



The Delaware RIVERKEEPER® Network's Quarterly Newsletter

Printed on 100% recycled paper



The River needs more than campaign promises

A note from the Delaware Riverkeeper

Inside this issue

Lower Delaware officially something special

Power lines proposed to travel along Wild and Scenic Delaware

Asian swamp eels found in Cooper River watershed

Horseshoe crab harvest to continue

A fulfilling summer internship with DRN

DRN launches Remember the River

Upcoming events

Nov 17th and 18th

6th Annual New Jersey Volunteer Monitoring & Education Summit

Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Morris County, NJ

December 6th & 7th

DRN's Craft Show

Washington Crossing Banquet Hall
Union Fire Company & Rescue Squad
Titusville, NJ

March 7th

Schuylkill Watershed Congress

Montgomery County
Community College
Pottstown, PA

Once again it's election time and, once again, important environmental issues – when addressed at all – are relegated to sound bite promises of protection. Passing mentions about the need to address climate change and press releases lamenting the plight of flood victims are not enough.

The environment remains the neglected step-child, while well-paid marketing firms take all things bad and spin them into sounding like something good. In times like these, the power of the people on behalf of the environment becomes more critical. The fact that the environment receives so little attention or concern, especially during elections, reaffirms for me the incredible challenges we face as a community in protecting our River from those who would exploit it. But it also highlights how important the role our organization and its members play in making sure that true river protection is not lost amid the platitudes.

Many people believe that environmental laws are created to protect our environment when, in truth, they are crafted to regulate how environmental harm takes place, not to stop it from happening. The Clean Water Act didn't stop industrial discharges to our waters; it regulated how those discharges would occur. We work within the framework of these existing laws to curb the violence against our environment, but we need stronger laws that truly protect the environment and our communities.

There is hope in the world and a new model to which we can aspire. Ecuador has crafted a constitution that gives the environment rights, including the right to stand up for itself in a court of law and be heard. In the United States, when the environment is illegally polluted and harmed, the law can only be enforced if there is a person who can prove in a very concrete way that he or she was harmed by the incident.

Today, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network uses the existing laws to fight for the rights of the River and all who depend upon it, but we hope that one day the law will hold violators to account for pollution of the River alone without having to prove that our members were harmed. Until that day, the Delaware Riverkeeper is here to be the voice of the River and to hold accountable those that would do harm.

Maya K. van Rossum
the Delaware Riverkeeper

Phonathon 2008. As the year draws to a close, we turn to our members to ask for crucial financial support with our year-end giving appeal. Soon, we will be contacting you, by mail or by phone, to ask for your support.

Phonathon allows us to connect with our members, provide updates on our work, and ask for donations because every dollar does make a difference. For more information or to volunteer, email chris@delawareriverkeeper.org. **Thank you for giving!**



The Delaware RIVERKEEPER® Network

300 Pond Street, 2nd Floor
Bristol, PA 19007

Phone: 215-369-1188

Fax: 215-369-1181

drn@delawareriverkeeper.org

www.delawareriverkeeper.org

Staff

Maya K. van Rossum,
the Delaware Riverkeeper

Richard Albert, *Restoration Director*
Claire Biehl, *Business Manager*
Molly Biehl, *Development Assistant*
Shannon Blankinship, *Executive Assistant*
Chris Block, *Membership & Events Associate*
Elizabeth Koniers Brown, *Senior Attorney*
Tracy Carluccio, *Deputy Director*
Bonnie Dahl, *Chief Administrative Officer*
Carole Glessner, *Office Assistant*
Emma Gutzler, *Restoration Manager*
Rich Myers, *Citizen Action Coordinator*
Mary Ellen Noble, *Associate Director*
Fred Stine, *Citizen Action Coordinator*
Chari Towne, *Director, Awareness-to-Action*
Tim White, *Website Manager*
Dave Williams, *Restoration Manager*
Faith Zerbe, *Monitoring Director*

Horseshoe crab harvest to continue

In August, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission voted to continue to allow horseshoe crab bait harvest. This is bad news for the red knot *rufa* and other shorebirds that rely on horseshoe crab eggs for food. Horseshoe crabs were first used for bait in the mid 90's. Since 1989, the red knot *rufa* population has plummeted from 95,000 to fewer than 15,000 in 2007. Scientists predict that the red knot *rufa* could be extinct by 2010. Other shorebirds that rely on horseshoe crab eggs during their Delaware Bay stopover have also declined in number. DRN plans to continue work to try to push for better protections of the horseshoe crabs and shorebirds so stay tuned by visiting www.delawareriverkeeper.org.

Lower Delaware officially something special



It took seven years of DRN advocacy and unwavering public support by those who love the River, debate with reluctant dischargers, data gathering and program development by the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), and a healthy dose of last minute politicking, but the campaign to adopt strict regulations to protect the Lower Delaware River has ended with success.

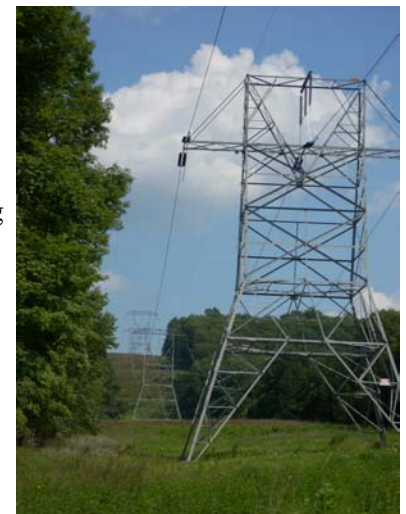
On July 16th, the DRBC Commissioners voted unanimously to designate the reach of the Delaware River from the Water Gap to Trenton as "Special Protection Waters." Taken with previous Special Protection Waters designations, advocated for and secured largely as the result of DRN efforts, the DRBC action establishes the longest stretch of anti-degradation policy on any river in the nation.

Our members helped make this possible. Thanks to all who helped sustain this worthwhile effort for so long.

Power lines proposed to travel along Wild and Scenic Delaware

A new power line to service New York City and other areas has been proposed to run along the Wild and Scenic Delaware River.

Although power lines currently exist in the proposed right-of-way, the new power lines would dwarf the current structure. The new right-of-way could be up to 1,000-feet wide. The new towers will be 180 feet high, 60feet taller than the existing towers. You can find more information about this issue at www.delawareriverkeeper.org.



Existing power lines along Delaware River.
Photo: F. Stine

Asian swamp eels found in Cooper River watershed

DRN volunteer Matt Kail recently discovered Asian swamp eels in Spring Lake in Gibbsboro, NJ. Spring Lake is an impoundment near the Cooper's headwaters. After some research, Kail realized he had found an exotic species thought to be a problem in only the more temperate climates.

The invasive Asian swamp eel is a member of the spiny eel family (*Synbranchidae*), unlike the American eel (family *Anguillidae*) which is native to the watershed. Kail reported his findings to the New Jersey Division of Fish and Game which confirmed his discovery, finding 90 eels during shocking of the lake.

To see a picture of the Asian swamp eel or to learn more about this watershed invader, go to www.delawareriverkeeper.org for our "Asian Swamp Eel Factsheet."

A full-filling summer internship with DRN

by Aubrey Higginbotham

My fondest childhood memories are of the time I spent at my grandparents' home on an island in the Chesapeake Bay where my grandfather, Pop-Pops, shared his love of the natural world with me. I picked blackberries and tried to convince Pop-Pops to prepare the pile of seaweed I had gathered for dinner. I kept snails in his best glassware for observation. Pop-Pops taught me to "help" in his garage, woodworking and maintaining his boats. I built all kinds of creations with whatever wood scraps, metal bits and tools caught my fancy.

When I was 5, my family moved to Chicago where I found new ways to express my love for animals and the environment, but unfortunately, as I grew older, Pop-Pops did too. While I was in high school, he suffered his first stroke, which paralyzed the left side of his body. With physical therapy, Pop-Pops regained some use of his paralyzed limbs.

Upon entering college, I decided to major in environmental engineering. I like math and I wanted to do something that would help people relate to their surroundings with more care. And I still had that burning desire, fostered in Pop-Pops' garage, to examine how things work and make them better. During my freshman year, Pop-Pops suffered another stroke, which took away all of his hard-won freedom of movement. At this point, he gave up on regaining full health, sold his boats and moved to Philadelphia.

This summer, after graduating, I began an internship with Delaware Riverkeeper Network. My goal was to learn how to integrate engineering with sound ecological principles. I achieved this goal, but I learned something more important. I saw first hand true environmental stewardship in action. I saw how DRN uses science to further the interests of nature, an approach I will strive to attain throughout my life's work.

DRN has also given me the priceless opportunity of being able to spend time with Pop-Pops once more. When I see him, he always asks first for stories of work. Pop-Pops loves to learn new things, especially about science and the earth. As I tell him stories of surveying a stream in a field full of curious cows, or being startled by my first trout and slipping into the river, he probably pictures me doing similar things at age 5.

Pop-Pops and I just celebrated his 88th birthday.



DRN Intern Aubrey Higginbotham wading in Valley Creek

Photo: D. Williams

DRN launches *Remember the River*

In July, DRN launched its new *Remember the River* campaign to recognize how healthy watersheds enhance our lives and to remind us all to *Remember the River* in every decision that we make. Components of the campaign included press events along the beautiful Delaware River as well as *RIVER* bracelets and *Remember the River* lapel pins, a new *Remember the River* brochure, and the installation of highway signs (depicted in the photos at right) marking entry into the watershed at seven locations in New Jersey and two locations in Pennsylvania. A new *Remember the River* section of our website and a report that documents the values of the River to our region are also part of this campaign.

Help *Remember the River* by purchasing merchandise available at <http://www.delawareriverkeeper.org/donate/shop.asp>

Remember the River press event photos

Top right: At Penn Treaty Park in Philadelphia, Delaware Riverkeeper Maya van Rossum, with featured speakers State Representative David J. Steil, R-31, and Delaware River Basin Commission Director Carol Collier.

Bottom right: At the Trenton Thunder Waterfront Access, featured speakers Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Deputy Commissioner Jen Godowski and van Rossum.



Photos: S. Blankinship.

Delaware RIVERKEEPER® Network

The Voice of the River and its Tributary Streams

300 Pond Street, 2nd Floor
Bristol, PA 19007

NONPROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
BRISTOL, PA
PERMIT NO. 471



American Littoral
Society Affiliate



Shop Delaware Riverkeeper Network's Annual Holiday Craft Show

10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Saturday, December 6th

10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Sunday, December 7th

*The Washington Crossing Banquet Hall at the
Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad
Titusville, New Jersey*



American shad carving by craft
show exhibitor Ron Dombrowski.
Photo: R. Dombrowski

Support local artists, artisans and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network while wrapping up your holiday shopping. You can do it all the first weekend in December at our **Sixth Annual Holiday Craft Show** at the **Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad** on **River Road in Titusville, New Jersey**.

The DRN craft show, which highlights **a wide variety of high quality, handmade crafts from over 30 local artists and crafters**, offers an alternative to mall shopping for the holidays. After a stop at our craft show, there will be no need to continue driving around to different stores to find the perfect gift. So shop the DRN Craft show. You will be saving gas, reducing your carbon footprint and helping to protect the River.

This year's quality crafts include jewelry, wearable art, ceramics, wood, glass, mixed media, watercolors, oils, pastels, photography, and homemade chocolates for all occasions. Don't miss one of the best seasonal shopping events in the region!

The **suggested entry donation is \$5.00 per person**. Entry donations help support programs such as our River Resources Law Clinic, water quality monitoring and awareness-to-action training. So come out and support DRN because every dollar donated does make a difference for the River.

Our annual Craft Show is held rain or shine. For more information, call Chris at 215-369-1188, ext. 115.