

# Centre County Senior Environmental Corps Newsletter November 2019

## PSU begins chemical lab analyses for our Marcellus teams



Dr. K (center) and Team 13 survey Beech Creek Oct 14

Dr. Khalequzzaman (Dr. K), Lock Haven University, Professor of Geosciences, informed us that his Lab had to terminate his community service program at the end of August for analyzing water from the Beech Creek Watershed due to discontinuance of their grant from the Degenstein Foundation. Dr. K encouraged us to continue our investigation of the Beech Creek Watershed. Dr. Brantley, Distinguished Professor of Geosciences at PSU noted our dilemma in our September newsletter, offered to help.

We met with Dr. Brantley and Dr. K with our Marcellus team leaders, Dave Truesdale and Dan DeLotto, our president, Lou Mayer and Ken Johnson on October 8, 2019 and worked out a plan for PSU to do the laboratory analyses of our water samples. Each Marcellus team is collecting water samples at four of the 24 Beech Creek Watershed sites each month. They may also conduct further tests. Dr. Brantley might get the info from other CCPaSEC teams.

The Penn State ICP-AES lab. measure the “geologic suite” of cations, as well as pH; and may be able to measure conductivity and alkalinity in the future.

Our Marcellus teams delivered our first water samples to the PSU lab on October 15th. Laura Jean met us at the curb so we did not need to look for a parking location. **Thank you, Laura Jean.**

***We are grateful of Dr. K's and Dr. Brantley's help and are hopeful the new synergy with PSU, LHU, CCPaSEC and Trout Unlimited will lead to a greater understanding by our community leaders of the condition of our water resources and the need to protect our environment.***

### Our Centre County PaSEC perseveres

CCPaSEC obtained help for equipment and supplies when Gary Moorman offered to write grant applications and took responsibility for the final drafts and be the contact person. Gary notes that “Betsy, Dan, Lou, Rob and others including Deb Nardone of the ClearWater Conservancy contributed to the preparation and submittal of the grant applications in behalf of CCPaSEC”.

They were successful in obtaining monies from:

- Dominion Energy and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.
- PIG Difference, a charitable initiative to salute our customers' passion for protecting habitats and preserving wildlife.
- Patagonia for the protection of water resources in Centre County.
- Centre Gives 2019 donors who contributed to CCPaSEC through the Clearwater Conservancy.

***We thank our supporters and the Centre County Gazette, Town&Gown and Centre Daily times for their support in publicizing our need and activities.***

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## Sparrow Run – Trout Unlimited

Trout Unlimited asked us to monitor Sparrow Run, a headwater stream in Taylor Township, that flows into Bald Eagle Creek. This cold-water fishery is habitat for Eastern Brook trout is now impaired. TU has received a grant to do reclamation work on the stream. This will not begin until the summer of 2020.

The objectives for this Trout Unlimited stream restoration and riparian buffer project are to improve water quality and increase habitat integrity by reducing bank erosion and sedimentation, mitigate nutrient input from agriculture and storm water runoff, and achieve IBI scores above the impairment threshold.

Sparrow Run is a small freestone stream approximately three miles south of Port Matilda and flows into Bald Eagle Creek. In its flow off the mountain, it picks up some spring water which helps to support some brook trout. In the fall it becomes quite shallow other than some pools along its course.

Since this stream is in the vicinity of Port Matilda where Team 3 currently tests, they took the responsibility to do the testing at Sparrow Run.

On October 2<sup>nd</sup> Bob Vierck, Bob Carline, Art Kemp and Ed Jeffreys walked the stream along with the owner of the property. Over the years the stream has witnessed some rather extensive bank erosion, especially during the spring run offs.

In order to establish a baseline, we did chemical testing at two locations on the stream. We will again do chemical testing and for invertebrates (macro testing) in the spring prior to construction when the water is level is up. Initially, our plan is to do physical and chemical testing four times a year and macro testing twice a year.

- Ed Jeffreys Team 3

Help Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited fund their 2020 project on Sparrow Run.

<https://www.embraceastream.org/organizations/springcreek>

## Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Congress created the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund to help clean up this legacy pollution. The fund, which charges a small fee is set to expire in 2021. Tell your Representatives support HR4248 and reauthorize the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund.

### Please clean your boots

Keeping your boots clean will help prevent you from dispersing Gill Lice and Zebra mussels. This is especially important if your team is surveying more than one site. Gill Lice a new invasive species. Brook trout seem to be most susceptible. Gill lice infestations aren't fatal, but they can create breathing problems for trout and make survival more difficult, said Parker, who said the state has adopted a zero-tolerance policy in an effort to contain the spread of the parasites.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iY-KEyUnHxY>

## Marcellus Team 14

We were disappointed to find a burned-out bed mattress and the remains of a rusted sofa blocking our path to our sample site at Panther Run - Clubhouse Rd. They are a few feet above the stream. This is the same site where we years ago reported the rusted-out vehicle to the Centre County Conservation District. The ClearWater Conservancy sent a tow vehicle to remove the car, but determined it was no longer a threat and did not attempt to remove it.



Dan and Dave returning from Panther Run

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## Update on the Elk Run incident

CCPaSEC reported The Elk Creek Narrows measure of stream specific conductivity was 1005  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ , over two times the normal and well in excess of our 500  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ . protocol. The observation was reported to the Centre County Conservation District for further investigation who notified the Pa DEP.

Ralph and Lou Mayer met with an aquatic biologist. The actual cause cannot be determined. The biologist explained that one reason for the high readings is that streams erode on a regular basis and rocks contribute to conductivity.

The biologist recommended that when levels are above normal the team immediately take more readings to find the source of the problem going as far as 500 yards to one mile upstream (not practical for most of the CCPaSEC streams). If there is a new leak it will stay on the side of the source. Therefore, 2-3 readings should be taken across the stream as well as upstream.

- **Ralph Locklin Team 5**

## 34<sup>th</sup> Annual RSVP volunteer Luncheon

October 24, 2019: Volunteers with 12 or more volunteer hours per year and newly enrolled volunteers were invited to attend the luncheon at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center, sponsored and supported by the Centre County Board of Commissioners and the Corporation National Community Service, Senior Corps.

The turnout was excellent and CCPaSEC folks received awards.

Joyce McKay –  
Lifetime Achievement Award (5,000 hours)

Jack Rimer – 20 years of service with RSVP  
Daniel DeLotto – 10 years of service with RSVP  
Patricia DeLotto – 5 years of service with RSVP



## CCPaSEC

December 11, Holiday

Luncheon

Members are reminded to inform Loretta Jeffreys that you are planning to attend.

Our December 11 meeting will start at 9:30 in the Willowbank Building, as usual. After a short meeting we will adjourn to the Penn Stater (arriving around 11:30) for our convivial holiday luncheon. All CCPaSEC volunteers are invited and to bring a guest.

### CCPaSEC volunteers are needed:

We need new team members who can visit stream sites and to replace the few of us who have had to vacate a position.

Contact the RSVP at Centre County If you can help.



Please call Brenda or Maryanne (RSVP Centre County) if you want to help. 814 355 6816

### CCPaSEC administrative help

We could use help for tasks that do not require field work, for notifications, community involvement, help introduce new recruits, training, keep track of team membership and contact with members, data entry, technical review of our data and more.

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## Help is needed for the Spring Creek redd count

Redd counts are indicative of the abundance levels of spawning trout each year and are used to assess the status of trout populations.



John Himes, is organizing this year's redd count, which will be taking place on Sunday, November 24th from 10 AM to 3 PM at Spring Creek Park. This year's redd count will be particularly important because nearly half of last year's count was cancelled due to high water levels. The data we gather this year will be invaluable in assessing the continued health of the trout population in Spring Creek.

Jim Lanning and the VSP have generously volunteered to provide hot food, coffee, and equipment for the volunteers. Volunteers are encouraged to do their counts on the 24th, but feel free to conduct the counts whenever is convenient (as long as the fish are still spawning).

If you have any questions, contact Jim at [j.himesusc@gmail.com](mailto:j.himesusc@gmail.com).

## We need articles for our newsletter!

If you would like to contribute an article to our newsletter, or would like to discuss writing an article. Think about your last survey. Was it successful, but anomalous, perhaps a few 'uh ohs' or an oops along the way? Maybe you have a suggestion to share, if so, others would like to read about it. Photos are always welcome. Please contact the editor, Ken Johnson.

## Pennsylvania Hunting Seasons 2019-2020

**Oct. 5 - Feb. 29** The Game Commission offers a variety of hunting seasons. Volunteers are reminded to wear orange when visiting state hunting grounds and is highly recommended for all seasons.



To join CCPaSEC, call the Centre County Retired and Senior Volunteer program (RSVP) Monday thru Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

Phone 814 355 6819

To submit comments, corrections or news articles contact Ken Johnson via our website.

*"Believe deep down in your heart that you are destined to do great things" – Joe Paterno*

*Nature Abounds™ was the primary sponsor and provider of equipment and supplies for CCPaSEC. The ClearWater Conservancy and Centre County RSVP are major supporters. The following have provided additional support funding for special equipment for one field kit: Financial support for this grant is provided by the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation which is dedicated to the economic, physical, and social health of the communities served by Dominion Energy companies. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy: This grant program was administered by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership, and collaboration, Patagonia for the protection of water resources in Centre County, PIG Difference, a charitable initiative to salute our customers' passion for protecting habitats and preserving wildlife and our many individual contributors through Centre Gives.*