problems. So yes, you'll see us in the old familiar places- taking water samples in the creeks and answering your questions at the fair - but look for us in new and unexpected places as well as we expand our partnerships in ever new ways.

Virginia McAnulty, President

## Schedule of upcoming events:

Water Monitoring: (dates may change due to weather and conditions)

- TBD - Chartiers Creek at Houston Ballfield
- TBD - Chartiers Run at Houston Legion
- April 15, 2023 - Little Chartiers on Linden Road
- April 23, 2023 - Chartiers Creek at Scotty's on Rt 18

April 27, 2023 - Envirothon

April 29, 2023 Wetlands walk and Clean-Up on Little Chartiers Creek

June 1, 2023 - Mingo Program: WILD about Washington County Watersheds (Registration through Washington County Parks required)

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# Washington County Girl Scouts World Thinking Day

February 18, 2023

Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (UCCWA) volunteers often wear more than one hat! While doing just that, the Shaw family joined the Girl Scouts of Washington County as they celebrated "World Thinking Day" at the Washington Crown



Center. The Shaws shared information from both the UCCWA and the Pennsylvania Master Naturalist (PMN), but most importantly, they helped the girls work through the theme: "Our World, Our Peaceful Future: the environment, peace and security". To do this, they provided information to both the girls and their families about native bees, various birding programs, macroinvertebrates in the creeks, the impacts of salt in the watershed and the importance of individual species to ecosystems. The program was well received and the Shaws were busy throughout the day answering questions and connecting with the Girl Scout Community.

## Donations

UCCWA president, Virginia McAnulty, was presented a \$145 donation from school secretary Denielle Bickmeier. The donation was collected from the generous teachers and staff at the Canon McMillan High School who participated in a dress down week. In exchange for \$5.00 staff were permitted to wear jeans and casual clothing for a week. They also were introduced to local watersheds by receiving brief informative emails describing watersheds in general and the Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed specifically.

Thank you to the fantastic teachers of Canon McMillan School District!



## Water Monitoring

Every Spring and Fall the Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association schedules four water quality monitoring activities. This is a great opportunity for anyone living within the watershed, to learn more about the quality of our water and the animals living in our streams.

Getting into the water is optional, although at least two people are required to get wet. Waders and long rubber gloves are provided. A water sample is pulled for the chemical testing, and a kick net is used to gather macroinvertebrates. Stream flow is also calculated while in the stream. Out of the stream, the chemical testing is completed, and macroinvertebrates identified, counted, and returned to the stream.

Anyone interested in helping should reach out by email to: [chartierscreekwa.pawccd.org](mailto:chartierscreekwa.pawccd.org)

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## Grant Awarded

Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association has received a Grant from BHE GT&S and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to conduct Chemical Lab Testing within the watershed.

Our watershed has been affected by acid mine drainage in the past, and more recently by gasoline and fungicidal spills. We hope to find any issues that we are not finding in our current monitoring and establish a baseline for comparison to future laboratory tests.

We are grateful for this opportunity to better monitor our watershed. Financial support for this project is provided by BHE GT&S which is dedicated to the economic, physical and social health of the communities served by BHE GT&S companies. This grant program is administered by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership, and collaboration.

## Educational Corner

What are macroinvertebrates and what do they tell us about the quality of our streams? Benthic (meaning bottom-dwelling) macroinvertebrates are small aquatic animals and the aquatic larval stages of insects. They include dragonfly and stonefly larvae, snails, worms, and beetles. They lack a backbone, are visible without a microscope and are found in and around water bodies during some period of their lives. They are often found attached to rocks, vegetation, logs and sticks or burrowed into the bottom sand and sediments.



Benthic Macroinvertebrates are used as water quality indicators because they spend all or most of their lives in water, are easy to collect and differ in their tolerance to pollution.

Evaluating the abundance and variety of benthic macroinvertebrates in a waterbody gives an indication of the condition of that waterbody. Generally, waterbodies in healthy biological condition support a wide variety of species and high numbers of macroinvertebrate including many that are intolerant of pollution. Samples that yield only pollution-tolerant species or very little diversity or abundance may indicate a less healthy waterbody.

We at the UCCWA monitor macroinvertebrates but scientists also evaluate algae and fish populations in order to come up with estimates of the biological conditions of a water body.

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency: National Aquatic Resource Surveys

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# Saltwatch results

Location	12/28/22 thru 12//22	2/8/2023	Key	Condition	Chloride Parts Per Million
Prior 5 Day Rain/Melted Snow	.11 inches	0.18		Excellent	0-30
Prior 5 day Snowfall	1.5 inches	0		Good	30-100
Chartiers Creek at South Franklin Firehall	75 ppm	68 ppm		Fair	100-230
Chartiers Creek at Scottys on Route 18 South	75 ppm	66 ppm		Toxic	Over 230
Catfish Creek Tributary beside W&J Stadium	448 ppm	203 ppm			
Chartiers Creek at Fairgrounds	203 ppm	Not tested			
Chartiers Tributary at Racetrack Road Behind Fairfield Inn	220 ppm	276 ppm			
Chartiers Run Tributary at Houston American Legion	31 ppm	Not tested			
Chartiers at Houston Ballfields	117 ppm	Not tested			
Chartiers Creek at Soccer Field on East McMurray Rd (before merge with Little Chartiers)	167 ppm	220 ppm			
Little Chartiers Tributary at Galley Road	66 ppm	50 ppm			

## Contact Information

email: [chartierscreekwa.pawccd.org](mailto:chartierscreekwa.pawccd.org)  
[upperchartierscreek.org](http://upperchartierscreek.org)  
[Facebook.com/UpperChartiersCreek](https://www.facebook.com/UpperChartiersCreek)

Please reach out with questions, concerns or ideas for improving our watershed.