



Musconetcong River News

Winter 2013

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Asbury, New Jersey

MWA, the river, and the power of “Healing Waters”

by Stuart Shafran

The Musconetcong Watershed Association, for the past decade, has successfully formed partnerships and alliances with other organizations and interest groups. Together with our partners we have made great progress toward realizing our goals of improving and protecting the water quality and health of the Musconetcong River. One special program we all support is Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (PHWFF), a program to assist in the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled veterans through fly fishing and fly tying.

Project PHWFF began in 2005 serving wounded military service members at Walter Reed Army Medical Center returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since then, PHWFF has expanded nationwide. PHWFF relies on Federation of Fly Fishers, Trout Unlimited, and independent fly fishing clubs to conduct the program at the Department of Defense and Veteran's Administration facilities across the nation. Volunteer staff and outings leaders include experienced fly fishers and guides, all of whom donate their time and knowledge to support PHWFF participants.

In recent years, on both private properties and New Jersey State Fish and Wildlife areas mostly in our watershed, PHWFF has held many recreational out-

A Project Healing Waters outing leader guides a veteran, fulfilling the organization's mission “Healing Those Who Serve”.



Photo by Richard Franklin PHWFF-NYC

ings for disabled veterans of foreign wars from Korea to Afghanistan. As a result, PHWFF has formed strong bonds with the Musconetcong River and has made greater progress towards achieving their goals.

Based out of Lyons VA Hospital in Lyons, New Jersey, PHWFF volunteers work with vets that live both on and off campus. This program is held not only during the fishing season, but throughout most of the winter months as well where they primarily tie flies and swap fish stories. A task as simple as tying a fishing fly can be quite challenging to a physically or emotionally disabled vet. The challenges may range from dexterity to concentration, even loss of limb, but for those who commit to learning and overcoming obstacles, the rewards are limitless.

The next step in the healing process is accompanying our vets on fishing outings and catching a fish with the flies that they personally created. For some, the outings may only be about getting away for the day. For others, it's a way of reconnecting with nature and even reliving younger days. For the volunteers, it's all about giving back to those who have

served our country. Whether we are fishing a pond from the bank, fishing a lake from a canoe, wading in a river or deep sea fishing from a boat, in this healing process everyone wins.

To become a volunteer (men and women are both welcome and encouraged to help) or to contribute in anyway please contact MWA Trustee and PHWFF Project Leader, Stuart Shafran at s2rtflyfisher@verizon.net or phone (732) 500-5239.

Asbury Mill Restoration Update

by Chuck Gullage

Over the past few months we have made tremendous progress towards restoring the Asbury Mill. The Musconetcong Watershed Association and the Mill Restoration Committee are most appreciative for all of the support, guidance and financial contributions that we have received.

Asbury Mill *Continued on page 2*

Native Plant Sale

at the River Resource Center

Saturday, April 27

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

see Save the Dates for details

Asbury Mill

Continued from page 1

Way back in September of 2012, when it was still warm and sunny, we finished the first physical milestone in the project, demolishing the west shed of the mill. For anyone who enjoys watching heavy equipment operated by demolition experts, it was a fun sight. In a few days the contractor knocked down the shed, carted away the debris and stabilized the area, while our archeologist examined the remains of an old stone wall that was buried beneath the floor of the shed. We found two old millstones and some metallic artifacts, but nothing particularly surprising or interesting. Subsequently the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection gave us permission to proceed with the demolition of the remaining sheds. We

are now waiting for our demolition contractor to return and take down the North and Storage Bin Sheds. Once these sheds are removed, the mill will be back to its original 1863 footprint. While writing this article I received a couple of calls from the contractor who wants to begin the second round of demolition in early February.

Last spring the Riddle family and Asbury Carbons, who generously donated the mill to us along with the building that is now our River Resource Center, approached the MWA with the offer of a challenge grant for \$50,000. In order to receive this grant we needed to raise a matching \$50,000 ourselves. In early fall of 2012 MWA made a grant proposal to the Franklin Township Open Space Committee in the amount of \$100,000 to help restore and preserve the mill. MWA Executive Director Beth

Styler Barry and I conducted mill tours for the township committee and the mayor, two members at a time, and finally made a formal presentation to the committee in December 2012. To our surprise and delight, the committee not only unanimously approved funding for our proposal, they increased the amount requested from \$100,000 to \$150,000 so that we could complete Phase 1 of the mill restoration without having to stop work to raise more funds. By Franklin Township approving us for \$150,000, the challenge grant money was released. At the end of December Beth and I met with Steve Riddle and the management team at Asbury Carbons to pick up the challenge grant check. To say that we are delighted is an understatement. These funds, combined with the grants that we previously received from Warren County and the Hyde and Watson Foundation plus individual donations, have met our goals for Phase 1. We are thrilled and most appreciative.



Demolition of the sheds surrounding the Asbury Mill, added during the 1940s and 1950s, will expose the original structure for the first time in half a century.

Photo by Bruce Livingston

In January we met with an architecture firm to start discussing the design and eventual reuse of the mill. Also last week the Mill Restoration Committee drafted our initial set of "Owner Requirements" to provide to whichever architectural firm we decide on. In addition we met with our engineer to finalize the plans and drawings for Phase 1. In parallel with all this activity, the Mill Restoration Committee began drafting high level plans for Phase 2 which largely addresses the exterior restoration and a few structural issues.

The Association and the Mill Restoration Committee are always looking for additional partners and volunteers. You can follow our progress on Asbury Historic Mill Facebook page. Individuals and corporate funders who wish to participate in the project are urged to contact Musconetcong Watershed Association, P. O. Box 113 Asbury, NJ 08802 or call (908) 537-7060. ☺

MUSCONETCONG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

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www.musconetcong.org

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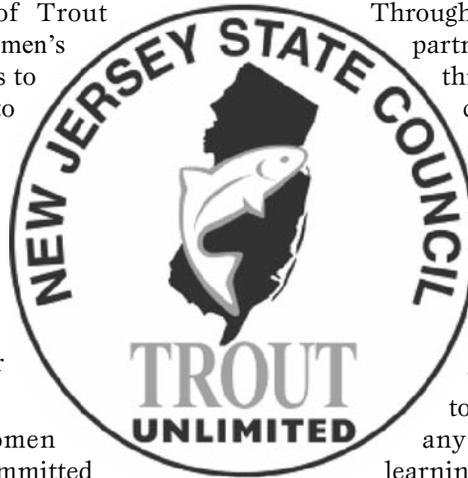
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Introducing Trout Unlimited's *Women's Initiative*

The New Jersey State Council of Trout Unlimited (TU) is introducing a Women's Initiative to provide support for chapters to recruit new members to TU and to encourage current members to network with other women and become involved in chapter projects and river outings. As a grass roots effort campaign, the NJ State Council hopes to see an increase in women members and their involvement and to empower new leaders to share their passion for cold water conservation.

NJ TU has many dedicated women anglers among its members who are committed to protecting local rivers and following TU's mission to make rivers cleaner, healthier and more fishable.



Throughout the state, the Women's Initiative is partnering with chapters to connect anglers through conservation projects such as river clean ups, and engage anglers with fishing outings and clinics to improve technique. Whether new to the sport or an experienced angler, please consider joining and gathering together for fishing and camaraderie.

There are future plans to organize outings in Spring, which will give women in the state the opportunity to gather together and enjoy the outdoors. If you have any questions or are interested in learning more about the NJ TU Women's Initiative Program, contact coordinator Kelly E. Buchta at kebuchta@njtu.org.



A male hooded merganser was photographed about 100 yards upstream from the River Resource Center. The bird was noted during the Audubon Christmas Bird Count and is believed to be one of the only pair in Warren County.



An Eastern Screech owl (gray phase) using one of the duck boxes along the trail at the River Resource Center. This great little trail begins in the meadow just below the building and is marked and has been posted with interpretive signs along the way by an Eagle Scout.



Photos by Brian Butler

MWA River Watcher program announces 2013 Training Sessions

The MWA River Watcher Water Quality Monitoring Program is inviting interested citizens to sign up to monitor the river's health for this year. No experience is necessary; you need to be 16 years of age or older, and attend the required annual field and lab training sessions. This year we will have trainings for two projects; one for our regular River Watcher program and an additional training for our Dam Removal and Restoration Monitoring projects.

The River Watchers monitor four stream locations, four times per year, measuring basic water chemistry and sampling aquatic creatures that live in freshwater streams. This program is a great way to learn about the river and protect it. The River Watcher field and lab training will be held on Saturday, April 6th from 9am to 3 pm at Warren County

Community College, Room 216. River Watcher monitoring usually occurs in late April, July, October, and January.

The Dam Removal and Restoration Monitoring projects require more advanced training; we are looking for adventurous people who are comfortable working in and around streams. We will be collecting organisms, making measurements, and doing some water chemistry at three sites along the river. That training will run on March 23rd from 9am to 3pm in room 216 at Warren County Community College. All of the monitoring for those projects will start in early April.

Please call the Musconetcong Watershed Association at 908-537-7060 to reserve your seat and for more details. You may also email the River Watcher Coordinator at nancy@musconetcong.org. ☎



MWA River Watchers test water quality at four sites along the Musconetcong River each year.

The Asbury Mill-Past, Present, Future...



The Musconetcong Watershed Association invites you to join us at a dinner for the Restoration of the Asbury Mill on February 22, 6:30 pm at Hawk Pointe Golf Club, 294 Route 31, Washington, New Jersey 07882. Presentations on the History and Restoration Plans for the Asbury Mill will be given by Stephen A. Riddle, Chief Executive Officer, Asbury Carbons, and Chuck Gullage, MWA Mill Project Manager. All proceeds from this event will go to the restoration of the Asbury Mill. Donation \$50.00 per person. Please RSVP by February 19 to adrienne@musconetcong.org, call (908) 537-7060 or register online at musconetcong.org.

SAVE THESE DATES!

- **Tuesday, February 12th - MWA "River Talk" Series - "How To Enjoy (And Survive) Cold Water Paddling" 7:00 - 9:30 pm at the MWA River Resource Center**

Experienced paddlers view March and November as "prime time" because water levels are often optimal and air temperatures typically aren't extremely cold. Indeed the Musconetcong River can provide an extra-beautiful paddling experience with snow still on the ground and temperatures climbing up into the fifties.

Join John Brunner, Mid-Atlantic Recreation Planner for the Appalachian Mountain Club (and former MWA Executive Director) at the River Resource Center for a discussion of what you need to know about cold water and how to be properly prepared for experiencing the joys of spring, fall and even winter paddling, while minimizing the risks to yourself and your paddling partners. What to wear? Where to paddle? What to plan for? We'll cover all the bases and plan for a few early spring river trips. Light refreshments will be served. Suggested donation: \$5.00.

- **Friday, February 22nd – Hawk Pointe Dinner - Past, Present, Future... The Asbury Mill - See page 4 for Details.**
- **Tuesday, March 5th - MWA "River Talk" Series "Drinking Water Supply and Water Quality in the Watershed" 7:00 - 8:30 pm at the MWA River Resource Center**

Our speaker Bruce Smith, Executive Director of the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority, will address drinking water supply and water quality in the watershed. Many people in the watershed get their drinking water from private wells, but many are drinking water supplied by a water company, public utility or municipal well. We'll talk about the availability of water and the quality. Do we have enough? Does it have to be treated before it is sent to residents? Bring your questions! Light refreshments will be served. Suggested donation: \$5.00.

- **Saturday, March 9th (rain date March 10), Paddle - Musconetcong River Trip 9:00 am - 1:00 pm**

We'll paddle a short 5-mile stretch of the river from Hampton Borough Park to Wolverton Bridge. This is one of easier paddling stretches of the river but experience in moving water is recommended. Paddlers must be properly dressed and prepared for cold water paddling. Wet weather and/or extreme cold will cancel (see rain date). Pre-registration required. Participants must supply their own boat and wear a life jacket. Come prepared with drinking water, a waterproofed lunch or snack and binoculars. Participants must sign a liability release. Space is limited so e-mail to reserve a spot today. Donation is \$15 for non-members and \$10 for MWA members.

- **Saturday, March 30th (rain date March 31), Paddle - Musconetcong River Trip 9:00 am - 1:00 pm**

Location and length of this trip to be determined but we will choose a slightly longer and more challenging stretch of the Musconetcong River than the March 9 event. Experience with moving water required and participants must be properly dressed and prepared for cold water paddling. Pre-registration required. Participants must supply their own boat and wear a life jacket. Come prepared with drinking water, a waterproofed lunch or snack and binoculars. Participants must sign a liability release. Space is limited so e-mail to reserve a spot today. Donation is \$15 for non-members and \$10 for MWA members.

- **Saturday, April 13th - 21st Annual Spring Clean-Up 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**

Come out and help at the Annual Spring Clean-Up. Each year we count on MWA members, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Trout Unlimited members, local citizens and environmental clubs to help us pull tons of trash from local roadsides and stream banks. Afterwards participants gather at noon at the MWA's River Resource Center in Asbury for hot dogs and sodas.

- **Saturday, April 27 - Native Plant Sale at the River Resource Center 9:00 am - 2:00 pm**

Purchase beautiful native species that will provide lasting enjoyment and also save you money, water and time. Native plants provide food and habitat for our wildlife and are economical for the homeowner since they do not require fertilizers or pesticides. They are adapted to our local conditions and can withstand our summer droughts and harsh winters. By planting natives, you will provide food and shelter and will help ensure the survival of the wildlife that depend upon them. Experts will be on hand at the sale to help you choose the best plants for your needs and location.

- **Saturday, April 27th - Early Morning Bird Walk at the River Resource Center 8:00 am**

Join us at the River Resource Center for a morning walk with lifelong birding enthusiast, Brian Butler. For information, registration, and as point of contact on the day of the activity, contact Tomas Gonzales (908) 328-3875, gonzales.tomas1@gmail.com

- **Sunday, May 5th - Run for the River**

The 13th Annual MWA Run/Walk for the River - Online registration now open, register early to take advantage of pre-registration discounts. All participants are eligible for great drawing prizes after the run.

- **Saturday, May 18th - Morning Hike/Bird Walk at Point Mountain Reserve 8:00 am**

Join us at Point Mountain for a morning hike with lifelong birding enthusiast, Brian Butler. For information, registration, and as point of contact on the day of the activity, contact Tomas Gonzales (908) 328-3875, gonzales.tomas1@gmail.com

For more information on these programs visit www.musconetcong.org and view the calendar.
To register for programs email adrienne@musconetcong.org or call (908) 537-7060 unless otherwise indicated.

- ◆ Save These Dates
- ◆ MWA River Watcher program announces 2013 Training Sessions
- ◆ Introducing Trout Unlimited's *Women's Initiative*
- ◆ Asbury Mill Restoration Update
- ◆ Musconetcong and Healing Waters

What's Inside:

Musconetcong River News



Asbury, NJ 08802
PO Box 113



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*.

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:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sustainer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Steward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Supporter | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Champion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000+ Life Member | |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Mail to:

Musconetcong Watershed Association
PO Box 113, Asbury, NJ 08802