

Swatara News 2018

By Jo Ellen Litz, President

Officers: Ben Miller Vice President; Fred Folmer, Secretary; Denny Miller, Treasurer

Board Members: Mike Adams, Bob Arnold, Tom Embich, Fred Folmer, Stephanie Harmon, Ann Lasky, Jack Stouffer, & Mike Willeman.

Web: www.SwataraWatershed.com Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SwataraWaterTrail/>

SWA remembers long time board member Richard (Dick) Blouch who passed away in 2018 and offers condolences to his wife June. Dick could always be counted on with his truck to haul anything from garbage to canoes, contributing financially, and with his wife June, annually making and/or picking up both breakfast and lunch for the Swatara Sojourn. Dick will be deeply missed. **Due to the generosity of donations received in memory of Dick Blouch and a successful Food and Brew, SWA paid off the mortgage on 1929 Blacks Bridge Road.**

COMMON ENEMY RULE: And I always thought of water as my friend.

<https://www.facebook.com/joellenlitz/videos/10216309847314196/>

BASELINE WATER QUALITY DATA PROGRAM GRANT: The County of Lebanon applied for a grant for USGS to test 44 wells and study the groundwater quality of our area. Homeowners participate voluntarily and receive free test results on over 100 parameters, a \$1000 value. While the grant was not awarded this year, the ground work for a future application is set. Resolutions or letters of support were received from the Lebanon County Commissioners, South Annville Township, US Senator Pat Toomey and PA Senator Mike Folmer, the Quittapahilla Watershed Association, Pipeline Awareness, and other organizations. USGS guaranteed a \$75,000 match to a successful grant submission.

BORDNER CABIN: Mike Willeman and Jo Ellen Litz assessed damage from a summer storm dropping 7.2" in two hours, which is equivalent to a 500-year flood. Needed repairs include constructing a **13' x 4' wall at Aycrigg's Falls, adding stone beneath our recent work under the porch, and replacing the sidewalk. Our sincere thanks are extended to the Swatara State Park and volunteers for repairing the driveway, which had 3-5' deep holes.**

A General Permit is needed prior to the start of repairs. The original 2014 General Permit can be used to repair the areas restored or rebuilt during the restoration project of that year. These areas include **washout/undercut below the concrete slab and piers (under the porch) and the stone wall rebuilt on the Route 81 side of the cabin.** A new General Permit would allow a longer completion time, the potential of future permit coverage, and cover the level of repairs proposed.

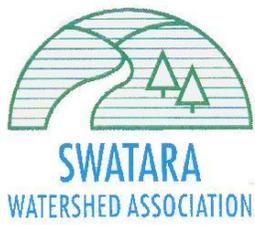
Repairs are planned for this spring. SWA will coordinate interested volunteers from the Red Horse, Boy Scouts, and MSC. If all goes well, we hope to repair the roof, fireplace, and install solar lights at the same time.

BRIDGES: In another summer storm, many bridges and roads were closed due to 8.8" of rain falling in a few hours. Multiple municipalities including; Bethel, Jackson, Millcreek, Myerstown, Richland, Schaefferstown, Swatara, and others were impacted. Many declared a Disaster Emergency to ascertain if damage assessments exceeded \$500,000 for the County to declare a Disaster Emergency. While the County met this threshold, the State did not meet their threshold.

EAGLE SCOUTS/INTERNS: Nabeel Rangoonwala (Troop 65) power washed/stained the Swatara Watershed Park office porch & crafted two benches for the porch. **Gavin Bender (Troop 431)** installed 3 Water Trail Signs. Our Eagle Scout Hall of Fame album is on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pg/Swatara-Water-Trail-86311524094/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10151572544779095

FLOODING: VOAD-Volunteers Offering Assistance after Disasters <https://www.facebook.com/LebanonCountyVOAD/> Losses can be reported to your municipality or online at <https://helpdesk.lcdes.org>. 150 homeowners were contacted. To date, six basements were cleaned out and treated for mold.

August 31, 2018 Summary- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHbCuTTGtU8&feature=share> It's a long process. For future reference, if money flows down from the federal government and you've exhausted your insurance options there may be some reimbursement. Therefore, always report your flood damage. You may not need the help, however your elderly, widow, and other neighbors may.



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LEBANON WATER AUTHORITY: SWA referred an inquiry concerning purchase of the Old Forge Mansion at the Christian E. Siegrist Dam. Per Jon Beers, a spring auction is planned.

Lebanon Water Authority added new signage to warn paddlers about the low-head dam and direct them to the left side to portage around the dam. An Eagle Scout candidate called and is interested in improving the portage trail.

LITTLE SWATARA: Fred Folmer conducted an annual Earth Day litter cleanup to collect trash at four ramps off Route 645 & 178. Eighteen people helped for three hours. 71 bags of trash were collected. Five large truck tires, a mattress, and large chunks of tire treads were removed over 800 yards near the Flying J Truck Stop. A small creek in the segment feeds the Little Swatara and mostly, plastic beverage bottles were removed.

Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF), an invasive pest, is causing concern in 13 counties. Fred provided educational plastic cards with pictures and statistics on the pest which thrives on Tree of Heaven. Tree of Heaven looks similar to Sumac with its base leaves. However, if you pinch the underside pimples at the base and it smells like rancid peanut butter, it's Tree of Heaven. SLF lay eggs in October and hatch in May. The egg masses are dark brown with a waxy appearance. Scrape them into a baggie with isopropyl alcohol to destroy them. Fred also presented on the SLF at Camp Swatara.

Further, they're holding a recycling program through a 'Junk Fair' where students make art from discarded items, and will award three \$50 prizes.

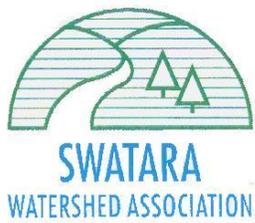
Finally, the Little Swatara is creating a list of infrastructure to mark and paint "Drains to the Bay."

MS4: Tom Embich reports the MS4 program is applying through DEP for a Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP). All roadways must be included, not just those with storm water outlets. PSATs said the MS4 program to reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay results in a 4% reduction of pollution load. This costs millions of dollars. Adams, Franklin, Lancaster and York are currently pilot counties writing their own County PRPs to be submitted as part of the State PRP.

Tom believes the MS4 program is pitting economics of the Chesapeake Bay watermen against local farmers over phosphorus. When sediment, specifically clay that the phosphorus binds to, erodes from our banks, downstream where it leaves fresh water and mixes with salt water, the phosphorus is released around the Bay Bridge, and the water turns green from algae bloom. Turbidity results.

An unfunded mandate, the MS4 program expanded to require nonpoint sources of run-off to be mapped and controlled. Comparing this to a football game, the most gains occur near the 50-yard line. The closer you get to the goal, the harder it is to cross. Wetlands and the Bay will fill in. It's a natural process that cannot be controlled 100%. Therefore, it would be more realistic to maintain an 80-90% storm-water compliance rate. To try and stop the inevitable is costly, and will unduly burden property owners.

PIPELINES: Patriot and Lebanon Daily News articles chronicle pipeline spills in Lebanon County.



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RAIL TRAIL: The Tunnel Hill Road culvert is in place. This is one project that benefits the majority of citizens. Including; wellness, family time away from electronics, alternate transportation routes to work or school, and even safety (as an alternate exit out of town if highways are blocked with traffic during emergency evacuation).

NL Township is purchasing an ATV to monitor the Trail through the Tunnel.

The rail trail will parallel Swatara Water Trail on the north side of Lebanon County. You will find that one rail trail goal is to connect communities and parks. I may miss some, but the Lebanon Valley Rail Trail connects Mt. Gretna, Cedar Crest High School, Lebanon Valley Expo, South Hills Park, City of Lebanon, Lebanon High School, Rite Aid Pharmacy, Jubilee Ministries, Lebanon Catholic, future Wengert Memorial Park, Gloninger Meadows Park, Coleman Park, LV Mall, Union Canal Tunnel Park, Swatara Water Trail, Jonestown, Swatara State Park, future Allwein Park, Appalachian Trail, and Stony Valley. Further, counties are connected--Lancaster, Lebanon and Schuylkill. It's a win /win.

Costs & Benefits: The LVRT is completed with a combination of funds via fundraising by LVRT. Including grants from DCNR, Growing Greener, and PennDOT (from the fuels tax) with a 5% County match.

SWATARA FOOD & BREW WEEKEND: July 13-15, 2018 was quite successful, raising \$2985.43! Thank you all!

VISIT LEBANON VALLEY OUTDOOR GUIDE: 10,000 4" x 7" field guides were printed with 24-36 pages. SWA provided 4-5 trivia questions/ fun facts, and our top five recommended experiences.

DAIRY FARMS: Nine former Swiss Dairy farmers were absorbed by Harrisburg Dairies. Between Lebanon and Lancaster Counties, 40 farms remain with Swiss Dairy. Scott Sechler of Bell and Evans, offered to purchase chickens from the remaining farms should they wish to switch to raising chickens.

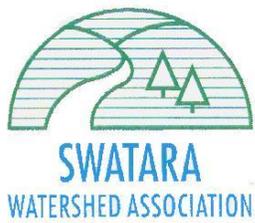
FEMA 10-YEAR FLOODPLAIN MAP LINK FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT:

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=c7c19ef8fa384660ba320823e0f0ac9d&extent=-76.8576,40.1983,-76.0144,40.5556>

WATER TRAIL: 180 tires were dumped at the Swopes Valley Road launch in Swatara State Park ☹

SWATARA WATER TRAIL MANAGERS REPORT measures parameters on Trails by Ben Miller & Jo Ellen Litz:

- a. Number of public access points – 20
- b. Length of time of navigability – 11 months with proper equipment, i.e. wetsuits
- c. Availability of overnight trips – 3 campsites (Jonestown KOA, Swatara Watershed Park, and Hershey Park Campgrounds)
- d. Connections to land trails – 5 (Appalachian Trail, Horseshoe Trail, LVRT, Schiavani Park Trail, Swatara RT)
- e. Currently in contact with adjoining water trails – 1 (Susquehanna)
- f. Connections to towns – 6 (Hummelstown, Jonestown, Middleton, Pine Grove, Royalton, Union Deposit)
- g. Presence of outfitters – 5 (Cocoa Kayaks, Jonestown KOA, Nolt, Susquehanna Outfitters, Swatara Watershed Assn)
- h. Presence of volunteers and community members – 16 (Audubon Society, Berks, Dauphin, & Lebanon County Conservation Districts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Hershey/Harrisburg Visitors Bureau, Lebanon Valley & Manada Conservancies, Northern Swatara Watershed, Quittapahilla, and Swatara Watershed Associations, RSVP, Trout Unlimited, United Way Day of Caring, Visit Lebanon Valley)
- i. Water Trail principles met – 8
- j. Robust management structure – 10 (DCNR, Municipalities installing and maintaining launches to date include Jonestown Boro, Derry Township, Hummelstown Boro, Swatara Township in Dauphin County) PEC, POWR, Pa Fish & Boat Commission, Swatara State Park maintains 3 launches, Swatara Watershed Association)
- k. Fatal flaws called out by feasibility study (not sure about this, but probably that all launches do not have toilets)



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SOJOURN: 30th Anniversary Proclamations received from the County of Lebanon, Annville, City of Lebanon, North Lebanon, North Londonderry, and South Annville Townships. **Celebrating a Cool River—the Swatara.** Thanks to all participants and sponsors! https://www.facebook.com/pg/SwataraWaterTrail/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10156451825219095

SWATARA WATERSHED PARK: United Way Day of Caring- volunteers shoveled mud from the ramp, picked up debris, and stacked limbs.

IMPROVEMENTS TO SWATARA WATERSHED PARK IN 2018:

1. Plumber bids were received to replace the water hydrants with Lou Caputzal submitting the winning \$865 bid
2. Six posts were replaced under the office
3. New entrance gate was installed
4. Porch was stripped and re-stained as well as benches added
5. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission installed a water monitor. The data is being displayed on the RWQMN webpage. https://mdw.srbc.net/remotewaterquality/data_viewer.aspx SRBC posted the video Jo Ellen created. <https://www.facebook.com/joellenlitz/videos/10216680970112034/>

INVASIVES: Due to the Emerald Ash Borer, Spotted Lantern Fly, and other pests, no wood may be brought onto or taken from the campsite. This includes pallets, which contain nails, and could contain invasive pests. Also, please check your campers for invasives and egg masses before entering the campgrounds.

SWATARA WATERSHED PARK FLOODING PROTOCOL: AT 17.15' peak: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o69qEem2rTO>

1. At **nine feet, notify campers** of rising water, & ask them to move campers to the parking lot or **off site at thirteen feet.**
2. Open gate to allow unobstructed passage of vehicles

TREATING MOLD AFTER A STORM: Do not use chlorine bleach, instead, use MOLDSTAT. Spray before removing items as well as after items are removed.

TETHER:

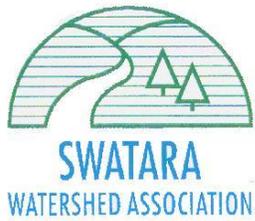
1. Canoes
2. Shed
3. Toilet
4. Picnic tables under pavilion and at campsites
5. If **more than 17'** are projected, **remove mower** from shed and tow off site.
6. Take pictures of the above for documentation.
7. **"No vehicles on grass"** where the office and pavilion are located. There is a drain field that will get damaged.

ORDER OF CLOSING OF ROADS TO ACCESS SWATARA WATERSHED PARK:

1. Blacks Bridge Road at 11'
2. Schoolhouse Road at 15', but access by Crooked Lane or Groff Road from Jonestown Road is possible
3. Gravel Hill Road 15-17'

MEMBERS WITH TRUCKS TO HELP HAUL CANOES IN AN EMERGENCY:

1. Fred Folmer
2. Tom Embich
3. Bob Arnold
4. Ben Miller (last)



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WATER CONSERVATION:

- **3.12.2018: FEMA 10-year floodplain map link for review and comment:**
<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=c7c19ef8fa384660ba320823e0f0ac9d&extent=-76.8576,40.1983,-76.0144,40.5556>
- **3.12.2018: A mud spill occurred on the Quittapahilla Creek from drilling on a bridge during road repairs** just west of the new McDonalds between 7th and 6th Avenue on Cumberland Street. Pictures were taken for documentation as well as controls to stop the mud from entering the Quittapahilla. Trout are stocked in local streams. Sediment is the number one polluter. Fish gills will clog, and they won't get needed oxygen from the water to survive. If there's a fish kill, the PA Fish and Boat Commission will get involved too. Conclusion: Drilling was stopped, sediment subsided, and no fish kill observed. Contractor prepared another plan of action.
- **9.7.2017:** for \$500,000, Lebanon Water Authority purchased 44.62 acres containing a mansion known as "The Forge" near the Christian E Siegrist Dam in Schuylkill County. 5 acres will be subdivided to contain "The Forge," pool, and barn. Invasive bamboo will be eradicated. The 5-acre parcel will be put up for bid in the spring of 2019.

SWA WISH LIST:

SWATARA WATERSHED PARK

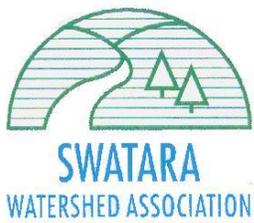
- Boat Dock
- New roof on Well House
- Bank stabilization

BORDNER CABIN

- Woodworker to handcraft spokes for two wagon wheels
- Porch Benches
- Chimney Repair
- Roof Repair
- Solar lights installed

SWATARA WATER TRAIL: A new launch in East Hanover, Dauphin County is coming with support from Hershey Trust. Gavin Bender installed two new and one used Water Trail Sign and map boxes.

- **Ben Miller reviewed the Emrich launch @ Harper's, and obtained an estimate of total cost.** Gravel is needed. There is a 3000' sq. (40'x75') parking area, 250' of drive to the ramp, and 65' of ramp that is 8' wide. In 2011, after Tropical Storm Lee, we used 2B stone at the Watershed Park. Ben was given permission to seek donations on behalf of the Swatara Watershed Association. He was asked to keep the Township, via Mr. Emrich, informed. This is an historic access on the 60-mile long Swatara Water Trail where coal trucks hauled dredge material from the Swatara for the foundry.



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2019 CALENDAR:

- January 17 @ 7PM Trivia Night at Mt. Gretna Craft Brewery
- April 20 **United Way Day of Caring**, 9:30AM--clean-up both Swatara Watershed Park at 1929 Blacks Bridge Road, Annville and the Bordner Cabin in Swatara State Park. Register on the United Way website for a free t-shirt, and to let us know you're coming. Refreshments provided. <http://www.unitedwaylebco.org/volunteer/day-of-caring-volunteer>
- Spring: **Bordner Cabin Repairs**
- May 4-5, 2019 **Swatara Sojourn** starts from Pine Grove at 9:30AM. **Pre-registration required** Visit www.SwataraWatershed.com for more details. Email Litz@mbcomp.com for a registration form.
- July 3 **Watermelon at the Waterworks**, 9:30AM, walk our adopted launch at the Fish and Boat property, and pick up litter, Afterwards, enjoy watermelon and conversation with members of SWA. All are welcome.
- September 15 **Hike and History Tour of Bordner Cabin**

Interviews 9.6 @ 11AM with Josh Raulerson, PEC @ Watershed Park is available statewide as both a podcast and YouTube videos. Videos are in support of reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

- **Preserving land around creeks is monumental:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fq2HDEqrDEU&index=8&list=PLMpHW-KP8hDEiCr4yFoR7XqXWeA3rWI2O>
- **Supporting local economies:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4Fs6zBnjgo&list=PLMpHW-KP8hDEiCr4yFoR7XqXWeA3rWI2O&index=5>
- **Creating Opportunities:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uY_BbFj6RK0&index=3&list=PLMpHW-KP8hDEiCr4yFoR7XqXWeA3rWI2O
- **Healthier Communities:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDFdyNxpGP8&list=PLMpHW-KP8hDEiCr4yFoR7XqXWeA3rWI2O&index=2>
- **Investing in Conservation:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4ZYaSKiKoy&list=PLMpHW-KP8hDEiCr4yFoR7XqXWeA3rWI2O&index=1>
- **Blog & podcast link:** <http://pecpa.org/pec-blog/pennsylvania-legacies-82-fund-drive/>

SHIQUEHANNA RIVER

AGAINST THE CURRENT



Jessica Berry, an environmental intern with the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, works with other conservationists to look for eels in the Catoague Creek on the Hagerstown Peninsula. Photo by Joe Horvath, PennLive

Eels were once a common part of life on the river, but they nearly disappeared. Now they're back.



Thousands of American eels were collected from the Catoague Creek.

Mish Malsbenden Joe Horvath

There was a time when the American eel was a common sight on the Susquehanna River, when eels were generally used to make eel soup along the river banks and where a family could make money packing and selling the eels to the fish markets for shipment to Baltimore and New York.

In the peaks of the river, the eels, which can grow up to 4 feet in length, were a common sight. Through eels, the fish, eels and eel, they were often the subject of both eel stories told along the river.

Even in the Atlantic Ocean far out to the Susquehanna, eels were caught along the river with the same eel catches around the waters around. From there they migrate inland, using rivers and their tributaries as natural highways into the interior. Here, in fresh water, they live for up to 20 years, growing into mature fish before once again returning to the ocean to spend the rest of their lives.

For as long as man lived along the river, he lived with, and took advantage of, the neighboring eels. Because the eels of the creek and local municipalities were used to be defined from a Native American term meaning "where we fed eels."

As the years of the 20th century, eels remained an important part of life for those along the river. State estimates at the time put the eel catch along the Susquehanna River at more than 500,000 pounds annually, with a value of more than \$200,000.

But life along the Susquehanna was changing. The gradual nature of the valley was shifting, as factories rose along the banks. Electricity came to the valley along with sanitation, hospital services, the automobile and paved roads.

Hagerstown, which in 1850 had a population of 10,000, by 1920 had reached 75,000. In York and Lancaster, similar population booms occurred. As the river cities and industries grew, hydroelectric dams were constructed across the river.

07/15/2018

Facts about eels

125,000

The number of eels that were transported into the Susquehanna River basin and stocked at the Hagerstown City Island, along the West Shore and at Fort Meade in Susquehanna Township in 2017.

800,000

Eels were captured, transported and released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service into the Susquehanna or its tributaries between 2007 and 2010.

20 years

The average of eels that live for eels to grow and mature in fresh water before returning to the ocean to spend the rest of their lives.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Vintage Klepper collapsible kayak with sail! Make offer. Proceeds will benefit Swatara Clean Water Projects.