

# Centre County Senior Environmental Corps Newsletter September 2020



## Team 2 at Little Fishing Creek

### *Our volunteers forge on*

The coronavirus pandemic heavily impacted our monitoring this year but starting in June, some of our Centre County Senior Environmental Corps teams braved the pandemic to continue their monitoring efforts with appropriate precautions. (see page 5).

Pennsylvania does not have unlimited resources to monitor all of them. Our volunteers augment the limited state sponsored remote sensors. We are a key information resource to provide a status of conditions of many local and remotely accessible streams in the Beech Creek watershed.

Our streams and tributaries are a critical natural resource and a part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

We are a non-profit group associated with the ClearWater Conservancy and our County RSVP. We are older adults (55+). Members work in teams of 3-6, regularly visiting sites throughout the watershed to gather about 40 data points per site, including water chemistry, stream flow, riparian characteristics, and counts of macro invertebrates (twice a year). – Ken Johnson

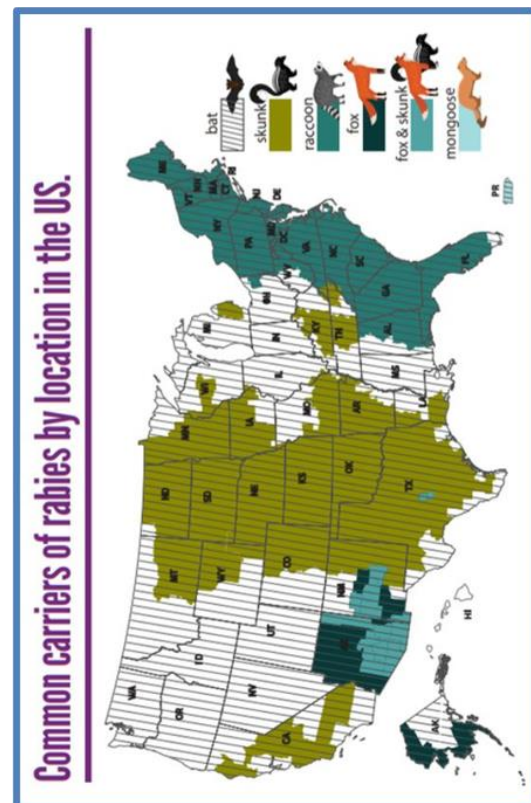
## September is tick season

Gary Moorman reported in June that he tested positive for the presence Lyme disease by the

Northeast Wildlife DNA Laboratory. Other tests were negative for the presence of *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*, *Babesia microti*, and Powassan virus Lineage II.

Report results provided by the Northeast Wildlife DNA Laboratory are in accordance with their standard procedures, terms and conditions. The test result for infectious agent screen does not rule out or confirm the presence of the agent or exposure to the patient. The result is intended to provide you and your physician or veterinarian with important information, when combined with other information, to help determine risk of exposure and subsequent clinical treatment and follow-up. They keep your tick specimen's DNA on file for two years. For free tick identification and testing for tick-borne pathogens see <https://www.ticklab.org/> - Gary Moorman (cont. page 5).

## Rabies in our Neighborhood



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**August, 5 2020: Ferguson, A wild fox injured a 3-year-old and tested positive for rabies - CDT**

Since 2000, between 350 and 500 animals are annually confirmed to have rabies in the Keystone State, according to the state Health Department. About half of animal rabies cases are raccoons, followed by skunks, cats, bats and foxes.

Infected animals may exhibit behavioral symptoms such as nocturnal animals being outside during daylight, excitability, apparent lack of fear or aggression, according to the PGC.

Anyone who witnesses an animal that might exhibit rabies symptoms should call police or the regional game commission office. Anyone who's bitten or scratched by an animal believed to be infected should seek immediate medical attention and report the incident to the state Department of Health. – *Centre Daily Times*

## Manganese

The Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board reviewed manganese studies on aquatic macroinvertebrates, fish and algae. Current science indicates that elevated manganese is toxic to aquatic organisms and included areas of epidemiology, epigenetics and animal toxicity studies.

Levels beyond those necessary to maintain adequate health, **manganese has been identified as a nervous system toxin and has been specifically linked to negative impacts on fetal and childhood neurodevelopment.**

**This proposed criterion of 0.3 mg/L** is expected to protect human health from the threshold level toxic effects of manganese (that is, developmental neurotoxicological effects) The current science indicates that **the human health criteria proposed in this rulemaking will afford**

**adequate protection for aquatic life if it is applied in all surface waters.**

Limits for **mining wastewater** effluent discharges. These manganese limits are 2.0 mg/L as a 30-day average, 4.0 mg/L as a daily maximum and **5.0 mg/L as an instantaneous maximum.** <http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov>

*Note: To date, the PSU ICP-AES Lab tests of our Marcellus water samples for Mn were well below the proposed 0.3 mg/L (milligrams per Liter) proposed health limit and protection of aquatic life.*

*Example: The August PSU Lab test results for North Fork of Beech Creek was 0.00314 mg/L and 0.00297 mg/L at South Fork of Beech Creek.*

## CCPaSEC Quality Program Update

Dr. Brantley, Penn State University, has offered to do additional water sample analyses in support of our Quality Control program. Bill and Lou will work out the details with PSU.

Laura-Jean Liesmann's Laboratory for Isotopes and Metals in the Environment (LIME) lab currently analyzes our Beech Creek Watershed samples for 19 parameters including Sulfate SO<sub>4</sub>, Nitrate NO<sub>3</sub> and Phosphate PO<sub>4</sub>.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to have some of our regular field team water samples analyzed. Our monitoring at sites other than Beech Creek are limited in scope to Sulfate, Nitrate and Phosphate. The additional lab tests could flag potential issues or indicate a significant, but un-detected contaminants from sewer, rain run-off and septic tank leakage, aside the watershed deep well drilling.

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## Living with Pennsylvania Black Bears

**Be on the lookout, during late summer and fall, black bears are roaming to fatten up for winter hibernation.**

<https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

### Feeding Habits

Bears may be on the move at any time, but most active at dusk and dawn. Bears are omnivorous, eating almost anything. During late summer and fall, black bears fatten up for winter hibernation.

**Intentionally feeding bears is against the law in Pennsylvania. It is also against the law to put out any feed, for any wildlife, that is causing bears to congregate or habituate**

“If you feed birds (and if you're living in bear country, you shouldn't be), you may want to bring all bird feeders, including hummingbird feeders, in at night. Bears frequent areas tempted by food sources” – *Pennsylvania Game Commission*.



Photo: Black Bear footprints by Team 13 in August. – Dan DeLotto

## CCPaSEC President's Report

Lou Myer CCPaSEC (president) met with Centre County RSVP director Brenda Reeve in July, to consult on volunteer safety requirements for continuing monitoring streams.

Lou and Justin Kozak (Centre County Conservation District water specialist) participated in the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative Phase 3 work in process, “ZOOM” discussion on September 8, to incorporate locally collected water quality data.

The project works with diverse partners to collect and share new and existing water quality and macro-invertebrate data to develop a comprehensive understanding of Chesapeake Bay Watershed health. They had prior knowledge of our data and our quality methods and procedures. They will be contacting us to ensure that our data will be acceptable by Pa. DEP.

<https://www.chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org>

The ALLARM organization has current projects with the states of Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, the University of Maryland (laboratories) and with Dr. Susan Brantley of Pennsylvania State University about the Cooperative with some of the leaders from the Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring's (ALLARM)

[Dickinson College ALLARM.](#)

Carolyn Hatley CCPaSEC (vice -president) announced that the ClearWater Conservancy is partnering with Pennsylvania Master Naturalist to offer a volunteer training course and bring the statewide program to Centre County for the first time. PA Master Naturalist is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a Corp of citizen volunteers engaged in protecting PA Natural Heritage through outreach and service.

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PaSec is being asked to present a session on Citizen Science and the work of our organization.

Louis Mayer, President, Carolyn Hatley, Vice President, Genie Robine and Dan DeLotto, Resource Advisors will participate on October 1 at Shavers Creek Environmental Center. – *Carolyn Hatley*

## Upcoming events



**Sep 25, 8:00 AM** Managing for Healthy Forests and Wildlife Diversity Field Tour. Eagleville Road (proceed to end of road), Eagleville Rd, Howard, PA, USA

<https://www.facebook.com/baldeagletreefarm/>

The Howard Nursery grows tree and shrub seedlings for state game land use, participating Hunter Access cooperators, the Seedlings for Schools program and our conservation partners.

**Any remaining surplus is available to Pennsylvania residents for purchase** for wildlife food and cover, watershed protection, soil erosion control, and for reclamation of disturbed areas, such as surface mine site and utility rights-of-way. The selection of seedlings changes from year to year due to available seed, seedling germination, or growing conditions.

This year ClearWater Celebrates 40 years -- and while we can't host our normal annual meeting, we've got something even better planned!

Join us for a self-guided tour of the Barrens to Bald Eagle Wildlife Corridor. Say hello to ClearWater staff, meet a board member or two, and enjoy a peaceful walk with incredible views and wonderful sounds.

*CONTACT > 814-237-0400, Email <contactus@clearwaterconservancy.org>*

**October 11th, 2-6 pm** ClearWater's Alternate Annual Meeting (arrive anytime and explore at your own pace) Where: Barrens to Bald Eagle Wildlife Corridor.

**Advocate for Your Watershed | New Webinar Series Sept 16, 22, 30, Oct 1.**



Whether you are looking to become more involved in local environmental issues or are just curious to learn more: Come on in, the water is fine! **Registration is free but required.**

**Sept. 16** Volunteers & Effective Communication

**Sept. 22** Water Quality Monitoring Basics

**Sept. 30** Telling a Story with Your Data

**Oct. 8** Local Government & Natural Resource Protection

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/allegheny-county-conservation-district-30124813842>

**Any Day any Time:** If you are looking for something to do, you may find free on-line course on a subject matter of interest at MOOC.org

**Mooc.org** is an extension of edX.org, a leader in online courses. Whether you're interested in learning for yourself, leveraging online courses to educate your workforce or creating a MOOC, edX can help. [Browse 2,900+ Online Courses from edX.](#)

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In addition to traditional course materials, such as filmed lectures, readings, and [problem sets](#), many MOOCs provide [interactive courses](#) with user forums or social media discussions to support community interactions

<https://www.mooc.org/>

## COVID-19 Monitoring Guidelines

We are requiring that all our partners that use RSVP volunteers must follow the CDC guidelines.

**Volunteers will need to provide masks, hand sanitizer and be able to provide a distance of at least 6' between people.** Volunteers may also provide their own clean mask that meets guidelines. **Volunteers must wear a mask at all times while volunteering.** The mask must fully cover from the nose and under the chin and either be snugly tied behind the head and neck or have ear loops. The mask should not be loose. RSVP encourages frequent hand washing and in between hand washings, the use of hand sanitizer.

RSVP needs to have acknowledgement from each agency and each volunteer that these guidelines will be followed.

It is possible that any of our partner agencies may have more regulations and those must be followed by our volunteers.

If you have any questions, please call Brenda at 355-6816 or 810-0088. – *Brenda Reeve Centre County RSVP Director*

## EPA Provides \$3.84 Million for Pennsylvania Efforts to Reduce Ag-Related Pollution



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reallocated \$3.84 million to support Pennsylvania's priority actions to reduce agricultural-related pollutants impacting local waters and the Chesapeake Bay.

EPA redirected portions of Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay funding to reduce excess nutrients and sediment affecting the Bay and local streams and rivers.

## September is tick season cont.



As we go through the seasons, the tick life cycle is going through changes as well. Late summer is the peak time for larval tick activity. Since this is their first blood meal, they prefer feeding on smaller mammals such as mice, chipmunks and birds. This gives us and our pets a brief break, however; there is still a chance other life cycles are still active, so don't let your guard down!

<https://www.ticklab.org/>

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(PaSEC) First in the Nation 1997

## Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps

The Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps (PaSEC) is the first partnership in the United States between the State Department of Aging and Environmental Protection. This private sector program is the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement (EASI) - a national non-profit coalition dedicated to increasing the involvement of older citizens in environmental volunteerism.

In 1997, the year PaSEC was founded, 300 senior citizens volunteered to participate in this project. In the first two years water quality monitoring was undertaken, and some 250 stream sites are being tested monthly for state-identified parameters. Twice annually, the volunteers carry out stream habitat assessment and bio-surveys, and all collected data is entered into an electronic database developed by EASI.

<https://www.global500.org/index.php/thelaure-ates/online-directory/item/80-pennsylvania-senior-environment-corps-pasec>

## Pennsylvania RSVP Senior Corps



Senior Corps taps the skills, talents, and experience of Americans age 55 and over to meet a wide range of community challenges. RSVP members are provided with supplemental accident insurance during volunteer activities.

Last year, 2019 more than 10,400 Pennsylvania seniors met critical community needs

<https://www.facebook.com/Retired-Senior-Volunteer-Program-of-Centre-County-352460218297469/?ref=hl>

National

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps>

To join us: Please call the Centre County RSVP

(Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)  
Monday – Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Phone (814) 355-6816

The CCPaSEC newsletter is published quarterly except for special events. To contribute news articles, or corrections please Contact Ken Johnson via our CCPaSEC website.

*“The greatest pleasure I know is to do a good thing by stealth, and have it found out by accident”. - Charles Lamb*

*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.*