



# West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition

Winter 2009



## Groundbreaking Ceremony Celebrates Pending Improvements to the West Branch Susquehanna Headwaters

On Thursday, November 12, WBSRC members attended the Barnes & Tucker Lancashire #15 Treatment Plant Groundbreaking Ceremony near Northern Cambria. Approximately 30 people turned out to watch as state and local officials broke ground for the \$11 million treatment facility that is slated to go online in the fall of 2011. The plant will treat up to 10 million gallons a day of polluted water from the abandoned Lancashire #15 deep mine, which blew out in 1970 and caused a major fish kill on the West Branch Susquehanna River. Since that time,



the discharge has been treated and pumped to Blacklick Creek in the Ohio River drainage. With the

opening of the new treatment facility, this water will be returned to the Susquehanna River drainage where

it is expected to clean up to 35 or more AMD-impacted miles of the West Branch and add much needed water to the basin. According to the DEP, this water will be used to make up for consumptive use by farmers and industry further down in the basin, thus impacts will be seen as far downstream as the Chesapeake Bay. Check out the press surrounding this event at [www.wbsrc.com](http://www.wbsrc.com) under Recent News.

Photo: Rachel Kester



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

## Share Your Stories!

*Mark Your Calendars!*

**West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium V**

**May 6th & 7th**

*Genetti Hotel,  
Williamsport PA*

The Clearfield County Conservation District is producing a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of "Clearfield County Waters", an informational booklet on the river and streams in Clearfield County. The Booklet will look at the county's waterways as they are now and compare them to the past; this is where we need your help! We need your personal stories or poems speaking to the past and present conditions of our streams and the West Branch Susquehanna River. Whether your story tells of your childhood fishing hole, your

favorite place to swim, that spot on the river you will never forget because you fell in on your first kayak trip, a stream that once supported a healthy population of fish but no longer can due to pollution, or of a stream that once was heavily polluted but has been restored, we want to hear it! Pictures are also welcome!

Copies of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of "Clearfield County Waters" booklet are also available upon request.

*Read an Example...Page 3*

*Please submit your stories/pictures/booklet requests no later than December 31, 2009 either by email or mail to:*

**Kelly Williams**  
Watershed Specialist  
Clearfield County Conservation District

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Clearfield, PA 16830  
[kwilliamsccd@atlanticbbs.net](mailto:kwilliamsccd@atlanticbbs.net)

## Welcome Rebecca!



Trout Unlimited (TU) is excited to welcome Rebecca Holler to our team. Rebecca graduated from Elizabethtown College with a B.S. in Biology in 2009. She has done research in the areas of Environmental Animal Behavior, as well as Molecular Biology.

Rebecca was hired as the Administrative Assistant for the Eastern Abandoned Mine Program and will be working on a variety of projects with the WBSRC and throughout the watershed.

### Not a member of the WBSRC?

It's easy to join—see our website for more information:

[www.wbsrc.org](http://www.wbsrc.org)

## From the Old Town Sportsman Association...

The Old Town Sportsman's Association (OTSA) started a fish stocking program after the Barnes and Tucker mine operation in Cambria County began discharging AMD-impaired water that all but eliminated the fishery in the Clearfield West Branch of the Susquehanna River in the early 1970's.

Over the decades the river has improved mostly due to environmental law changes, municipal waste improvements and the unfortunate loss of industry along its watershed. OTSA started building a renewed interest in the river with annual trout stockings and in 1975 with a youth fishing derby that still continues today. In 2005 the PA Fish and Boat Commission listed the West Branch from Hyde downriver to below the town of Clearfield as an approved "trout waters" making it part of their annual spring and fall trout stocking program.

As public perception of the condition of the river began to improve many local residents re-

mained skeptical - demonstrating a need to complete a water quality analysis of the river. Talk of such a project reached Trout Unlimited and the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition and a partnership was formed with OTSA.

On August 12, 2009 the almost 2-year study was made public by the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition summer interns Aaron Furguele, Lori Smith, Zack Bassett and Zeb Buck who presented an in-depth study that looked at the health of the river's ecosystem at 14 locations. A crowd of over 60 people as well as 3 local newspapers and 1 local TV station gathered at the Elk's Club in downtown Clearfield to hear the study's results. Complete details of the study can be found at <http://www.wbsrc.org/statusflyer.html>

This status of the river report will go a long way in documenting the improvements of the River and also provide information regarding what needs to be done in the future.

The report is a crucial source for the ever changing challenges that face the future of the West Branch with its recreational and manufacturing uses.

Thanks to Trout Unlimited and the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition for their continued support and clean up of the West Branch Susquehanna watershed.

*Terry Malloy, Member,  
Old Town Sportsman's Association*

### Thank you !

A special Thanks to the OTSA for its donation to the WBSRC's internship fund!

*If your organization would like to sponsor an intern contact us as  
[info@wbsrc.org](mailto:info@wbsrc.org)*

## Babb Creek Removed from Impaired Streams List

The Babb Creek Watershed Association celebrated the removal of Babb Creek from the DEP's list of impaired streams on Saturday September 12<sup>th</sup> with a ribbon cutting cere-

mony. Over the last 25 years more than \$6.8 million dollars and in-kind services from local, state, and federal sources has been dedicated to the recovery of this creek.

This delisting follows the 1999 removal of five miles of Pine Creek below its confluence with Babb Creek from the state's list of impaired streams.



Photo: Rachel Kester

## A Conversation with Curley's Run

I talked to a pretty little stream today.  
As it went skipping and tripping on its way,  
Rushing, tumbling and merrily flowing  
I thought I heard it say "Where am I going?"

You're up here where the streams get their start,  
And sooner or later become a part  
Of larger streams of every sort;  
But, to make a long story short –  
**YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY  
TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY!**

There are many others who share your journey,  
Like Mosquito Creek, Cole, 12-Mile, McNerney,  
Rollingstone, Alder, Emigh and more,  
Grimes, Surveyor, Lick Run for sure.

Then there's Moose, Montgomery, Morgan Run;  
Clearfield Creek, Chest and the Anderson;  
Mowery, Moravian, The Moshannons, Red and Black;  
Bilger, Bear and Hubler also join the pack.

Also, Kratzer, McCracken, Muddy and Trout;  
Lost Run and Gifford are not to be left out.  
Potter, Rock, Laurel and Sandy,  
Buck Run, Deer Creek are also quite handy.

There are named and un-named "tribs" galore;  
These, too, as I said before  
**ARE ON THEIR WAY  
TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY!**

So, where are all of you going as you flow along?  
Why, you become the SUSQUEHANNA, awesome and strong,  
Gathering up streams day after day  
**ON YOUR WAY  
TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY!**

Along the way folks look to you  
To quench their thirst, provide food too;  
Give them a place to relax and play;  
Lift their spirits at the end of the day.

But, Alas! little friend, I must confess  
We've made of some of you, quite a mess;  
Let you fill up with silt and AMD  
Trashed your banks for all to see.

Sad to say, no matter what your name,  
Carrying your burdens and your shame,  
**YOU WEND YOUR WAY  
TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY**

But, you know what, little friend?  
We're trying our best to reverse the trend.  
Through professional groups and volunteers –  
Although it may take many years –  
This we sincerely promise you –  
We will do whatever we can do!

We'll make our youngsters more aware;  
We'll teach people how to care;  
We'll clean you up, your integrity restore;  
Plan for your protection forevermore.

So, keep up your spirits, little Creek;  
Things are happening as we speak.  
May very soon come the looked-for day  
When you and your friends can spiritedly say:  
**"WE'RE ON OUR WAY  
TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY!"**

Edith M. Hebel  
June, 2009

Clearfield County Senior Environment Corps