

# *Springs & Sinks*

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE SPRING CREEK WATERSHED COMMUNITY

JANUARY 2002

- From the Chair
- Central Penn Watershed Team Meeting Planned
- From Jason Bell
- Vision 2020 Update
- Water Conservation Congress
- Woody Debris Vital to Streams

## A Watershed Approach to Stormwater Management

On Nov. 13, the Centre County government unanimously approved the long-awaited Stormwater Management Plan. The plan complies with the Stormwater Act of 1978 (Act 167), which mandates the adoption of water quality standards by municipalities.

The goal of the plan is to provide all municipalities within the Spring Creek Watershed with a technically and consistent implementation procedure for comprehensive stormwater quantity and quality management. In addition, the plan provides a technical strategy for managing stormwater discharges from new land development. Since runoff does not recognize municipal boundaries, this plan will provide a consistent watershed-wide approach to stormwater management.

The Stormwater Management Plan development process began five years ago with the efforts of several advisory committees. Once the plan was prepared, a public hearing was held at the Spring Township building on Oct. 30, 2001. The public hearing committee answered questions regarding recharge provisions, water quality standards and new development impacts. Committee Chair Bob Donaldson explained that the plan includes control of quantity and flow, as well as of water quality through best management practices.

The Stormwater Management Plan includes a description of watershed characteristics, presentation of technical standards, water quality considera-

tions, economic analysis and recommendations for plan adoption and implementation.

The next step in plan implementation is Department of Environmental

Protection approval. That approval will set in motion a mandatory schedule of adoption of municipal ordinance provisions to implement the standards and criteria included in the plan.

### Forum Participants Discuss Water Supply:

## Are we running out of water?

This is a startling question to address, even if the threat is not immediate. The League of Women Voters of Centre County held a public meeting on Nov. 28 so citizens could learn about the situation and get answers to their questions. The forum panel and the standing-room-only audience fulfilled the basic purpose of bringing objective, educated, non-partisan information to the public.

The panel consisted of Max Gill and Rob Cooper, representing State College Borough Water Authority and Engineering Services of Penn State University, (the two largest water suppliers in the area); Todd Giddings, hydrogeologist; and David E. Hess, deputy secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

"We are continually becoming more aware of how much water we have and how it is used," Hess stated. "In order to protect this resource for the future, we need new legislation to update the state water plan, identify critical water planning areas, promote voluntary water conservation, improve stormwater management and establish private water well standards."

The forum provided an opportunity to gain an understanding of the area's current and future water supply, and what must be done to preserve it. The audience consisted of members of various local and state conservation groups, governmental agencies and educational institutions, as well as concerned private citizens. Co-sponsors of the forum were: Spring Creek Watershed Commission, Spring Creek Watershed Community and the Clearwater Conservancy.

In an effort to increase the outreach initiatives of the Spring Creek Watershed Community, future forums are being planned.

I read recently that the trend among columnists who get paid for writing is the "blogger" format — a disparate collection of thoughts under a number of subheads. This allows even established columnists who typically write in long format an opportunity to dash off "broad and shallow" thoughts and still fulfill their obligations. In the midst of a busy holiday season and with a looming deadline, it sounds good to me!



**Welcome to Jason Bell, Outreach and Education Coordinator**

Jason joined our staff in late October, and if you haven't met him yet, you probably will. He has already shown himself to be extremely energetic and capable, and will be a great

addition to our team. He comes to us from the Loyahanna Watershed Association, where he was serving as interim executive director. In addition to valuable experience, Jason brings with him a wide array of contacts with foundations and with other watershed organizations.

**Thanks to Centre County Historical Society**

A heartfelt thank-you to the Centre County Historical Society for sponsoring the November *Springs and Sinks*. I personally believe the preservation of historical and natural assets are closely linked, so I hope it was a mutually beneficial effort; it was certainly beneficial to us.

**Groundwater Forum at College Township Building a Success**

Many thanks to Susan Campos and the League of Women Voters for inviting us to participate in the groundwater forum Nov. 28. For more information, see the related article on Page 1.

**Quotable**

*"I love all the seasons: The snows and bare woods of winter, the rush of growing things and the blossom spray of spring, the leafy shades that are heralded by the green dance of summer, and the sharp fall winds that tear the brilliant banners with which the trees greet the dying year."*

— Theodore Roosevelt

**Closing Thoughts**

As I write this, it is two weeks after Thanksgiving, but as you read it, 2002 has begun. I write in the hope that you all are experiencing a wonderful holiday season and that the New Year is a prosperous and happy one for you.



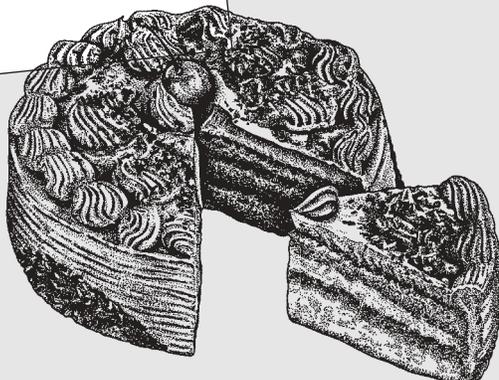
**Mark Ralston, CWC Volunteer of the Year**

Mark Ralston, Chair of the Water Resources Monitoring Committee and faithful participant in the Coordinating Committee, was honored as ClearWater Conservancy Volunteer of the Year at the ClearWater annual meeting recently. In addition to his service as noted above, Mark has been seemingly omnipresent around the offices, helping with a variety of tasks, and the award was well deserved. Thanks, Mark!



**"For the Love of Chocolate" party and fundraiser**

Penn Stater Conference Center, \$25. Featuring entertainment, raffle...and confections galore. Call 237-0400.



**About Springs&Sinks**

COORDINATORS Jason Bell, Katie Ombalski

EDITOR Tracey Dooms

LAYOUT C Factor

*Springs&Sinks* is a bimonthly publication of the Spring Creek Watershed Community. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the public about matters of interest to the Watershed Community. Although the Spring Creek Watershed Community is a major focus of the ClearWater Conservancy, views and positions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of ClearWater, or any other stakeholder group in the watershed. Your contributions to our continuing dialogue are welcome.

Send them to:

Editor, *Springs&Sinks*  
2555 North Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16803  
phone (814) 237-0400 / fax 237-4909  
email clearh2o@vicon.net

# Briefly noted...

## ■ Central Penn Watershed Team Meeting Planned

The Central Penn Watershed Team will hold its quarterly general watershed meeting on January 30 at the Patton Township Municipal Building from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Co-sponsored by the Spring Creek Watershed Community, the meeting will include reviewing potential Growing Greener project applications and a discussion on "What's New in your Watershed." There will also be an update on the Watershed's Environmental Futures Plan. Everyone is invited (there's food!).

If you plan on attending, please contact Mike Welch (Department of Environmental Protection) at [mwelch@state.pa.us](mailto:mwelch@state.pa.us) or by calling (570) 321-6525.

Thirty-four watershed teams have been established statewide to work at a regional level, and are comprised of DEP staff and key stakeholders. The Watershed Community has been actively involved since the inception of the regional Watershed Team.

## ■ Volunteer Tuesdays

Volunteer Tuesdays began on October 9. Each week the staff gathers tasks appropriate for office volunteers to accomplish on Volunteer Tuesdays.

The Spring Creek Watershed Community can always use volunteers, any day of the week. We need people who would like to help organize and mail our newsletters, carry out general office work, grant research, spreadsheets, educational material compilation, website maintenance and much more.

Volunteers are the backbone of this organization. So, if you have any special skills or just a healthy interest in environmental issues, you may enjoy volunteering with the Spring Creek Watershed Community. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, contact Angie at 237-0400 or email at [angiemitch@yahoo.com](mailto:angiemitch@yahoo.com).



## From Jason Bell, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Through tools such as *Connections*, *Springs and Sinks*, public forums, watershed boundary signs and our website, the Spring Creek Watershed Community endeavors to link all levels of the community to the natural world of the Spring Creek Watershed. The Spring Creek Watershed Community has become an effective tool for instilling and capturing enthusiasm for preservation, restoration and sound stewardship of the natural resources in the Spring Creek Watershed.

As your new education and outreach coordinator, I am eager to work with the energy and drive of the SCWC to continue to positively impact our stakeholders. I am looking forward to working with the *Connections* program, which I and many others feel is an effective tool for capturing our youth's enthusiasm for learning about the environment and how it relates to us locally and "downstream." It is through unique programs such as this that interest is naturally passed on to others.

I look forward to working with the many volunteer contributors to *Springs and Sinks*; such a magnanimous amount of knowledge and the desire to share it in one watershed is truly a blessing. Public forums will provide communication vehicles for all of those interested or concerned about Spring Creek Watershed issues by featuring topics that engage the local community. This encouragement of active participation is the lifeblood of successful community-based initiatives. Boundary signs will remind us that waterways do not abide by traditional township or municipal boundary lines and should be addressed accordingly.

Education and outreach initiatives have become an important extension of the community's awareness and concern for the state of the natural resources. I am honored to help continue this tradition, as well as to participate in collaborative efforts to develop new programs that will expand the positive impact of the Spring Creek Watershed Community.

*Jason can be reached at [jtbell71@yahoo.com](mailto:jtbell71@yahoo.com).*

A cursive handwritten signature that reads "Jason".

***"To the dull mind nature is leaden.  
To the illumined mind the whole world  
burns and sparkles with light."***

*— Ralph Waldo Emerson*



**W**ith a new year, it always seems appropriate to reflect back on all that has been accomplished recently and to look forward to the things to come. *Vision 2020: Living with I-99* is no different. The project has a great history and the potential to create a great future for this region. As the project end draws near, it is important to review how the project got started, how it proceeded and what you can expect in the months ahead.

### **History in the Making**

The *Vision 2020* project actually has its roots firmly grounded with the Spring Creek Watershed Community (SCWC), which just celebrated its fifth anniversary. In 1996, stakeholders in the newly formed SCWC began to ask questions about what would happen to the region when Interstate 99 was complete. In 1998, The SCWC, ClearWater Conservancy and Spring Creek Watershed Commission initiated the I-99 Community Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Over the course of a year, this I-99 Partnership developed a scope of work that would achieve its mission to: bring together as many different viewpoints and interests as possible to consider potential land use around I-99 interchanges in Centre County; ensure that the new I-99 enhances the quality of life,

improves or maintains the environment, and improves the economy; and reach consensus about the guidelines and principles that should govern land use and other related decisions by individuals, organizations and appropriate government bodies.

In 1999, the Spring Creek Watershed Commission, in conjunction with the I-99 Partnership, submitted a proposal — with the Centre County Board of Commissioners as the official applicant — to the Federal Highways Administration for a first-ever grant program designed to help communities deal with the cumulative impacts of major roadways. The purpose of *Vision 2020* was to work with the 23 municipalities of the Mid-Bald Eagle Watershed to develop a vision for the future and a land-use and sustainability plan to make the vision a reality. ClearWater Conservancy, given its administrative history with the Partnership, was asked to administer the project. In 2000, the state also chose to support this worthwhile project during the first round of Growing Greener by providing funding for geographic information systems assistance.

### **A Process of Community Involvement**

The first three phases of *Vision 2020* were designed to build the vision through an interactive process with the

public and municipal officials. The public dialogue began in Phase 1 — Understanding the Probable Future — during the fall of 2000 with a series of six focus groups and a mailed consensus survey. The ideas that were heard led to the development of area-wide objectives that would be used to guide the remainder of the planning process (see box).

The final product of Phase 1 was the development of a Probable Future Report and public displays in February 2001 that described the probable conditions of the region in the year 2020 with the presence of I-99 and the continuation of current public policy or trends. Specifically, the report addressed such items as: the impact of I-99 on travel time, the expected growth and development in residential and non-residential uses, and where land would be under the most pressure to be developed in the next 20 years.

This Probable Future was used to continue the public dialogue in winter 2001 with six visioning forums as part of Phase 2 — Envisioning the Ultimate Future. The public was asked to react to the Probable Future by answering the question “Where do we *want to be* regardless of cost or resources?” Many ideas emerged from the visioning forums and were the basis for the final activity in Phase 2, the consultant team’s development of the principles of the Ultimate Future, or “ideal view of the

future.” The Ultimate Future Report was developed as talking points and discussion items for the local government bodies in Phase 3 of the process. The report described four major themes: Open Space/Natural Resources, Rural/Urban Setting, Transportation, and Economic and presented many principles which could be applied within the study area.

In Phase 3 — Building the Consensus Vision — we worked with municipal officials during a series of workshops to further develop the ideas brought forth by the community. Officials evaluated the consultant’s Ultimate Future information and determined where the principles could be applied within the watershed to arrive at a future that is realistic, achievable and acceptable for the local communities. Phase 3 resulted in the creation of the Sustainable Future Report (see *Springs and Sinks*, September 2001, for details).

Approximately 550 people participated directly in Phases 1 to 3, and tens of thousands more received information through the randomly mailed survey, newspaper tabloid inserts in the *Centre Daily Times* and *Lock Haven*

*Express*, and displays placed throughout the community.

### **Making the Vision a Reality**

The fourth and final phase of *Vision 2020* — Preparing an Implementable Land-Use and Sustainability Plan — focuses on creating a tool kit of strategies that may be utilized to attain the sustainable future and meet the area-wide objectives at the local, multi-municipal and regional level. Four Technical Advisory Committees (Growth Management; Design; Conservation, Preservation & Protection; and Economic & Organization), consisting of municipal and citizen experts from a variety of backgrounds, met in October and November to review, modify and prioritize 47 strategies developed from Phases 1 to 3, aimed at achieving the vision.

The work of the TACs is being used in conjunction with all other information collected to date to create the final product for our project — The Land-Use and Sustainability Plan. The plan will provide a detailed reference for the *Vision 2020* process itself and a summary of the recommendations arising from the process. It will

contain a strategies notebook that provides enough details for communities to pick up the tools and implement them.

As we near the end of the *Vision 2020* process, we have two major events left in the schedule: a municipal officials’ review and discussion on Jan. 24 and the public unveiling of the plan on Feb. 26. The municipal meeting will give local officials one last chance to provide input on the plan as it is being written. Please let your municipal officials know that you support this project, and encourage them to participate! Then in February, we will reveal what you and your community can do to achieve a better future.

The final plan will be a “recipe” to help us achieve the vision for a sustainable future. But this vision won’t become a reality without your help! Whether you are a municipal official, business owner or private citizen, your support and energy are needed to make sure these tools are utilized in the decisions that you, your municipality, organizations or agencies make. Any kind of maintenance of the aspects we cherish about this community or change toward a more desirable future will take commitment, time and resources from all parts of the community. It all starts with YOU! Make 2002 the year in which you make a commitment to guide the future of our local communities.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Roxanne Shiels (rcshiels@yahoo.com), project director, or Julie Nelson (jednelson@yahoo.com), project assistant, at the ClearWater Conservancy (814) 237-0400. For more details on the project, including past reports, check out our website at [www.I-99vision2020.org](http://www.I-99vision2020.org).

***Public participation is an integral part of the success of the Vision2020: Living with I-99 project.***





## Area-Wide Objectives

- Forested areas will be preserved.
- Personal safety will be maintained.
- Water will be clean and plentiful.
- Jurisdictions will be able to provide and maintain necessary services.
- Roadway safety will be improved.
- Residents will have enhanced access without exploiting scenic and rural areas.
- Boroughs and villages will thrive economically.
- Economic opportunities will expand.
- Farming will remain viable.
- Minimizing of noise pollution will improve.
- Minimizing of air pollution will improve.
- Fish and wildlife populations will not decline.
- Important natural resource areas will be maintained.
- The character of rural areas will not change.
- Municipalities and community members will work together to resolve common issues.
- Efficient public transit systems will exist.
- Traffic congestion will be minimized.
- Commuting times will be reduced.
- Traffic will be reduced, and safety will improve on SR 3040 (formerly PA 220).
- Traffic will be reduced, and safety will improve on PA 150.
- Tourism will grow.

## Mark Your Calendar!

### ■ Thursday, January 24

“Guiding I-99’s Effects: A Discussion and Review for Municipal Officials,”

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Mt. Nittany Middle School.

### ■ Tuesday, February 26

“The Final Vision — Living with I-99: What Your Community Can Do.”

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Mt. Nittany Middle School.

## Our Vision for the Sustainable Future

*“Our future generations will experience a quality of life enhanced by economic diversity, a healthy environment, distinct communities and an efficient transportation system.”*

# Water Conservation Congress Held at Penn Stater

On behalf of Pennsylvania Gov. Mark Schweiker, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary David E. Hess outlined the Administration’s new water resources initiative designed to inventory and protect Pennsylvania’s water resources from overuse. Secretary Hess discussed the water resources initiative at the first-ever Water Conservation Congress held at the Penn State Conference Center, State College.

“Water is one of our most pre-

cious resources,” Secretary Hess said. “It is vital to our economy and to natural systems and habitats, yet we know little about how much water we have and how it’s used. Proposed legislation will allow us to better manage our water resources by laying a foundation of solid information on which we can make decisions.

The Water Conservation Congress drew more than 150 representatives from agriculture; industry; local, state and federal government;

bottled water supply industries; and the building and land-developing industries.

Attendees provided input on innovative practices currently in use to conserve water, while also addressing existing constraints that inhibit water conservation. Participants also discussed ways to overcome obstacles and exchanged ideas on making water conservation a top priority and an environmental ethic in Pennsylvania.

# Woody Debris Vital to Streams

A stream and the land it flows through are interconnected and dependent on each other. They comprise a complete ecosystem and must be managed as one. Limbs, entire felled trees, and root wads are considered woody debris. An important part of managing this ecosystem is knowing when to leave woody debris in a stream or when to remove it.

Woody debris in streams has an important influence on stream processes. In the recent past it was considered an acceptable practice to keep stream channels “clean” by cutting brush from the stream banks and removing woody debris from the channel. Although these efforts seem pleas-

ing to the human eye, they prove detrimental to the aquatic environment. Woody debris and other vegetative matter that enters the stream channel is an important and necessary part of the aquatic ecosystem. This material serves as a primary food source as well as habitat for many organisms on the lower end of the food chain. Larger woody debris helps to form and shape the stream channel and creates variability in habitat types. This often makes some of the best trout habitat there is and cannot be easily duplicated.

There can be, of course, negative effects caused by woody debris. While woody debris provides many benefits

to the stream ecosystem, individual debris jams may increase erosion or endanger roadways, bridges or personal property. In cases like these, it may be necessary to remove part or all of the jam to alleviate the problem. Removal decisions are subjective and should be made on a case-by-case basis, ultimately removing only what’s necessary. In wild areas, it can be argued to allow woody debris to continually shape and change a stream channel as a natural process without interference.

*Compiled using information from:  
PA Fish and Boat Commission*

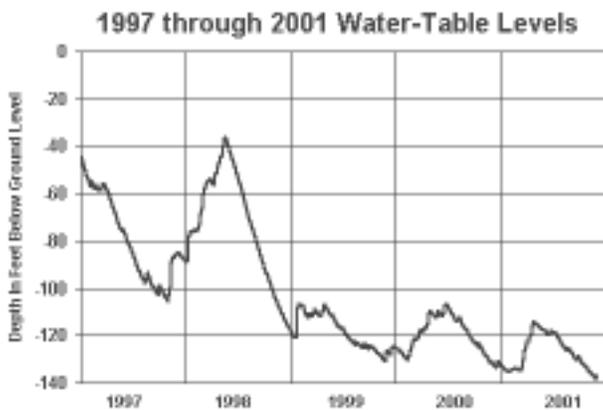


**The ClearWater Conservancy**  
2555 North Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16803  
phone: 814-237-0400  
www.springcreekwatershed.org

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
State College, Pennsylvania  
Permit Number 239

*January 2002*

## *The drought continues...*



# *Springs&Sinks* CALENDAR

**Jan. 16**, Wednesday, 7–9am  
Coordinating Committee of  
the Spring Creek Watershed  
Community, ClearWater  
office, 2555 N. Atherton St.  
Call 237-0400.

**Jan. 22**, Tuesday, 5:30–8pm  
Spring Creek Watershed  
Commission meeting, Willow-  
bank Building, Bellefonte.  
Call 234-0700.

**Jan. 24**, Thursday, 7–9pm  
“Guiding I-99’s Effects: A Dis-  
cussion and Review for Munic-  
ipal Officials,” Mt. Nittany  
Middle School. Call 234-0700.

**Jan. 25**, Friday  
“For the Love of Chocolate”  
party and fund-raiser, Penn

Stater Conference Center.  
Call 234-0700.

**Jan. 30**, Wednesday,  
5:30–7:30pm  
Central Penn Watershed  
Team general meeting, Pat-  
ton Township Municipal  
Building, co-sponsored by the  
Spring Creek Watershed  
Community. RSVP to Mike  
Welch (Department of Envi-  
ronmental Protection) at  
mwelch@state.pa.us or (570)  
321-6525.

**Feb. 16**, Saturday, 12–2pm  
Guided Nature Center Visit,  
Shaver’s Creek Environmental  
Center, for ages 6 to 10, \$4  
nonmembers/\$3 members.  
Call 863-2000 to register.

**Feb. 17**, Sunday, 12–3pm  
Brownie Girl Scout “Animals”  
Try-It, Shaver’s Creek Envi-  
ronmental Center, \$6 per  
Scout, including cost of  
badge. Call 863-2000 to regis-  
ter.

**Feb. 20**, Wednesday, 7–9am  
Coordinating Committee of  
the Spring Creek Watershed  
Community, ClearWater  
office, 2555 N. Atherton St.  
Call 237-0400

**Feb. 23**, Saturday, 12–3pm  
Brownie Girl Scout “Outdoor  
Adventurer” Try-It, Shaver’s  
Creek Environmental Center,  
\$6 per Scout, including cost  
of badge. Call 863-2000 to  
register.

**Feb. 24**, Sunday, 12–3pm  
Brownie Girl Scout “Senses”  
Try-It, Shaver’s Creek Envi-  
ronmental Center, \$6 per  
Scout, including cost of  
badge. Call 863-2000 to regis-  
ter.

**Feb. 26**, Tuesday, 5:30–8pm  
Spring Creek Watershed  
Commission meeting, Willow-  
bank Building, Bellefonte.  
Call 234-0700.

**Feb. 26**, Tuesday, 7–9pm  
“The Final Vision — Living  
with I-99: What Your Commu-  
nity Can Do,” Mt. Nittany  
Middle School. Call 234-0700.