



The Delaware RIVERKEEPER® Network's Quarterly Newsletter

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Marking 400 years in Delaware River History

A note from the Delaware Riverkeeper

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Upcoming events

February 5th

DRN's Peace A Pizza Fundraiser
Peace A Pizza restaurants
12 locations around the watershed!
(See page 3 for details)

March 7th

Schuylkill Watershed Congress
Montgomery County
Community College
Pottstown, PA

May 2nd

DRN's Annual Native Plant Sale
Golden Nugget Antique Market
Lambertville, NJ

In 1609, Henry Hudson, “discovered” the Delaware River while seeking a northwest passage. Although he examined the waters of the Bay and noted the appearance of its shores, Hudson never attempted to land, but European traders looking to profit from the area’s rich resources followed only one year later.

The Delaware River system of this time was an abundant source of clean water and healthy fish so abundant you could catch them with your bare hands. In the Bay, whales, seals, and porpoises swam in abundance. When the horseshoe crabs spawned, the Bay beaches bubbled over with tiny green eggs. The hundreds of thousands of migratory shorebirds that came to feast on these eggs darkened the sky with their arrival. Much has happened in the life of the River since that time.

The settlers that came to the Delaware in the years after 1609 built along its banks, even filling in the River and building upon this fill. The River and Bay were fished, sometimes to excess. The River provided water for drinking and for industry but it also became the dumping ground for sewage and industrial waste.

The River began to react and, in some ways, it began to die. Fish became too contaminated to eat. The River’s once pristine water need treatment before it could be drunk. Populations of shad, sturgeon, horseshoe crabs, bald eagles, and migratory shorebirds began to decline, some to the brink of extinction. Homes and businesses built too close to the River were subject to devastating floods and also contributed runoff and pollution to neighbors downstream. The River clogged ships’ engines and literally peeled the paint from their sides. It became so polluted you could smell it from a plane above Philadelphia.

But enough was finally enough and the community reacted by demanding clean water, strong laws and strong action not only to protect but also restore the River to health. Caring and committed community action coalesced as an unwavering force of good for the River. From this passion, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network was formed. For the past 20 years the Delaware River and its tributaries have had a Riverkeeper to give it a voice and champion its rights as members of our community.

For its first 20 years, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network operated as a regional arm for a national organization. But in 2009, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network is being reborn as an independent nonprofit organization. This rebirth does not change our mission. We will continue to be the strong and unwavering voice the Delaware River needs. We will continue to take on the contentious issues, dealing with them strongly and directly. We will continue to be the resource and support that caring communities and citizens rely on to help protect their piece of the watershed. And we will continue to lead river protection into the future because the River that our children will inherit is determined by our actions today.

Maya K. van Rossum
the Delaware Riverkeeper

The Delaware RIVERKEEPER® Network

300 Pond Street, 2nd Floor
Bristol, PA 19007

Phone: 215-369-1188

Fax: 215-369-1181

drm@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*
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, *IT/Donor Relations Coordinator*
Faith Zerbe, *Monitoring Director*

DRN looks at the past

Although known for its environmental work, one of DRN's restoration projects has moved it into the archeological world. DRN has hired archeologists to conduct shovel tests near the near the historical village of Saddlerstown, Haddon Township, NJ.

The work is part of the Saddlers Woods Restoration Project. As a result, two sites of historical importance were registered with the state museum in DRN's name. The restoration project is funded by a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection 319(h) grant.



Susan Mazziotto, The Berger Group, sifts soils. Photo: R. Albert

Natural gas extraction hits the Upper Delaware

Natural gas extraction is at the Delaware River's door. Gas companies are signing leases with landowners in the Upper Delaware River watershed (mainly Delaware and Sullivan Counties in New York, and Wayne and Pike Counties in Pennsylvania) to drill natural gas wells and extract what the industry sees as a vast supply of natural gas in the Marcellus Shale formation that underlies the region. Gas companies are already drilling next door in Pennsylvania's Susquehanna River watershed and the first application has just been submitted by Chesapeake Energy to the Delaware River Basin Commission for water withdrawal from the East Branch of the Delaware River near Hancock, New York, for six natural gas wells they want to drill in the region.

DRN is working with coalitions in New York and Pennsylvania advocating for the protection of the River and its watershed, which stands to be transformed to an industrial landscape if gas drillers have their way. The process and the scale of natural gas development in the watershed is a major threat to the River, the water supply for 15 million people, and the natural resources and assets of our watershed.

For more information, go to our website where you will find a DRN factsheet about the chemicals injected into the ground by hydraulic fracturing and the vast amounts of water needed for horizontal drilling – just 2 of the hazardous facets of the process of natural gas extraction used in the Marcellus Shale: <http://delawareriverkeeper.org/newsresources/factsheet.asp?ID=78>.

New DRN Factsheet on Coal-tar Sealcoat

Millions of American homeowners have a fresh glossy black coat of sealant applied to their driveways every few years in hopes extending the life of their paving. But recent studies of have found coal-tar sealcoat to be a major source of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs, impacting stream health.

PAHs are toxic to aquatic life. They are suspected human carcinogens and they persist in the environment. Concern over PAHs have led Austin, TX, and Dane County, WI, to ban the use and sale of coal-tar sealcoat. Major retailers have even considered banning coal-tar sealcoat from their shelves. To learn more, check out our new "Coal-tar Sealcoat Factsheet" at www.delawareriverkeeper.org.

DRN challenges Casino Sewage Plan approval

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network has joined forces with the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia and the Northern Liberties Neighborhood Association in an exciting legal case. DRN is challenging the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's approval of a revision to the City of Philadelphia's Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan to accommodate development of the proposed SugarHouse Casino on the banks of the Delaware River.

The Appeal, filed in November with the Pennsylvania Environmental Hearing Board, challenges DEP's decision to approve the revision despite a lack of key data and sufficient opportunity for public participation. Philadelphia struggles with discharges from combined sewer overflows, yet DEP failed to fully consider the impact of additional discharges on the river and neighborhoods.

SugarHouse, estimated to cost \$550 million and accommodate up to 5,000 slot machines, would be built along the River on North Delaware Avenue by HSP Gaming, L.P. Proposed development includes construction on the banks of the River and dredging, filling and bulkheading in the River. Modification to the City's Sewage Facilities Plan, as well as permitting from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is necessary for the project to move forward.

DRN is restoring streams in your community. See where.

DRN's Restoration Program is busy. We are currently working on stream restoration, aquatic habitat enhancement, and stormwater management projects on many streams throughout the watershed. Interested in learning about what is happening in your neighborhood? For more information, contact us 215-369-1188.

Crum Creek, Chester County, PA – Development of a Coldwater Conservation Plan for the Exceptional Value West Branch of Crum Creek that will provide recommendations for enhancing and preserving aquatic habitat.

Little Darby Creek, Delaware County, PA – Design of a stormwater best management practices to meet community's needs for stormwater management, woodland restoration, wildlife observation, and passive recreation along an existing bike path.

Mill Creek, Berks County, PA – Design and implementation of a project to restore over 1,300 linear feet of channel damaged by agricultural use.

Pine Run (Wissahickon Creek), Montgomery County, PA – Development and implementation of a design to stabilize 400 linear feet of channel and restore a native riparian buffer along this headwater stream.

Saddler's Run (Newton Creek), Camden County, NJ – Design and construction of a stormwater management system using best management practices to control stormwater entering a historic woodland and this headwater stream.

Sprogel's Run, Montgomery County, PA – Design and implementation of a dam removal and restoration of the channel to provide for fish migration and enhanced habitat.

Swamp Creek, Bucks County, PA – Development and implementation of a stream restoration design to restore 1,000 linear feet of stream channel near the historic Erwinna Covered Bridge.

Tinicum Creek, Bucks County, PA – Design of a stream restoration project to restore over half a mile of this Exception Value, National Wild and Scenic River.

Valley Creek, Chester County, PA – Identify, map, design, and implement priority projects to enhance instream fish habitat and riparian vegetation along three miles of this Exceptional Value stream. Implementation of priority projects slated for 2009.



**Bring the
whole
Family!!**



1140 Old York Road
Abington, PA 19001
215-885-1210

4 Station Road
Ardmore, PA 19003
610-896-4488

291 Main Street at Exton
Exton, PA 19341
484-875-5800

143-149 S. Gulph Road
King of Prussia PA 19406
610-962-9900

Visit www.peacepizza.com for a full menu

44 East Main Street
Newark, DE 19711
302-737-6766

Liberty Place*
1625 Chestnut St
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-564-1105

1125 Lancaster Avenue
Rosemont, PA 19101
610-581-7010

1178 Baltimore Pike
Springfield, PA 19064
610-328-PIES

522 West Lancaster Ave
Wayne, PA 19087
610-293-6988

Valley Square Center
1508 Main Street
Warrington, PA 18975
215-343-1300

7 Gay Street
West Chester, PA 19380
610-918-1116

3945 Welsh Road
Willow Grove, PA 19090
215-657-4464

* Liberty Place closes at 7pm

**Thursday
February 5th, 2009
5pm – 9pm**

Dine at any of the 12
PEACE A PIZZA locations
and present this coupon
when you pay

PEACE A PIZZA will
donate **20%** of the
proceeds to
the Delaware
Riverkeeper Network

STORE LOCATION:

Write in the name of which participating
PEACE A PIZZA you are visiting

RSVP requested but not required
Shannon@delawareriverkeeper.org
215-369-1188 x 105

Delaware RIVERKEEPER® Network

The Voice of the River and its Tributary Streams

300 Pond Street, 2nd Floor
Bristol, PA 19007

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Mark your calendars for **Saturday, March 7th 2009!**

Don't miss . . .

The Schuylkill Watershed Congress *Montgomery County Community College* *Pottstown, Pennsylvania*

The Schuylkill Watershed Congress has become a highly anticipated annual event for watershed citizens interested in understanding, protecting and restoring their local streams. The Congress is the place to network across disciplines and hear new information about watershed restoration.

Although focused on the Schuylkill River watershed, the Congress draws participants and presenters from throughout Pennsylvania as well as from Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey. Join us as a representative of your local stream.

This year's Keynote Speaker will be Andrew Pitz, Vice President, Strategic Policy & Planning, Natural Lands Trust. He will be presenting a talk titled "Climate Change in the Watershed." In addition, special sessions on climate change and its impact on watersheds are included in our 2009 program.

Register by Friday, February 20th, 2009, to qualify for the \$40 Early Registration Fee. After February 20th, the Registration Fee increases to \$50 per person. For more information, call 215-369-1188 or go to the Calendar page at www.delawareriverkeeper.org. **The Congress is held rain, snow or shine.**

What are people saying about the Schuylkill Watershed Congress?

Great job again with the Congress! It's so high quality with such a diverse group of people. I always get a lot out of it . . . *The keynote address and the sessions I attended were informative, well presented, and had a number of good questions from the audience . . .* Another great job. Each year I learn more things about my favorite topics . . . *Thank you for your hard work in pulling together an excellent program and a flawless conference . . .* My organization was delighted to have an exhibit table. It was a great opportunity to get information out . . . It was especially nice to get such good exposure.