

Newsletter Fall 2015

Octoraro
Watershed
Association



Celebrating 48 years
of preserving and
protecting
the natural and
historic resources of
the Octoraro.



Pat Fasano & Levi Fisher
on a Farm Visit

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Stream Clean-ups April 2016

Mark your calen-
dars for a clean-up
of the Octoraro
East Branch at
Scroggy Road on
April 23. We are
partnering with
the Chester Water
Authority.

Additional clean-
ups are planned in
PA & MD.

More to follow!

President's Message

Anders Alfelt, President

A Happy Holiday Season to Everyone! We here at the OWA headquarters hope that you are enjoying the many scenic and natural wonders here in the Octoraro watershed. The fall foliage was spectacular this year, and I have already seen a great variety of birds at my family's feeders over in Sadsbury Township, Lancaster County.

The OWA continues to work hard to make sure that our watershed can continue to be the home of a great variety of plants, animals, homes, farms and businesses that all live together in a sustainable way. OWA has done this in a number of ways:

Education. In April, OWA hosted its annual Banquet and Membership meeting in Quarryville, PA. After a wonderful meal, Patricia Stabler gave a presentation about water quality data in the watershed. There is an abundance of information being gathered and that show the watershed's strengths and areas in which we need improvement.

We have also continued with our outreach to the Amish community. We have visited dozens of farms with our Amish Liaisons to inform and educate farmers about best management practices for farms and land preservation opportunities. This work has been recognized nationally and is being duplicated in other watersheds. We are very proud of our program and the work that our outreach coordinator, Patrick Fasano, has done.

Best Management Practices Implementation. OWA received a grant to encourage local farmers to implement best management practices (BMPs) on their farms. OWA is in the process in visiting over 70 farms across the watershed to get them on their way to do things such as stream bank fencing, stormwater management and constructing manure pits. This work is crucial to bring our region into compliance with guidelines and goals established to help the Chesapeake Bay and other local water resources.

Partnerships. OWA is partnering with the Town of Rising Sun, MD and other partners to design and build stream bank restoration projects and stormwater BMPs with the town. A grant of over \$630,000 was awarded in June of this year. Many thanks to OWA's Rupert Rossetti for his tireless work on bringing this project to life.

Organizational Improvements. OWA Treasurer Matt Kehoe has done extensive work to produce high quality financial reporting, budgeting and money-saving ideas for the OWA. Patrick Fasano has written numerous grant proposals to ensure that the work of OWA will continue. Recording Secretary Rupert Rossetti has presided over our organization's creation and implementation of a five-year strategic plan to focus and prioritize our efforts. Our members and supporters, through their generous contributions, continue to make our activities possible. Special thanks go out to the Chester Water Authority for their consistent support. They have assisted us with office space and financial aid that allows OWA to do this valuable work.

There are activities coming up that will give all of you a chance to participate in the protection and preservation of the Octoraro Watershed (see other parts of this issue for details). I would encourage you all to come out and enjoy the fellowship and satisfaction of giving back to your community. And as always, your financial contributions are welcomed and encouraged.

Yours in Conservation,
Anders Alfelt
President, OWA

Amish Outreach: American University Documentary for MPT

Pat Fasano & Shannon Lawrence

During the busy harvest season, I generally stay off the farms. Instead, our Amish Liaisons and I continue our outreach by visiting the local Elders and Bishops in the areas we are working, and attending Township meetings. However, I did spend four rather intense days shooting video for an upcoming documentary with some students from the graduate film course from American University, Washington DC. As Shannon Lawrence, the lead producer writes:

“A team of five American University students are producing a short documentary featuring Pat Fasano and his efforts as part of the Octoraro Watershed Association, to be completed in December 2015. The piece will focus on nitrogen and sediment pollution in the Octoraro Watershed and the impact of watershed pollution on local water and the Chesapeake Bay. Additionally, the film will cover Pat’s years-long efforts in the Amish community, promoting the implementation of farm conservation techniques with the goals to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution originating from farming activity in the region.



Pat Fasano “on camera”

The American University student team will complete their documentary as part of a fall semester course, “Environmental Filmmaking for Public Television.” Each fall, American University students enrolled in the course have the opportunity to use their skills in filmmaking and media to produce and create a documentary on issues relevant to Maryland Public Television audiences. Previous films created by students in this course have received numerous awards, including Student Emmy Awards.

Maryland Public television had done a program about the Octoraro Outreach called the “Runoff dilemma” a few years ago. This program showed some of the work That OWA has been doing with our Amish liaisons, to reach out to the Amish farmers in our watershed.”

While the MPT program is no longer available on-line, we do have a couple of copies at the office and would be happy to loan them to you. Email Pat at pfasano@aol.com to arrange a time to stop by.

Rising Sun Triangle Park Maintenance —Volunteers Make It Happen!



Aug 12th. Bryan Lightner and one of his teams doing some maintenance work at Triangle Park—weeding the plantings & pulling cattails

Recent Grants—Pennsylvania

A major grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation which we received in 2010 has enabled us to fund fourteen new Conservation Plans, bringing the total number of plans in our target areas to 79. It also has enabled us to create a tracking system for implementation of the BMPs identified in those plans. This grant is now drawing to a close.

We are thankful that we recently received two new grants which will allow us to continue our Amish Outreach work in Lancaster & Chester Counties.

- In August, we received a grant of **\$12,000** from the Pennsylvania Foundation for Watersheds (PFW), a long-time partner to the OWA. The grant funds on-farm visits to Amish farmers with completed Conservation plans to assist them as they implement BMPs.
- In April, we received a grant of **\$28,300** from the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), through the Growing Greener program. This grant has a similar purpose: On-farm visits to get commitment from farmers with Conservation Plans to implement the BMPs specified in those plans. The grant is restricted to the northern part of the Lancaster County portion of the Octoraro Watershed. with a focus on the Nickel Mines and Meetinghouse Creeks sub-watersheds.

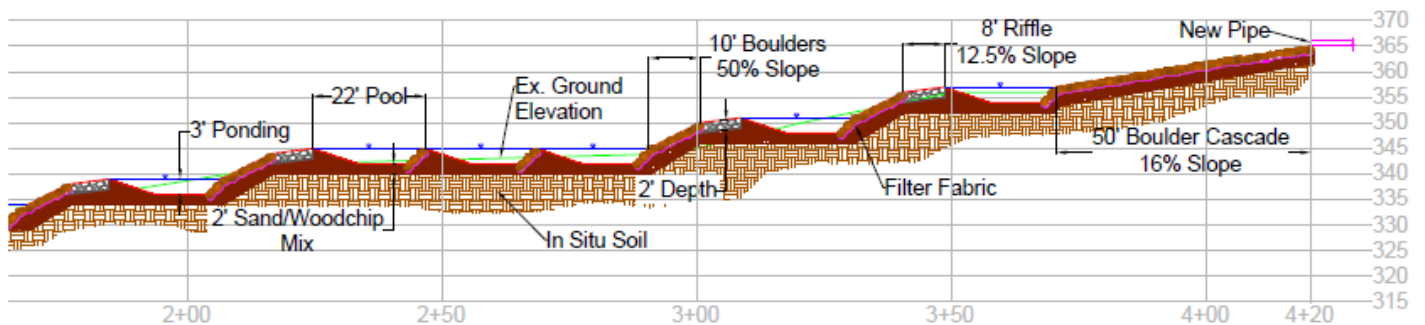
Many thanks to PFW & DEP for their generous support

Recent Grants—Maryland

In Cecil County, Maryland, we are currently operating with a slightly different model, with a focus on urban stormwater. We rely exclusively on volunteers and on partnerships with the Center for Watershed Protection, the Town of Rising Sun, Cecil County DPW and a host of others! With major funding from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the MD DNR Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund, we have completed a watershed assessment of Stone Run, the tributary that flows through Rising Sun and designed and installed a stormwater wetland in the town’s Triangle Park.

We have now turned our attention to the Veterans Community Park, which was another high priority project identified in the Watershed Assessment. The town, in partnership with the OWA and two technical partners, the Center for Watershed Protection and Ecotone Inc., recently received a grant of **\$633,710** from the MD DNR Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund for the implementation of a Step Pool Stormwater Conveyance, a bioswale, a wetland enhancement and 600 ft of stream restoration. Cecil County DPW provided \$8,000 for Advanced Concept Design of the Stormwater elements. The Rising Sun High School Advanced Placement Environmental Science class will conduct ongoing water chemistry and macro-invertebrate monitoring. North Bay Adventure will do the same with the Middle and Elementary school students and Bryan Lightner a recent graduate of the Cecil Watershed Stewards Academy, will lead volunteer maintenance work parties, in which all are welcome to participate. **Partnership IS the key!**

Many thanks to MD DNR for their generous support



Detail from CWP’s Step Pool Stormwater Conveyance design profile submitted with the grant proposal



517 Pine Grove Road
Nottingham, PA 19362
717-529-2132
octorarowa@gmail.com
www.theowa.org

Officers

President: Anders Alfelt
Vice-President: Linda Swank
Treasurer: Matt Kehoe
Secretary: Rupert Rossetti

Board Members

Pat Fasano
Arba Henry
Axel Linde
Ed Thayer

Newsletter Editor: Rupert Rossetti
rupertrossetti@aol.com

Join us next Spring for one of our Stream Clean-ups, or start one of your own!

On May 2nd 2015, Linda Swank led a small group on a clean-up along the east bank of the reservoir. Four of us worked southwards from Worth's Bridge Road and four northwards from Jackson School Road. In a couple of hours, we hauled out 1025 lbs of trash including 6 tires and an inflatable dinghy, filling the dumpster at Fishing Headquarters to overflowing. We had hoped to meet up, but did not come close, and will be returning on April 23, 2016 for another clean-up. We'll also be organizing or coordinating additional clean-ups in Cecil County—dates TBD. If you have a stream reach or roadside that you'd like to tackle, we can help you get organized.

For more information go to
www.cleanstream.allianceforthebay.org
or email Rupert.

