

Springs & Sinks

A Newsletter of the Spring Creek Watershed Community

Exchange Visit Now Available on Video

A colorful and informative 58-minute video of last September's International Country-side Stewardship Exchange in the Spring Creek Watershed has been completed and is now available for viewing.

It will be shown to the public by WPSX-TV at an early date. Meanwhile, it can be borrowed at the Centre County Library and Schlow Memorial Library in State College, which have received free copies. Personal copies may be purchased from the ClearWater Conservancy at \$10 each, with proceeds to benefit the Spring Creek Watershed Community.

The documentary, "Spring Creek: Living in a Watershed", was produced by Agricultural Information Services of the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences. It presents a day-by-day account of the international study team's visit, from their arrival at a welcoming reception Sept. 13 through their final report to the public at Bellefonte High School Sept. 19 and departure from the area next morning.

The camera accompanies them on tours of the watershed, including a visit to major water sources, sinkholes, and other hydrogeologic points of interest with Dr. Richard Parizek of Penn State, and a train ride with the public along Spring Creek. It looks in on their meetings with county and municipal officials, farmers, industrialists, University officials, high school students and others, and some brainstorming sessions at their temporary residence in Bellefonte as they put together the final report.

The documentary is sprinkled with interviews of citizens knowledgeable about the watershed. It was written, directed, and narrated by Steve Williams, Penn State Ag Information Services, with videography by Tom Cherry and Kristi Price.

Members of the Spring Creek Watershed Community got a special preview of the

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Commission Urges County to Apply For State Funds to Manage Stormwater



IN ITS FIRST OFFICIAL ACTION, the new Spring Creek Watershed Commission voted unanimously February 25 to request Centre County to apply to the State for funds to develop a stormwater management plan for the watershed.

County Planning Director Bob Donaldson explained that the grant application would be a two-step process, the first step being a letter of intent to be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The second part, he said, involves a more in-depth application for "a Phase I, which includes collecting existing background data and developing an agreed-upon scope of work." DEP has expressed a high level of interest in the project because of the Community's involvement in the watershed.

This was the second meeting for the Watershed Commission, which was organized January 28 and consists of the Centre County Commissioners and one elected official each from the 14 municipalities in the Spring Creek watershed.

Prior to the action taken on the stormwater management plan, each municipal official on the commission was asked to vote on his or her priority item for the commission. Stormwater management was the highest vote receiver, with

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Stronger Links Sought with Watershed Localities

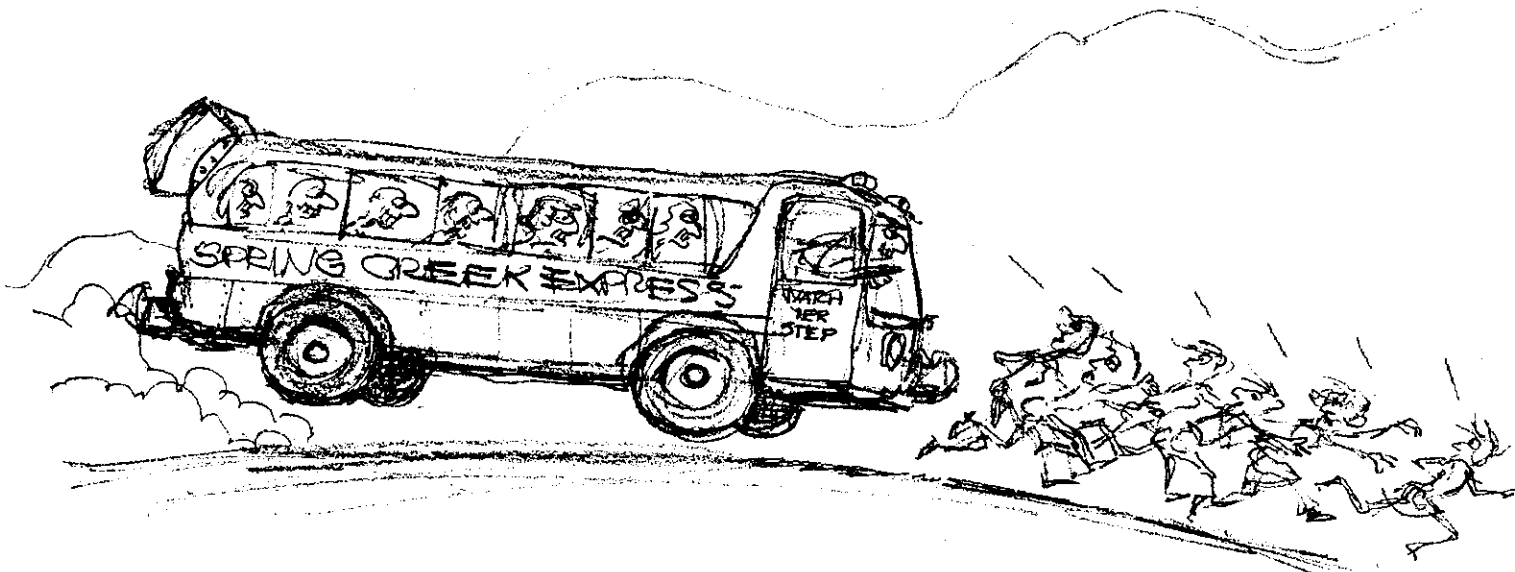
The Spring Creek Watershed Community is seeking to establish closer contact with local governments and community organizations in the watershed through the formation of a Liaison Committee of volunteers from those governmental jurisdictions.

The volunteers will be asked to attend local meetings on an as needed basis and report back to the Watershed Community's Liaison Coordinator on actions taken or proposed that may affect the watershed. In turn, they will report to local governments

and organizations on the broader Watershed Community activities that may be of interest to them.

Linda Marshall of Centre Hall, a member of the Coordinating Committee, has been asked to organize the liaison effort. She requests that volunteers from the 14 municipalities in the watershed who are interested in becoming an important communication link for their community contact her at 364-1031.

The municipalities are Milesburg, Bellefonte, Centre Hall, and State College boroughs, and Benner, Boggs, College, Ferguson, Halfmoon, Harris, Patton, Potter, Spring, and Walker townships. ♣



"We could be run over by a bus and the community would still have gotten much out of the Exchange, just by planning for it."
Jennifer Wilson, United Kingdom Watershed Expert

A Watershed Community Emerges

By CAREN E. GLOTFELTY

IN APRIL, 1996, the Board of Commissioners of Centre County, Pennsylvania, announced that the Spring Creek watershed had been selected to host a team of experts through the International Countryside Stewardship Exchange. The chief question on the minds of the reporters covering the meeting was, "Why do we need outside experts to come to our area to tell us what to do?"

It was a valid question. The Spring Creek watershed is home to The Pennsylvania State University. The presence of Penn State professors, students, and resident university graduates with scientific and professional expertise, means that Spring Creek is one of the most studied bodies of water in the world. One might reasonably suppose that knowledge about the creek would translate into actions to protect it, but so far those actions have been as fragmented as the fourteen separate municipalities which share the Spring Creek watershed. In Pennsylvania the ultimate authority and responsibility to plan for growth and to manage land use is delegated to each of the more than 2500 individual municipalities in the Commonwealth. Scientists and planners don't make the political decisions about where development should and should not go; local elected officials do.

The Spring Creek watershed is about 175 square miles in size, including the entire

limestone aquifer that supplies flow to the creek. Historically, Bellefonte, a mining and manufacturing town, was the economic center of the watershed and the county. Today, Penn State's main campus, with its more than 40,000 students, dominates the area physically, economically, and culturally. The university is by far the largest employer in the watershed, whose total population numbers about 100,000 people. About 70% of the watershed's population live in the headwater portions of Spring Creek and depend on groundwater supplied from upstream wells. As Penn State continues to grow and its presence attracts new employers, the natural environment and quality of life in the watershed become more threatened.

In the Spring Creek watershed, as in most places, local officials and citizens do not tend to think of the cumulative impact of their day-to-day decisions on the water resource shared by other municipalities and citizens. In fact, most citizens don't even identify themselves as being part of the watershed, or having any direct or indirect impact on it. Yet most residents of the watershed are aware of the scenic and recreational value of Spring Creek itself, care very much about it, and want to see it protected for the future.

The organizers of the International Countryside Stewardship Exchange to the Spring Creek Watershed saw the Exchange primarily as an opportunity to increase the visibility of Spring Creek, and to make local residents and officials understand the threats to it. In fact, that is exactly what happened. As Exchange Team member, Jennifer Wilson, put it at the beginning of the

Exchange Week, "We could be run over by a bus and the community would still have gotten much out of the Exchange, just by planning for it."

International Countryside Stewardship Exchanges have been organized for more than ten years by the Countryside Institute, based in New York. Initially Exchanges took place primarily between towns in New England and Great Britain. In recent years, the Countryside Institute has broadened its scope to include other European countries, Canada, and the rest of the United States. In 1994, several agencies and organizations involved with the Chesapeake Bay collaborated to sponsor Exchanges simultaneously in three communities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These 1994 Exchanges to communities in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, were so successful that the same organizations, led by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, decided to undertake a second Baywide Exchange in 1996.

The ClearWater Conservancy, a Centre County based land trust and conservation organization, submitted the initial application to host the Pennsylvania Exchange in the Spring Creek watershed. Even during the preparation of the application, it was clear that there was a broad base of support for such an endeavor among governmental and nongovernmental interests alike in the Spring Creek watershed. Somehow the idea that we might be able to get a fresh perspective on our community was tantalizing.

The Exchange promoters understood from the beginning that the success of the Exchange was dependent on organizing a broad-based effort to reach citizens throughout the watershed. The Local Steering

Committee for the Exchange consisted of everyone who was interested enough to attend meetings or get on the mailing list. The local Steering Committee made special efforts to reach out to constituencies or neighborhoods in the watershed that seemed to be under-represented, and to solicit participation. By the time of the Exchange in September, 1996, the Local Steering Committee mailing list included more than 500 names.

The Local Steering Committee used a facilitated process to identify the high priority issues or questions that the community wanted the Exchange Team to address. These included the need to develop a watershed-wide identity for the entire Spring Creek Watershed, to overcome the traditional antagonism among the individual municipalities that share the water resources of Spring Creek. A second issue was how to enable the communities in the watershed to come to agreement on a common future vision for the watershed. Another issue was the need to determine whether there is a carrying capacity for the water resources of the area, that is, how much growth can the watershed accommodate and still maintain the high quality of Spring Creek and its tributaries? A final issue was, what educational and implementation technologies, techniques and strategies could be used in the watershed to mitigate some of the impacts of the inevitable growth facing the watershed communities? These issues formed the basis for recruiting the Exchange Team members.

The Exchange Team included six professionals. Four were from various parts of Great Britain—a rural development specialist from Cambria, a water resources engineer from Newcastle-on-Tyne, a rural planner from Wales, and a public lands manager from Surrey. Another member was a U.S. Forest Service hydrologist from Oregon, and the sixth was a rural village protection specialist with the Maryland Environmental Trust. These team members had never met one another before meeting in Maryland for their initial orientation at the Chesapeake Bay. Twenty-four hours later they arrived in Centre County to face a crowd of well wishers with extremely high expectations. No sooner had they finished lunch and their first round of interviews with the media that would end up following them around for the entire week, than they were plunged into a practically nonstop round of briefings, tours, and meetings.

The Scheduling and Logistics Committees had struggled for most of the summer trying to make sure the Exchange Team would be exposed to all parts of the watershed and to as many points of view as possible in the community. The result was a tightly organized and very full schedule, including a tour of the hydrogeologic high points of the watershed led by Dr. Richard Parizek, an eminent Penn State professor, dinner at the Centre Furnace Mansion featuring historical photographs of Centre County, Spring Creek Day—a community event celebrating the creek, a farm tour and discussion roundtable with farmers in the watershed, a train tour of key industrial and recreational sites along Spring Creek, an art show on the theme of watersheds, a meeting with Penn State administrators, a discussion with volunteer township planning commissioners, a visit with Bellefonte High School students, and much more. At the end of the week, the Exchange Team had about 24 hours to pull together both a public presentation and a written report to leave with the community.

It seemed impossible, but the Team did it. On September 19, they presented their observations and recommendations to an audience of more than 200 citizens at the Bellefonte High School. Barbara Ellis-Sugai observed that it looked to her like the Spring Creek watershed community was “being nibbled to death” by development, which was occurring without an overall vision or plan. Elisabeth Moore suggested that the watershed community should “think really hard about what you value about the place you live in and set about protecting it.” In all, the Team presented about 60 different recommendations to the Spring Creek watershed community. Some ideas were familiar, for example, allocating more money to acquire farmland easements in the watershed. Other ideas were new and not as expensive, such as putting up signs at the edges of the watershed to let people know they are entering the Spring Creek community. Other recommendations emphasized the need to increase public awareness and understanding of the values of the watershed, to define the “carrying capacity” of the watershed, to provide for sustainable growth, to identify and protect ecologically sensitive areas, and to foster increased coordination and cooperation among municipalities. The Team stressed the need to develop a consensus vision for the watershed and cooperatively adopt mea-

asures across municipal boundaries to implement the vision. High on the Team’s list of priorities was education about watershed stewardship—in schools and of the public at large.

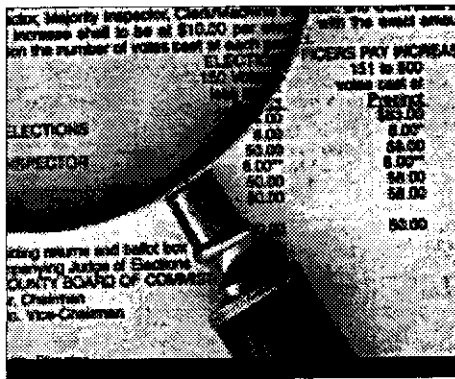
Specific ideas aside, perhaps the most important thing to come out of the International Countryside Stewardship Exchange to the Spring Creek Watershed was a growing sense of the watershed municipalities as a community. When the organizing effort for the Exchange began, participants were careful to use the term “Spring Creek watershed communities”, out of a sensitivity to the concern that the watershed initiative was just another attempt at consolidation or regional government. After the Exchange, however, more and more people are referring to the “Spring Creek watershed community”—a subtle change in terminology possibly reflecting a subtle change in attitude about the importance of cooperative action for the watershed’s future.

Several months after the Exchange interest is still high in the Spring Creek watershed community. The Centre County Commissioners have begun to create a Spring Creek Watershed Commission, composed of an elected official from each of the 14 municipalities in the watershed and the County. In addition, the citizen-based Local Steering Committee has begun to reorient itself toward implementation of some of the Exchange Team’s recommendations. A committee to get signs erected at the boundaries of the watershed has already made progress. The ClearWater Conservancy has applied for several grants to keep the watershed initiative going.

With the benefit of hindsight, now that the Exchange is over, the Spring Creek watershed community understands that Jennifer Wilson was right—the Exchange Team could have been run over by a bus and the community would still have benefited tremendously from the Exchange. The real values of the Exchange were the opportunities it provided to bring the community together to plan for an event and to raise the visibility of Spring Creek to the citizens in the watershed who will determine its future.



Caren Glotfelty is currently the Goddard Chair, School of Forest Resources, Penn State University. She was previously Deputy Secretary for Water Resources in the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. This article was first published in Sylvan Communities and is reprinted with permission.



Magnifying the Legal Notice

By JIM LOUGHRAN

Under the newspaper heading of Legal Notices you will find in small-sized type your personal invitation to participate in government. It's well worth your time to read it if you want to have any say in what your local government is doing.

In the form of delicately printed legal notices, you recently were invited to attend this year's scheduled meetings of local and regional government boards, councils, commissions, authorities, and advisory committees.

The Centre County Planning Commission, the Centre County Airport Authority, the Centre County Solid Waste Authority, and the Penn State Board of Trustees also extended finely printed invitations to their meetings.

If you misplaced your invitation, you can call the appropriate office or agency for meeting places, dates, and times. And if it's not possible for you to attend these meetings personally, you will find the Legal Notice Column the next best way to keep informed. In tiny print, they will give you:

- 1) announcements of public hearings,
- 2) solicitations for professional consultation,
- 3) invitations for public comment,
- 4) invitations for final comment,
- 5) announcements for a vote to adopt,
- 6) announcements for enactment, and
- 7) announcements for considering variances and challenges.

Since January 1st, for example, you've been invited to: attend water system regionalization meetings between Boggs Township, Milesburg Borough, and Unionville Borough; discussion of municipal planning issues and options between the "Inner Valley" municipalities; the organizing meeting of the new Spring Creek Watershed Commission; comment on

options for improving Route 26; review a proposed flood control plan for Fishing Creek and Cedar Run; and review and comment on a request to amend a Deep Mine Permit to allow for expanding an existing surface groundwater injection pipeline system.

The purpose of this article is to encourage the Spring Creek Watershed Community to look around at the ongoing activities of government, to appreciate how these activities interconnect and relate to the watershed, and to accept the invitation to participate in government. ♣

Jim Loughran, a member of the Watershed Community and an avid reader of fine-print legal notices, has agreed to help us keep an eye out for those of particular interest to the Community and to magnify them in future issues of Springs & Sinks. In the meantime, you may wish to take a look yourself to be within time limits for responding.

Sinkhole Cleanup Set

The Sinkhole Watch Committee has located a large sinkhole west of Harner's farm in Ferguson Township with a fair number of trash items like tires, barrels, and refrigerators in it. Mr. Grau, the property owner, has agreed to a cleanup project.

The cleanup is planned for Saturday, April 19, as a joint project of the Sierra Club and the ClearWater Conservancy. The committee will call for volunteers in late March. Interested persons may contact Gert Aron at 466-6067, Stan Smith at 466-6087, or Tim White at 364-2432. ♣

Grant Approved for Watershed Signs

The Centre County Community Foundation has announced a grant of \$4500 to help the Spring Creek Watershed Community erect signs identifying the boundaries of the watershed. It is half the estimated amount needed by the Watershed Sign Committee, chaired by Jim McClure, to do the job. The ClearWater Conservancy applied for the grant on behalf of the Sign Committee. The grant award will be officially presented by a member of the Foundation Board at an upcoming roundtable meeting of the Spring Creek Watershed Committee. Our special thanks to the Centre County Community Foundation for their support of this initiative by the Watershed Community. ♣

Penn State & County Cited For Recycling Excellence

The tons of trash recycled after Penn State football games and tailgate parties earned the University and the Centre County Solid Waste Authority a 1996 Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence.

The Beaver Stadium joint recycling effort with the County increased from 4 tons recycled in 1990 to 34 tons last year and from a few rarely used drop-off sites outside the stadium to a streamlined system of 23 stations in key tailgate areas to recycle steel and aluminum cans and plastic and glass containers.

Many of the stations feature "one-stop shopping" consisting of a compartmentalized recycling bin, a trash dumpster, and a portable restroom facility. Of the 23 stations, 17 are staffed by local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

The University and County partnership to expand Beaver Stadium recycling and showcase it as a concerted effort by public, private, and volunteer groups was joined by a local scrap dealer, the Steel Recycling Institute, and the Glass Packaging Institute.

The effort is unique among universities in the country. Although Pennsylvania has a statewide goal of 25 percent recycling by 1998, Penn State is already recycling at a 41 percent rate. It has avoided over \$2400 in garbage tipping fees, reduced man hours by 15 percent for postgame cleanups, saved approximately \$6,283, and earned \$11,019 which was donated to the United Way of Centre County.

Congratulations to Penn State and the Solid Waste Authority for this splendid environmental achievement. Similar 1996 Governor's awards to watershed-based recipients Atotech and UAJA were reported in last month's issue of Springs and Sinks.

Used Motor Oil Collection

Look for an announcement day in May for the Centre County Solid Waste Authority's semiannual collection of used motor oil. As Joanne Shafer, Recycling Coordinator for the Authority, says, "It only takes one gallon of motor oil to contaminate a million gallons of water. There are so many ways to dispose of it properly that there's no reason not to." ♣

Elemental Mercury Pickup Planned

An opportunity to dispose of the highly toxic material, elemental mercury, will be offered in March by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Williamsport. The pickup can be scheduled with DEP by homeowners, schools, and businesses by telephoning 717-327-3636

Elemental mercury is most common in thermometers, but it also can be found in other sources. Years ago, children freely played with mercury, enjoying its unusual liquid characteristics. This practice ceased when the toxicity of mercury was fully realized. However, experts estimate it still exists in a number of places. It should not be disposed of in a sanitary landfill, a septic system, or the sewage.



A Wise Citizen Knows His or Her Own Planners

Local planning commissions play a key role in our lives, advising municipal governments where to run highways and create residential, business, and recreational areas. Few of us know just who these key members of the local power structure are, yet they are vital to the protection of our watershed in the face of ongoing development and land-use decisions.

As a service to our readers, we publish this list of planning commission members within the Spring Creek watershed. A number of them played important roles in the 1996 Stewardship Exchange and are helping carry out its recommendations. Please urge your local members to stay on top of developments in the Spring Creek watershed as they review and work on community planning projects.

- **Centre County** (Bob Donaldson, Director). John Auman, Bellefonte, Chair. Ronald Carver, Julian, Vice Chair. J. Carroll Dean, State College, Secretary. Mercer Bristow, State College. Robert Corman, Centre Hall. James Cramer, Snow Shoe. Jack Graffius, Philipsburg. Dan Harner, State College. Lowell Krape, Bellefonte.
- **Centre Region** (Bob Bini, Director). Charles Brueggebor, Penn State, Chair. Ron Buckalew, Harris, Vice-Chair. Bryce Boyer, Patton. Michele Ebaugh, College. Bob Eberhart, Halfmoon. Robert Friedman, State College. Ralph Wheland, Ferguson.
- **Bellefonte Borough**. Richard Ulrich,

President. Dean Scholl, Secretary. Robert Dannaker, Gary Fleisher, Dennis Meleshenko.

- **Benner Township**. Joe Schultz, Chairman. Dave Breon, Vice-Chair. Robert Fugate, Secretary. Fred Gay, Steve Porter, Tim Robinson. Ken Williamson.
- **Boggs Township**. Delbert Meeker, Chair. Paul Deering, Vice-Chair. Ron DeHaas, Secretary. Thomas Poorman, Robert Rhein.
- **Centre Hall Borough**. Joe Hammaker, Chair. John Martz, Secretary. Robert Rahauser, Doug Royer, Ray Hankinson.
- **College Township**. Ron Weis, Chair. Donald Joyce, Vice-Chair. Judith Larkin, Secretary. Al Barbour, Michele Ebaugh, Frederick Kissinger, Stanley Smith.
- **Ferguson Township**. (Cassandra Schmick, Community Planner). Lindsey Kiefer, Chair. Lamartine Hood, Vice Chair. Nathan Hartwig, Secretary. Ralph Wheland, David Witmer, Randy Kramkowski.
- **Halfmoon Township**. Bob Eberhart, Chair. John Stevens, Vice-Chair. Nancy Vanlandingham, Secretary. James F. Andrews, Rob Brooks, Bradley W. Karch, D. J. Liggett, Timothy Tressler.
- **Harris Township**. Paul Weener, Chair. Ron Buckalew, Vice-Chair. Davies Bahr, Edward Benner, Lisa Berkey, Ruth Corter, J. Garry McShea.
- **Milesburg Borough**. Donald Ammerman, Boyd McCartney, Mike Kresovich.
- **Patton Township**. Robert Barlock, Chair. James Rogers, Vice-Chair. Bryce Boyer, Connie Cavalier, Ken Martin, Seydar Rahman.
- **Potter Township**. Tom Sharer, Chair. Tim White, Vice-Chair. Craig Weidensaul, Secretary. Robert Corman, John Dunkleberger, Linda Marshall, Wade Wolfe.
- **Spring Township**. Rodney Musser, Chair. Don Boob, Vice-Chair. Michael Bonchack, Edith Gordon, Thomas Harris, Martin Mattocks, Mary Jane Ramish.
- **State College Borough** (Carl Hess, Director). Drew Hyman, Chair. Ginny Chuba, Vice-Chair. Rae Chambers, Robert Friedman, Peter Hulbert, Jackie Melander, Paul Rigby. ♣

Grant Sought to Expand 1994 Corridor Study

The ClearWater Conservancy has applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for a "Rivers

Conservation Planning Grant". ClearWater's proposal requests \$50,000 from the state in order to extend the work begun in the 1994 Spring Creek Corridor Study to all tributaries of the watershed, most notable being Buffalo Run and Logan Branch. From the proposed work, which includes an inventory and analysis of issues throughout the stream areas, a conservation plan for all of the waterways of the watershed would be generated.

ClearWater sought support from each of the municipalities of the watershed in the form of letters of support or resolutions acknowledging the proposal and its intent. Special thanks goes to the Centre County Board of Commissioners, Benner Township Supervisors, and the Patton Township Supervisors for passing resolutions in support of the rivers conservation planning grant proposal. Also thanks to Potter Township, Spring Township, State College Borough, Harris Township, Ferguson Township, Bellefonte Borough, Centre Region COG, Centre County Planning, Centre Region Planning, and Coming Asahi for officially registering support for the project via letters of support. Extensive professional services are being donated as the local in-kind contribution to match the potential state funds by the Department of Landscape Architecture, Penn State University, and Landstudies, Inc. ♣

Exchange Visit Video

Continued from page 1

video at their Feb 13th monthly roundtable meeting in Pleasant Gap, with showings both before and after the business meeting at the Vo Tech Center. It was also seen by attendees at a ClearWater Conservancy membership dinner Feb. 10.

Copies may be ordered from the ClearWater Conservancy by telephone at 814-237-0400 or by mail at P.O. Box 163, State College, PA 16804. Checks for \$10 per copy should be made payable to the ClearWater Conservancy.

In addition to State College and Bellefonte public libraries, free copies of the video are being made available to classroom teachers of students learning about the Spring Creek watershed in schools.

The documentary was funded by the Maurice K. Goddard Chair, PSU Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources. ♣

Commission Urges County to Apply For State Funds to Manage Stormwater

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streambank protection and education also receiving votes.

Related to the proposed initiation of a watershed-wide stormwater management plan was a discussion brought to the table by College Township Watershed Commissioner Elfrieda Persic which centered on a proposed stormwater evaluation for the Shiloh Road drainage area (or sub-watershed). With Pennsylvania Senator Doyle Corman's involvement, College Township has initiated a cross jurisdictional discussion between several agencies, groups, College and Benner Township, relative to how stormwater in the vicinity of the Walmart, Sam's Club, and any future new development may impact the area. While the Commission did not take action on this item, Benner Township Watershed Commissioner Helen Alters stated that she would inform her board of the possibility of the project.

Stormwater management was also selected by the Spring Creek Watershed Community last fall as a high priority item. "Stormwater in our watershed is a big issue that clearly requires governmental involvement and action; we should be pleased by the Commission's selection of stormwater management as their priority issue," said Kristen Saacke Blunk, Coordinator of the ClearWater Conservancy.

The Commission is an outgrowth of the 1996 Spring Creek International Country-side Stewardship Exchange, which cited fragmented government as a major obstacle to protection and sustainable use of the area's natural resources.

The Watershed Commission was initiated by Vicki Wedler, Chairman of the Centre County Commissioners, in response to that complaint. She welcomed the group to its first meeting at the Centre County Courthouse and submitted a mission statement with three major objectives:

- To establish a long-range vision for the watershed that represents a consensus of thoughts and ideals commonly shared by its people.
- To perform a leadership role in advancing and coordinating projects and programs consistent with that long-range vision.

A BROOK IN THE CITY

The farmhouse lingers, though averse to square
With the new city street it has to wear
A number in. But what about the brook
That held the house as in an elbow-crook?
I ask as one who knew the brook, its strength
And impulse, having dipped a finger length
And made it leap my knuckle, having tossed
A flower to try its currents where they crossed.
The meadow grass could be cemented down
From growing under pavements of a town;
The apple trees be sent to hearth-stone flame.
Is water wood to serve a brook the same?
How else dispose of an immortal force
No longer needed? Staunch it at its source
With cinder loads dumped down? The brook was thrown
Deep in a sewer dungeon under stone
In fetid darkness still to live and run—
And all for nothing it had ever done
Except forget to go in fear perhaps.
No one would know except for ancient maps
That such a brook ran water. But I wonder
If from its being kept forever under
The thoughts may not have risen that so keep
This new-built city from both work and sleep.

Robert Frost

■ To establish a long-range, comprehensive watershed management plan and a program of associated projects to protect and enhance the quality of life within the watershed.

Members of the commission are Centre County Commissioners Vicki Wedler, Keith Bierly, and Sue Mascolo and the following elected officials from boroughs and townships: Helen Alters, Benner; James Andrews, Halfmoon; John Auman, Spring; Robert Crassweller, Ferguson; Thomas Daubert, State College; Karen Drosnes, Patton; William T. Griffith, Boggs; Dennis R. Hameister, Harris; Roy Herlocker, Bellefonte; Ronald N. Lee, Walker; Elfrieda Persic, College; Chuck Salvanish, Milesburg; Ira Whiteman, Potter; and Walter Yearick, Centre Hall.

Also at their first meeting, commission members were briefed on the PSU Department of Landscape Architecture's Spring Creek Corridor Study two years ago by two of the investigators who worked on it —

Mark Battaglia and Neil Korostoff.

Tony Gerace, President of the ClearWater Conservancy, explained his organization's role in protecting Spring Creek over the years as a prelude to the 1996 International Exchange. Andy Cole, Chairman of the Coordinating Committee, Spring Creek Watershed Community, reported on the Community's preparation for the Exchange visit and the outcome of the visit itself. Caren Glofelty, a principal organizer of the Exchange, briefed commissioners on the Community's work since the Exchange, focusing on the priorities and action items slated.

The commissioners agreed to review the materials supplied them by the County Planning office and the Spring Creek Watershed Community and be prepared to present their individual township's priority action items at the commission's next meeting.

They decided to meet regularly on the fourth Tuesday of each month. ❁

Walnut Springs Park

By SALLY HEFFENTREYER

Thanks to the help of volunteers, work on the three-phase plan for Walnut Springs Park has been progressing steadily, says municipal arborist Alan W. Sam.

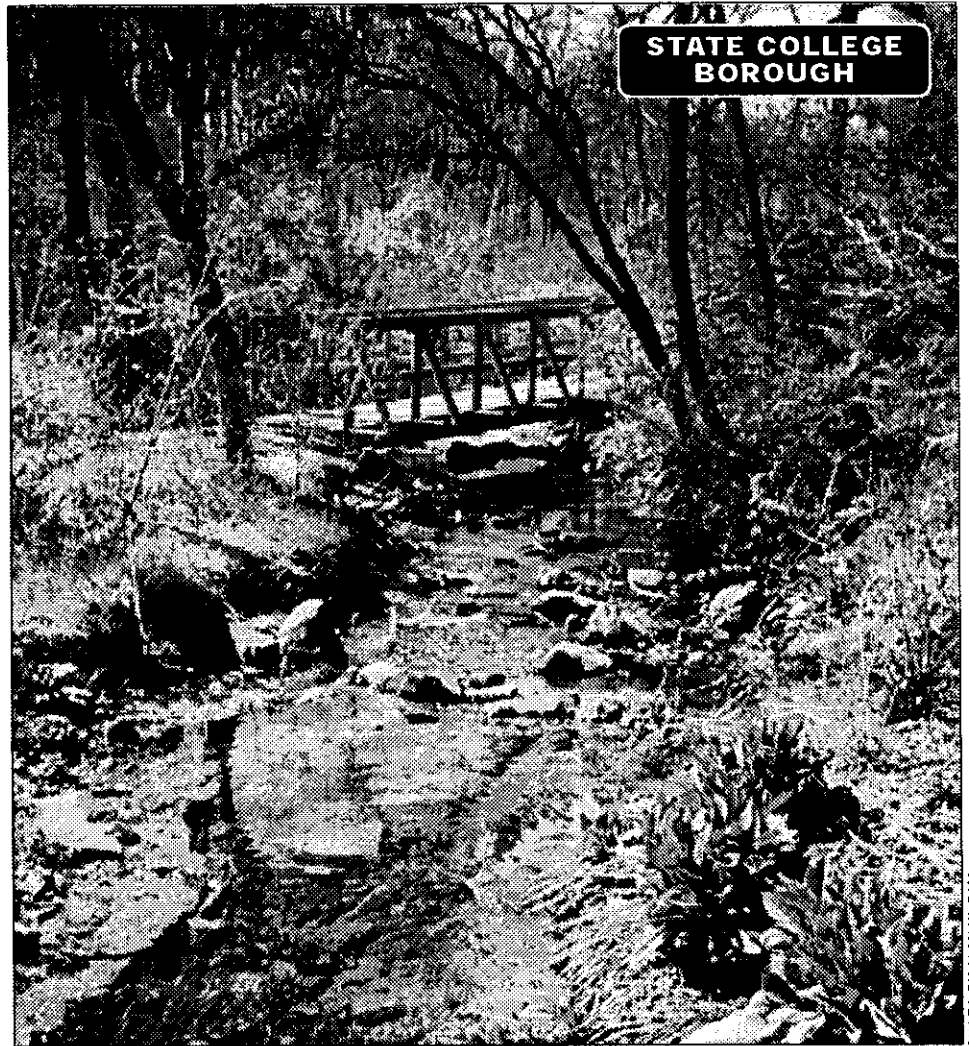
"The Penn State forestry fraternity has done a lot of trail work, plantings, seeding, and benches. They also helped with the bridge," Sam said.

During the United Way's Day of Caring this year, Sam said, between 150 and 200 people volunteered in the park, such as State College Area School District students, Penn State Intercollegiate Athletics department, and other groups.

"They all did an awful lot of work," Sam said. "Part of that—more than 1,000 feet of trail were mulched and two more trails were established. Also, a new bench was installed and the volunteers cleared a couple of the springs."

A three-phase plan for improvements at the park, a 19-acre area adjacent the intersection of University Drive and Easterly Parkway, was submitted to the Borough in 1992 by two landscape architects, under the guidance of the Borough's Walnut Springs Ad Hoc Steering Committee. The plan is designed to realize the park's potential for community use, to improve the natural environment within the park and to allow for study of the historical and cultural significance of existing structures in the park. During all three phases of the plan, the progressive improvements include clearing of brush, spring and stream clearing, trail development, plantings, bench installations, wetland development, pruning, seeding, study and restoration of historic artifacts.

Originally known as the Poorman farm, the area includes two significant springs that flow year round into Walnut Run which joins Thompson Run near Clark's Motor, crosses the Benner Pike, meanders through Millbrook Marsh and then joins Slab Cabin Creek. Remains of walls and foundations still are on the land from those early days. In the middle 1800s it became part of the Centre Furnace Farm. The land was purchased as part of a larger area by H. O. Smith in 1955 from descendents of the Thompson family. In 1966, the park area was sold to the Borough for the combined purpose of stormwater control and park



A bridge over Walnut Run was installed with help from the Penn State forestry fraternity.

uses. When work began as part of the new development plan, the park was a natural area with very few usable trails and no pedestrian bridges. Walnut trees and a thick undergrowth of shrubs made most of the park inaccessible.

Sam says the work at the park is significant for the following reasons.

- The park's two large springs have been improved by clearing areas around them.
- Walnut Run receives not only storm water runoff but also spring flow.
- The dam that is part of the storm water runoff system is being maintained regularly.
- A bypass channel has been established around one of the springs.
- The flow of water into the wetland area has been increased.
- A second wetland area has been identified, as specified in the development plan.
- Old building foundations, walls and a road bed on the site are being studied.
- The park is an important area for the study of birds.
- Invasive brush is being eliminated and

replaced with native wetland species.

- Willow and dogwood cuttings are being planted to stabilize the bank areas by the springs and Walnut Run.

As for the future, Sam says the plan is progressing well. The next steps: Completion of an access road is planned, as are the establishment of the second wetland area, creation of a new entrance sign and installation of trail markers. Some erosion problems in the channel will be mitigated as well. The study of the building foundations, walls, old township road bed and non-native vegetation will connect with historical periods to allow for cultural history interpretation. 🍁

Reprinted with permission from the Fall/Winter 1996 issue of the State College Borough Newsletter.

Background information on Walnut Springs Park was obtained from the report "Walnut Springs Park, Master Plan Study," by landscape architects Daniel Jones and Mark Battaglia and the Walnut Springs Ad Hoc Steering Committee.

The ClearWater Conservancy
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State College, PA 16804

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State College, Pennsylvania
Permit Number 239

CALENDAR

March 19, National teleconference, "Tools for Drinking Water Protection." Studio D, Mitchell Building, University Park, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. To reserve a seat please call the League of Women Voters at 867-0106

March 19, Roundtable Meeting of the Spring Creek Watershed Community, 5:30 p.m. (place to be announced)

March 23-25, Annual conference Pennsylvania Rural Water Association, Nittany Lion Inn, State College. Topics will include the '96 floods, update of DEP regulations, and others. The program is geared towards water and wastewater systems professionals and board members. Registration information: 800 653-7792. The PRWA is located at 138 W. Bishop St., Bellefonte.

March 25, Monthly Meeting of the Spring Creek Watershed Commission, Centre County Courthouse.

April 18-19. Conference on "Community as Classroom: Indigenous Knowledge, Natural Resources and Ecology." Spring Creek Case Study will be part of this teacher/student training opportunity offered by Penn State. For information, call 865-6565.

Sunday, April 20, Earth Day at the HUB lawn, featuring several watershed-based projects including the Bellefonte Middle School's Watershed Quilts and a display by the Spring Creek Watershed Community of the Exchange. Volunteers needed to staff an exhibit. Call 237-0400.

Sunday, May 18 "The Big Spring Festival", Talleyrand Park, Bellefonte. A celebration of water and all the beauty it sustains. For information call Laura Beach, Festival Coordinator, 355-1705. Volunteers needed to staff an exhibit. Call 237-0400.

About This Newsletter

Springs & Sinks is a regular newsletter of the Spring Creek Watershed Community. It will appear monthly or bimonthly, as the flow of information warrants.

Its major purpose is to inform the public and members of this organization – and also sponsors of the 1996 Spring Creek International Countryside Stewardship Exchange – about progress in implementing recommendations from the Exchange, as well as about watershed problems and developments occurring outside the scope of the Exchange.

The editors are Herb Thompson (814-234-2512) and Kristen Saacke Blunk (814-237-0400). Design and artwork is the responsibility of Jim McClure (814-237-5739). They welcome your comments and suggestions for improvements and, above all, your individual contributions to the newsletter and its exchange of information among members. The mailing address is P.O. Box 163, State College, PA 16804.