



Musconetcong River News

Summer 2014

Published quarterly by The Musconetcong Watershed Association

Asbury, New Jersey

MWA to Receive \$100K from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation *By Beth Styler Barry*

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Delaware River Restoration Fund (Fund) is a partnership among the Open Space Institute and the Academy of Natural Science of Drexel University, with major funding from the William Penn Foundation. The Fund will award at least \$2 million per year nationally in competitive grants, focused on three priority strategies: stewardship of working lands, restoration of wetlands, floodplains and stream corridors, and promoting adoption of green infrastructure in urban/ suburban landscapes. The Fund was launched in late 2013 to help community-based non-profits and government agencies work

together to clean up and restore polluted waters, and improve habitat for target species including Eastern Brook Trout and River Herring.

MWA and two of its long-time partners, North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development (NJRC&D) and Trout Unlimited (TU) will work together to improve two Hunterdon County tributaries to the Musconetcong River under this grant. A portion of the funding will help TU purchase materials to complete an in-stream restoration on a Bethlehem Township farm.* The majority of the grant will promote agricultural best management practices (AgBMPs). In order to meet the project goals of reduc-

ing nutrients and bacterial contamination in the tributaries and the main stem of the river, funding will be available for materials such as fencing, and also to promote participation in the River Friendly Farm Program.

River-Friendly farm Certification is a free, voluntary, and self-paced program that assists farmers in identifying areas for improvement to help protect our water resources. This program is currently facilitated by NJRC&D, a non-profit organization spanning six counties in North Western New Jersey.

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Freeing The Musky: Observations Following Dam Removal On The Musconetcong River

By Laura Craig, Ph.D., Associate Director, River Restoration Program

Note: This article originally appeared on August 14, 2014 on the American Rivers blog (www.americanrivers.org/blog/issues/dams/)

Musky Pebble Count I Musconetcong Watershed Association

Earlier this summer, I spent a day working in the cool, shallow water of the Musconetcong River. The Musky, as it's known locally, drains 158 square miles of rural New Jersey and is a major tributary of the Delaware River. Over the last several years, American Rivers has been working closely with a group of partners – including environmental non-profits, state and federal resource agencies, and

private landowners – to “Free the Musky” by removing numerous outdated, low-head dams that impede the movement of resident and migratory fishes, reduce habitat quality and availability, contribute to streambank erosion, and pose a threat to recreational paddlers.

So far, the Lower Musconetcong River Restoration Partnership, working under the leadership of the Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA), has successfully removed four dams: Gruendyke Mill Dam (2008), Seber Dam (2009), Riegelsville Dam (2011), and Finesville Dam (2011).

With plans for additional projects in the future, our group is interested in understanding how dam removal is impacting the river and how we might use this infor-



Laura Craig, Ph.D., of American Rivers, and the MWA Langdon Palmer Memorial Intern, Dillon George, monitor for changes to streambed habitat and shifts in macroinvertebrate community composition in June, 2014

mation to inform future projects. I worked with the MWA's Monitoring Coordinator, Nancy Lawler, to develop a monitoring plan, and we recently spent the day with a small team of volunteers

Freeing the Musky *Continued on page 4*

MWA Asbury Grist Mill Update

By: *Chuck Gullage, Trustee Emeritus*

On September 3, 2014, the MWA attempted to obtain Franklin Township - Land Usage Board (LUB) approval for the Asbury Grist Mill site plan. Coincidentally, it was one year to the day since we last made our last presentation to this board.

Throughout the past year, the MWA worked on the issues and concerns that were brought up by the LUB regarding our initial site plan. We worked with NJDEP to get our wetlands permit, and, of course, we worked with the NJDEP Non-Point Source Pollution group to obtain approval for our proposed gray-water only septic system.

To address LUB concerns, we modified our site plan to lengthen parking stalls, and increase the width of the driveway, making

it safer for two-way traffic. This driveway modification necessitated a full septic system re-design.

Basically, we spent one full year addressing the LUB concerns and issues in preparation for the meeting this past September 3rd.

Unfortunately, the LUB was not completely satisfied with our updated plans.

The bottom line was that no vote was taken on September 3rd. It will take place at the next LUB meeting, which may not occur until November. The LUB would prefer we scale down our plans to only have a museum on the first floor and in the basement, with no office spaces, as we had planned for the second and third floors.

The MWA rejects the museum-only concept as economically infeasible. We believe that



The original tailrace island was merely a pile of rocks when constructed in 1865. The crew is now using these same rocks to fill gabions and anchor them, so it should stay in place at least another couple of hundred years. Native trees will be planted to replace those we had to remove.

when we finish our testimony in November, we will be successful in finding a workable compromise.

MUSCONETCONG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

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Asbury, NJ 08802

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www.musconetcong.org

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Printing: *Good Impressions, Washington, NJ*

New Faces at the MWA



Kevin Meininger
Water Quality Field Specialist

Kevin joined the MWA staff in the Summer of 2014. Prior to his work in conservation, he worked in remediation where he learned proper sampling techniques with a variety of equipment, and the state regulations on handling the samples. He then worked for The Nature Conservancy where he learned the conservation side of environmental work. At the MWA, Kevin samples our watershed, gathering water quality data and interpreting results for our conservation efforts.

Kevin obtained his B.S. in Environmental Science from The Bloomsburg University of PA where he was president of the Bass Angling Society for Students (B.A.S.S.). He spends most of his free time fishing, and loves to snow/water ski, ride motorcycles, and attend N.J. Devils hockey games.



Dan Ross - MWA Watershed Ambassador
WMA1 Upper Delaware

Dan is the current AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassador serving out of the Musconetcong Watershed Association. He graduated from the School of Environmental & Biological Sciences Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, in 2012 with a B.S. in Environmental Policy, Institutions & Behavior.

A life-long New Jersey resident, Dan developed an affinity towards nature during his time with the Boy Scouts of America. He became passionate about environmental stewardship during his teenage years. In his spare time, he enjoys Cooking, Camping, Gardening, and promoting environmental awareness.

Camp Musky Summer Program Makes a Splash!

By: Kyle Richter



Campers look at and discuss macro invertebrates during Stream Team Session 2

This summer the MWA welcomed 36 campers to our Camp Musky Summer Program over the course of four weeks, ranging in age from 5-12+. The month of July was filled with exciting, hands-on, outdoor learning adventures. Each day, campers explored a different part of the beautiful MWA River Resource Center (RRC) property and the adjoining preserved 30 acres of meadow, woods and wetlands. They learned about the many different animals that call this region home; from turtles to bears, to all of the various macro invertebrates that live in the Musky, and how they adapted to live in this area. At the end of each day they took time to draw and write in their nature journals to document their learnings. Some highlights from each session include:

Explorers (ages 5-6) kicked off the start of Camp Musky. It was a full week of playing nature-based games, exploring different ecosystems, and creating craft projects, such as camouflage vests, which allowed our young campers to blend in

with nature, like many animals do!

Stream Team (ages 7-9) had the option of full-day or half-day sessions. These two, one-week-long sessions offered campers an opportunity to conduct in-depth studies of the Musconetcong River and the organisms that call it home. Campers in these sessions were lucky enough to see a wide variety of animals roaming the preserved meadow next to the RRC!

River Rangers (ages 10-12+) acquired skills on what it takes to live sustainably, to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony. They also learned about all of the different features that make the River Resource Center a LEED Platinum building. (LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) The LEED program encourages environmentally friendly and efficient building construction.) Once the kids were up to speed, they put their sustainable living skills into practice, building solar ovens and cooking s'mores. To round out the week, they invented their own creations out of recycled materials, and even found a giant turtle shell near the pond on the river trail!

It was a great summer, and together, we accomplished a lot! MWA would like to extend a big "thank you" to our amazing volunteers, Karen Kapral, Chloe and Colin DeCleene, and Langdon Palmer Camp Musky Intern Jackie LeClair, for their help in making Camp Musky a huge suc-

cess this summer. Be on the lookout for a Camp Musky reunion – details to be released soon! 🎧



Campers from Stream Team Session 1 explore the river looking for critters that call the Musky home.



Explorers show off their camouflage vests before heading off into the woods to see how well they work.



The River Rangers take a moment to discuss the power of the sun as they wait for their solar ovens to heat up their s'mores.

School's Closed November 6th & 7th – MWA Offers Nature Exploration Extravaganza for Kids

With schools closed for the 2014 NJEA Teachers Convention on November 6-7, the MWA will hold a Nature Exploration Extravaganza. Let your kids enjoy their days off at the beautiful MWA River Resource Center, where we will spend the day exploring the meadows, woods, wetlands, and the Wild and Scenic Musconetcong River. We will also play games and do craft projects. This program runs 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on both days. Fee: \$45 per day, or \$80 for both. We also offer early drop off at 8:00 am and late pick up at 5:00 pm for an additional \$10 each day. Don't forget to pack a lunch! We need a minimum of 10 children to register in order for this program to run, so please register early. Registration forms can be found on our website, under Camp Musky.

Camp Musky Reunion – Calling all Alumni!

Do your kids miss all the fun of Camp Musky? If so, we have great news! MWA will host a one-day Camp Musky Reunion during winter break. This one-day camp will run Dec. 29, 9 am - 4 pm. Fee: \$45 per child, with optional early drop-off at 8 am and late pick-up at 5 pm for an additional \$10. A minimum of 10 campers are needed in order for this program to run, so please register early. Registration forms can be found on our website, under Camp Musky.



Are you following the Musconetcong Watershed Association on Facebook?
It is a great way to find out what's going on at the MWA.

Special Thanks to Mohawk Canoe Club

The MWA would like to extend a big thank you to the Mohawk Canoe Club – specifically, Vin Marmorato, Chris Myers, Bob Lester, and Elliott Koppel, for their efforts in clearing several obstructions in the Musky. Typically when a tree falls in the river, the best solution is to do nothing. As the saying goes, “wood is good” and you let nature take its course. In certain circumstances, such as events like Superstorm Sandy, debris collects and twists together, creating hazardous conditions for people and animals. If left alone, these blockages could continue to collect more debris, resulting in even bigger problems.

For safety reasons, the MWA is not always able to enter the river to clear large obstructions because they sometimes require chain-saws and other heavy duty equipment. On the last Sunday of September, the Mohawk Canoe Club cleared hazardous debris along the river, opening the river and allowing safe passage from King’s Highway to Point Mountain to beyond the Butler Park Bridge. This huge undertaking had them working on the river from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, for which we are extremely grateful. Their efforts created free-flowing water for recreational use, and the fish and wildlife that thrives in these waters. ☺



Rep. Scott Garrett, 3rd from left, joined by river guide John Brunner, at left, Franklin Township Mayor Bonnie Butler, 4th from left and MWA Executive Director Beth Styler Barry at far right, set out to survey the river on Saturday June 20th. The Congressman introduced the Musconetcong Wild and Scenic River Bill in the House of Representatives in 2005.



Ms. Liz Christian and Ms. Alex McGuire brought their Franklin Township Elementary School 4th grade math class on a field trip to the River Resource Center. These clever kids made bluebird houses as part of a geometry class lesson and were kind enough to donate them to the MWA

\$100K

Continued from page 1

The River-Friendly Farm Program **was initiated to address water quality concerns within the Raritan River Basin. The program seeks to promote environmentally friendly farming practices through the recognition of farmers that, through good management, help to protect water resources within the watershed. To participate, farms voluntarily send an application to the NJRC&D Council. Once an application is received, a conservation planner will schedule a site visit with the land owner or producer. The farm will then be evaluated in 5 main areas:

- Soil Loss Management
- Nutrient Management
- Pest Management
- Riparian Buffers
- Irrigation Water Management

*Project largely funded by a Natural Resource Conservation Services grant.

**This project builds upon data and implementation activities completed through the 2006 319h Subwatershed Study and it will implement projects described in the Musconetcong Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan.

Freeing the Musky

Continued from page 1

assessing post-removal substrate characteristics in a stretch of river that was previously inundated by the Finesville Dam. I led our team in conducting Wolman pebble counts— a method that consists of randomly selecting and measuring hundreds of pebbles within the study reach to determine the composition of the riverbed. The work is simple, but yields important data that allows us to inexpensively track changes following the removal of a dam.

We are beginning to observe coarser bed material as finer parti-

cles, like silts and sand, are slowly flushed out of the system. These changes to streambed habitat may also lead to shifts in macroinvertebrate community composition— another factor that we are monitoring as part of the dam removal effort.

While standing in the river on that hot July day, I was reminded how quickly dam removal can positively affect a river. Dam removal immediately eliminates an obsolete structure and often leads to rapid, visible improvements in stream habitat quality and availability. ☺

SAVE THESE DATES!

October 29 and 30, 6-8:20 pm - Experience the Night Along the Musconetcong - As Halloween approaches, join the Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) on October 29th and 30th from 6:00 to 8:20 pm as we explore the River Trail along the Musconetcong River. Learn how to use your senses in a nocturnal setting. We will also discuss topics such as night vision, nocturnal wildlife, and comfort with the darkness. Starting at 6:00 pm, guided tours will depart every 20 minutes, with the last tour leaving the River Resource Center at 8:20 pm. This event is perfect for children ages 5-10, but all ages are welcome to attend. Enjoy apple cider and light refreshments, along with pumpkin painting. Suggested donation: \$7.50 per person (max of \$20 per family.) Location: 10 Maple Ave., Asbury, 08802. Please register.

October 31 and November 1, 7-10 pm - Haunted Hike along the Musconetcong - Looking for a fun and safe event after everyone's done trick-or-treating? Come to the Musconetcong Watershed Association's River Resource Center (10 Maple Ave., Asbury, 08802) from 7:00-10:00 pm on October 31st and November 1st for a haunted hike along the Musconetcong. This promises to be a night full of fun and fright! Groups will depart for a self-guided tour from the River Resource center every 20 minutes. Suggested donation: \$7.50 per person (max of \$20 per family). Please register.

November 6-7 – School's Closed - MWA Nature Exploration Extravaganza! - With schools closed for the 2014 NJEA Teachers Convention on November 6-7, the MWA will hold a Nature Exploration Extravaganza. Let your kids enjoy their days off at the beautiful MWA River Resource Center, where we will spend the day exploring the meadows, woods, wetlands, and the Wild and Scenic Musconetcong River. We will also play games and do craft projects. This program runs 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on both days. Fee: \$45 per day, or \$80 for both. We also offer early drop off at 8:00 am and late pick up at 5:00 pm for an additional \$10 each day. Don't forget to pack a lunch! We need a minimum of 10 children to register in order for this program to run, so please register early. Registration forms can be found on our website, under Camp Musky.

Saturday, November 29, 10 am-12 pm - Post-Thanksgiving Hike at Point Mountain - Set aside the Saturday after Thanksgiving to burn off those extra calories for our annual hike at the Point Mountain Reserve trail. Hikers will use the Ridge Trail, which cuts through the forests and a mountain stream. A scenic overlook along this trail provides a view of distant mountains and farmland in Warren County. The trail is diverse and challenging at times, and includes a steep and rocky incline. Bring a snack, water and binoculars. All are welcome, novice and expert alike. The meeting place for this hike is the gravel parking lot on Point Mountain Road approximately 0.3 miles from Route 57. MWA members are free, non-members are asked to donate \$3 per person (max of \$10 per family.) Please register.

Saturday December 6, 10 am-12 pm - Children's Craft and Hike - What child doesn't enjoy crafts and adventures? Bring your kids to Musconetcong Watershed Association's (MWA) River Resource Center on Saturday, December 6th, where they will create a special winter themed craft, and explore the beautiful MWA River Resource Center property and adjoining 30 acres of preserved meadow, woods, and wetlands. Event runs 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Location: 10 Maple Ave., Asbury, 08802. Suggested donation: \$10 per child. Please register.

December 29, 9 am-4 pm - Camp Musky Reunion! - Do your kids miss all the fun of Camp Musky? If so, we have great news! MWA will host a Camp Musky Reunion during winter break. This one-day camp will take place from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. \$45 per child, with optional early drop off at 8:00 am, and late pick up at 5:00 pm for an additional \$10 per child. A minimum of 10 campers are needed in order for this program to run, so please register early. Registration forms can be found on our website, under Camp Musky.

To Register, or learn more information on any of these events, please email kyle@musconetcong.org or call 908- 537-7060, unless otherwise noted. Also find us on Facebook or visit our website at www.musconetcong.org. MWA River Resource Center (RRC) is located at 10 Maple Ave., Asbury, NJ

The Musconetcong Watershed Association

The Musconetcong River Valley is rich in scenery, history, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. The river rises up in Lake Hopatcong - New Jersey's largest spring-fed lake - and is shadowed by 1,000-foot Highland ridges and slices through a deep, limestone river valley, flowing swiftly to the Delaware River. Along the way the "Musky" passes by state and county parks, bustling towns, vital industries, historic villages, and some of the most productive farmland in the state.

The Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) is a non-profit organization formed in 1991 to protect and enhance the Musconetcong River and its related resources through advocacy and environmental education programs, scientific research and river restoration projects. The MWA scope spans the 158 square-mile Musconetcong River Watershed, and includes portions of four counties, and all or portions of 25 municipalities. The Musconetcong River became part of the National Wild and Scenic River System in 2006.

MWA members are part of a network of individuals, families and organizations who care about the Musconetcong River and its watershed. They are kept informed about issues concerning the river and its related resources by receiving quarterly issues of the *Musconetcong River News*.



PO Box 113
Asbury, NJ 08802

MWA Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the Musconetcong Watershed Association in which I will receive membership benefits and publications. I have enclosed a check payable to **MWA** for the membership category listed below:

- \$20 Student
- \$30 Family
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Sustainer
- \$250 Steward
- \$500 Champion
- \$1,000 + Life Member

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Musconetcong River News

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