



Visit us on the web at
conewagoinitiative.net

The Conewago Creek Initiative is a locally-led, collaborative partnership effort in the Conewago Creek watershed in Dauphin, Lancaster, and Lebanon Counties. We seek to work with local residents and stakeholders to increase awareness and adoption of land management practices that will improve water quality of local streams and ensure healthy farms and communities, implementing the vision of the Conewago Creek Watershed Community: *a restored Conewago as a centerpiece of pride and a treasured asset in a rural landscape.*

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Conewago Currents

Volume 2, Issue 3

Summer 2012

The Coordinator's Report

Who can say no to free pancakes?

Especially when the Lawn Fire Company volunteers are serving them up! The Conewago Initiative will host our largest summer event of the year this Saturday, July 28 at the Lawn Fire Hall on Route 241 in Lawn. Come eat your fill of pancakes from 8 AM to 10 AM and mingle with Initiative partners. Then, join us for a tour of the watershed from 10 AM to 12 noon, where we will visit three landowners who have implemented conservation practices.

As you will see when you join us for the tour, we continue to make great strides in conservation planning and working with Conewago farmers to implement best management practices to improve water quality. We also now have an equivalent program for



homeowners in the watershed. We are partnering with LandStudies to offer free "Green Masterplans" for interested landowners. Our grant dollars will also fund the installation of stormwater best management practices (like rain gardens, meadows, and riparian buffers) identified in those plans.

And while seeing the results of improved water quality takes time, there are some positive early signals. As you will read below, fish sampling conducted this summer at the

Hershey Meadows stream restoration project resulted in double the number of fish species since the last time the site was sampled in 2007, before the restoration. That's exciting news, not only for Conewago partners and landowners, but for the Conewago's smallmouth bass, swallowtail shiners and banded darters, too!

Matt Royer
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Free Pancake Breakfast and Watershed Tour in Lawn on July 28th

The Conewago Creek Initiative will sponsor a free pancake breakfast and watershed tour, beginning at the Lawn Fire Company, Route 241 in Lawn on July 28, 2012 from 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

This summer watershed event invites the public to learn about, and visit restoration and conservation projects that the

Conewago Initiative has implemented.

The event will begin at 8:00AM with a free pancake breakfast. The pancake breakfast will seek to engage all Conewago Creek residents—farmers, homeowners, business owners, and municipalities that live and work in the watershed. Residents will get the chance to interact

with initiative partners and leave with a better understanding of their immediate impact on the watershed.

The tour of the watershed will begin at 10:00AM. There will be three main site visits showcasing the work of the initiative. The

(Continued on page 2)

Pancake Breakfast (cont.)



Brown Residence features extensive native plant landscaping, the Hanson Farm will explain the benefits of no till planting and riparian buffers, and the Wenger Farm will show the importance of stream bank fencing and how to better manage cattle water access. On the tour, participants will get the chance to ask farmers and

homeowners alike about their land management practices. A watershed tour map will be provided, showing the locations of these three sites as well as highlighting 8 other properties and their conservation practices along the route.

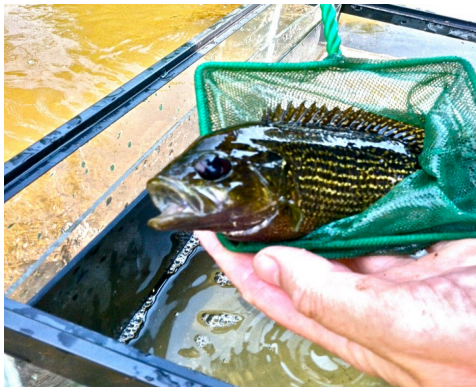
Saturday, June 28, 2012

Lawn Fire Company
5596 Elizabethtown Rd
Lawn, Pa 17041

**Pancake Breakfast—
8:00AM-10:00AM**

**Watershed Tour—
10:00AM-12:00PM**

Summer Fish Survey Shows Signs of Recovery



On June 28th, a fish survey was conducted on the Conewago Creek, at the Hershey Meadows restoration site in Lancaster County. This restoration project began in 2009 on Hershey Trust property, to repair nearly a mile of eroded stream banks and create 15 acres of wetlands and 20 acres of forest between routes 743 and 283, adjacent to the Rail-Trail recreational path.

Fish surveys are an important method of water quality monitoring, as fish

species are a good indicator of ecosystem health. This survey was conducted using electrofishing gear, an approach that stuns fish temporarily without harming them. This fishing method is used in order to learn about the number of species present, abundance, and size of fish in the stream.

Matt Kofroth of the Lancaster County Conservation District led the survey and was assisted by local naturalist, Larry Coble. Volunteers from the DEP, Milton Hershey School, Conservation Districts, and Penn State helped to catch and identify the fish.

The survey provided excellent results, including 24

species of fish. (2 Perch species, 6 Sunfish species, 11 Minnow species, 2 Catfish species, Sucker Species, and 1 Killifish Species). 3 of the species are classified as "intolerant," designating them indicators of high quality water.

Overall, the survey showed improvement in the creek, when compared to past historical fish survey data. The bank stabilization and forested riparian zones have made significant improvements in the creek's overall quality, resulting in improved aquatic health. Check out the Conewago Initiative's website for more detailed results from the survey!

Make sure to check out the Conewago Creek Initiative's Website. The summer interns are hard at work everyday adding information about events, programs, and ways you can help the Conewago Creek!

conewagoinitiative.net

Conewago Featured at Bay Executive Council Meeting

On July 9, the Conewago Initiative was featured on the agenda of the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council's annual meeting at Guston Hall in Virginia, the historic residence of George Mason. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, PA DEP Secretary Michael Krancer, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and others got to hear firsthand about the

Initiative and the wonderful work Conewago residents and partners are doing to implement best management practices and improve water quality in the watershed.

Matt Royer presented on behalf of the Initiative, reporting that the Initiative's work over the past two years has resulted in over 45 conservation plans written, 5,000 feet of stream bank

fencing installed, 31 acres of forest riparian buffers restored, and 21,000 feet of terraces built in the Conewago watershed.

Special thanks to all of our partners and the residents of the Conewago for making this a story worth sharing across the Chesapeake Bay watershed!

Amending the Conewago Creek Watershed Restoration Plan

In 2006, the Tri-County Conewago Creek Association partnered with RETTEW Associates to create a Conewago Creek Restoration Plan. This plan included 129 locations along the Conewago Creek and its tributaries that were in need of restoration.

Since then, all of the Conewago Creek Initiative partners have been working to restore these sites to reduce the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) coming out of the

creek and heading into the Chesapeake Bay. This simply means we have been trying to make the Conewago Creek cleaner so that the Bay can become cleaner.

Now, 6 years later, the Initiative and its partners are going to be creating an amendment to the restoration plan. It will explain the work that has been completed, and identify more sites that have since been identified as needing restoration.

The addition of this

information will help make the watershed eligible for more funding and will help prioritize outreach and restoration efforts. This is one of the few amendments that have ever been created for a watershed plan and will help pave the way for other watershed organizations to update their plans.

This amendment will help show that we have come a long way but still have a ways to go before the Conewago will be clean and healthy.



Conewago Partner Spotlight: LandStudies, Inc

The Conewago Initiative is excited to partner with LandStudies, a design/build environmental restoration company from Lititz, PA. Their mission is to restore and improve natural systems through a holistic approach resulting in functional, natural landscapes. They will be providing stormwater assessment and planning services to landowners in the Conewago Creek watershed through our Stormwater Incentives Program.

LandStudies' signature Green Masterplan provides a guide for landowners with ideas on how to manage their property to improve water quality. Interested landowners have the opportunity to receive a free Green Masterplan from LandStudies through the Initiative. This will include an initial site visit, the Green Masterplan itself, and a guide on native plants and maintenance.

LandStudies has over 20 years experience designing and installing native plant habitats, restoring degraded streams, and implementing stormwater best management practices. By helping landowners to understand how stormwater can be managed effectively, water quality improvements are sure to occur. To sign up for this program contact Matt Royer at 717-948-6459 or mroyer@psu.edu.



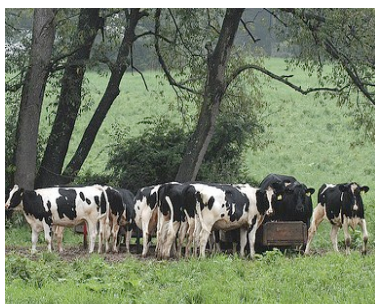
Practice Spotlights

On The Farm:

Stream Bank Fencing

When cows have full access to streams they damage the stream banks by ripping out the vegetation that holds soil in place. They also add harmful bacteria to the water which can create health effects for the cows drinking the water and people swimming downstream. Installing stream bank fencing to limit the cows' access to the stream can solve these problems. Funding is available

to help install the fencing and alternative water sources. For more information contact your County Conservation District.



Around The Home:

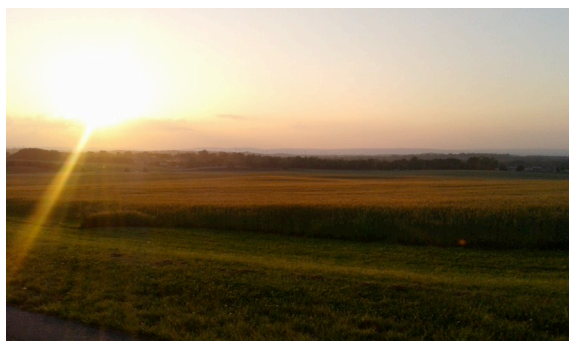
Rain Barrels

Stormwater runoff is one of our streams' biggest sources of pollution. Rain barrels can be used to collect and store water from your roof that would otherwise be lost to a storm drain. Once the water is collected, it can be used to water yards and gardens, wash cars, as well as for other outside uses. Using rainwater for your outside water uses will

reduce your water bill and have a positive environmental effect. Stormwater management means keeping rainwater where it falls.



Conewago Photo Gallery



This issue's gallery features summer scenery and photos from our Fish Sampling at Hershey Meadows Restoration Site.

Summits and Seminars

Dive Deeper-Environmental Education Summit

Penn State Extension is hosting a multi-state environmental education summit spotlighting innovative teaching about water. This is an all day event with lunch workshops, lunch, and guest speakers designed for all informal and formal educators who teach youth about water.

The focus will be on the importance of quality youth water education and the innovative approaches that can enhance water education programs and inspire a new generation of water scientists.

There is a \$45 program fee and the registration deadline is September 23rd.

Complete details for the event can be found at <http://agsci.psu.edu/dive-deeper>

September 27, 2012

The Central Hotel &

Conference Center

800 East Park Dr.

Harrisburg, PA

8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Clean Water: What's Clean Water and How do We Get It Back

The Lancaster County Clean Water Consortium and its partners will conduct three educational seminars about clean water this fall. The seminars will connect the dots between protecting our communities' drinking water, cleaning up our local streams and saving the Chesapeake Bay.

The first seminar will focus on defining clean water and the goals for cleaning up our local streams. The second seminar will feature local officials and the clean water projects occurring in their municipalities. The third seminar will explain how to start a Source Water Protection program in a municipality.

These are FREE seminars but registration is required. Visit <http://www.lccwc.com/seminars.htm> for more information.

September 13, October 11, &

November 8, 2012

The Farm and Home Center

1383 Arcadia Rd

Lancaster, PA

9:00 am-12:00 pm

Samuel Haldeman's 200th Birthday Celebration on August 12th

Join the Conewago Creek Initiative at a summer outreach event on August 12th! The Haldeman Mansion is joining with the Conewago Initiative to host a 200th Birthday Celebration for Samuel Haldeman, a famous American scientist and naturalist.

Samuel Haldeman was born at the mansion on August 12, 1812, in Bainbridge PA. Mr. Haldeman attended Dickinson College yet left after two years, claiming that "I cannot learn from others. I must see for myself."

Mr. Haldeman became a self-taught naturalist and scientist, studying everything from paleontology to fresh water snails and shells. Aside from science, Haldeman was also an accomplished linguist, studying the origin and historical development of words. When Samuel Haldeman died on September 10, 1880, he left behind him more than 200 publications in six separate disciplines.

The event will occur from 12-5pm at 230 Locust Grove Road, in Bainbridge, PA. The celebration will include historical bus tours of Marietta, a

stream sampling activity, mollusk presentations, fish print t-shirt making, games, cupcake decorating, and plenty of food! There is a \$5 parking fee and admission is free.

Sunday, August 12, 2012

12:00-5:00 pm

Haldeman Mansion

230 Locust Grove Rd

Bainbridge, PA

Newsletter Challenge: Win a Free Tree!!

*This is your opportunity to win a **free tree**!*

You can feel good knowing that when you plant this tree you will be helping clean up the stream!

This is a new and exciting element of our quarterly newsletter. All you have to do is answer the seasonal question (**hint: the answer is in the newsletter**) and email conewagocreekinitiative@gmail.com with your name and answer. You will have one week from the day the newsletter is sent to get your answer to us. A random drawing will determine the

winner (or winners) of the season's prize. So don't wait, start searching for the answer to the following question:

What is the name of the signature stormwater assessment and plan that landowners in the watershed can receive through funding with the Initiative and its partners?



CONEWAGO CREEK INITIATIVE

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Dauphin County Conservation District • Lancaster County Conservation District • Lebanon County Conservation District • Tri-County Conewago Creek Association • South Londonderry Township • Elizabethtown College • Penn State University • PA Department of Environmental Protection • PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources • PA Fish and Boat Commission • PA Department of Agriculture • USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service • USDA Agriculture Research Service • U.S. Geologic Service • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Chesapeake Bay Foundation • ZedX, Inc. • American Farmland Trust • Capital Area RC&D

The Conewago Creek Initiative is a project of Penn State Cooperative Extension made possible through funding by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds



Community working together for a restored Conewago.

The Conewago Watershed Community has envisioned a future that establishes the restored Conewago and its tributaries as a centerpiece of pride and a treasured asset in a rural landscape.

This vision includes a strong agricultural community and productive farmland, community recreation areas and vibrant, well planned communities. Pristine landscapes will be protected while providing sustainable uses of natural resources, clean water and streams, and educational opportunities for generations to come.



BEFORE-2007

AFTER-2012

These are before and after pictures taken at the Hershey Meadows Restoration Site. The banks, which were once steep and free of vegetation, are now much more level and completely covered in healthy plants. These are some of the changes that have helped increase the fish population, as discovered during our summer fish survey!

Calendar of Events

Pancake Breakfast and Watershed Tour

Saturday, June 28, 2012
8:00am-12:00am
Lawn Fire Company
5596 Elizabethtown Rd
Lawn, Pa 17041

Samuel Haldeman's 200th

Birthday Celebration

Sunday, August 12, 2012
12:00pm—5:00 pm
Haldeman Mansion
230 Locust Grove Road
Bainbridge, PA 17502

National Night Out- Come visit the Conewago Initiative and Stream Team Booths

Tuesday, August 7, 2012
6:00 pm— 9:00 pm
Campbell Fire Company
Grounds

Tri-County Conewago Creek Association Monthly Meetings

July 25, 2012
August 29, 2012
September 26, 2012
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Conewago Township Bldg
3279 Old Hershey Rd, Etown
(717) 948-6459

Conewago Initiative Project Advisory Team meeting

August 21, 2012
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Penn State Harrisburg
Room 172E, Olmsted Bldg
(717) 948-6459

Clean Water Seminars

September 13, October 11, &
November 8, 2012
The Farm and Home Center
1383 Arcadia Rd, Lancaster
9:00 am-12:00 pm

Dive Deeper-Environmental

Education Summit

September 27, 2012
8:30 am– 3:30 pm
The Central Hotel &
Conference Center
800 East Park Dr.
Harrisburg, PA

Sustainable Forests & Meadows Bus Tour

September 7, 2012
7:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Middle Creek Wildlife
Management Area
Kleinfeltersville Rd.

www.lancasterwatersheds.org