

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS 2012

SPRING WORKSHOP

Community Habitat Certification

FALL SEMINAR

“Bringing Nature Home” by University of Delaware Dr. Doug Tallamy

(check website for dates and times of workshops and seminars)

4TH ANNUAL CREEK FEST

12 – 4 p.m. Saturday May 5th
Carpenter Recreation Area,
White Clay Creek State Park

The family event of the spring! Live band, family entertainment, kids crafts, food, nature talks, live animals, local colonial history enactors, fly fishing clinics, native gardening ideas, FREE Water Bottles, and MORE. Co-sponsored with White Clay Creek State Park and United Water Suez Environment.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
ALL OUR PROJECTS, VISIT
WHITECLAY.ORG
OR ON
[FACEBOOK.COM/
WHITECLAYWILDANDSCENIC](https://FACEBOOK.COM/WHITECLAYWILDANDSCENIC)

**White Clay Creek Watershed
Management Committee
National Wild &
Scenic Rivers Program**

12 White Clay Drive
Newark, DE 19711
302-737-6590



The Watershed Management Committee, with our local and state partners, is charged with promoting the long-term protection of the White Clay Creek watershed and its resources in Pennsylvania and Delaware through the implementation of the Watershed Management Plan. The Management Plan Coordinator was added in 2002 to assist the Committee in project and administrative duties. In January 2011, a Management Committee Planning Team began the process of Strategic Planning to guide the development and focus on priority issues in the White Clay Watershed for the next five years. For more information, please visit our website at www.whiteclay.org.

The White Clay Creek watershed contains some significant natural areas and outstanding values through which the watershed achieved its federal designation. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Program supported projects that protect this jewel through community outreach and education, open space preservation, restoration, and research.

White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Executive Committee Members:

Kyle Sonnenberg, Delaware Co-Chair
Aileen Parrish, Pennsylvania Co-Chair
Linda Stapleford, WCCSP Advisory Committee
Martha Corrozi Narvaez, University of Delaware Water Resources Agency
Kristen Travers, Delaware Nature Society
Derek Stoner, Delaware Nature Society
Douglas Janiec, CardnoENTRIX
Ed O'Donnell, Fly Fishers
Dorothy Miller, Coalition of Natural Stream Valleys
Martin Wells, London Britain Land Trust
John Theilacker, Brandywine Conservancy
Jack Stefferud, Natural Lands Trust
Sally Cheyne, London Britain Township
Jake Michael, Chester County Planning
David Bartoo, Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation
Rob Line, Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation
Gerald Kauffman, University of Delaware Water Resources Agency
Kevin Donnelly, New Castle Conservation District
Thomas Zawislak, President White Clay Watershed Association
David Hawk, Treasurer White Clay Watershed Association

Jennifer Egan, Management Plan Coordinator - Staff
Julie Bell, National Park Service liaison to Wild & Scenic
Watershed Management Committee

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Photos courtesy of Rick Darke*

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WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2011 UPDATE

WHITE CLAY CREEK
NATIONAL WILD & SCENIC RIVER





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2011 UPDATE

MARCH 2012

Welcome to the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Program Update. The Watershed Management Committee presents our 2011 accomplishments to watershed partners, legislators, and our community.

Ecological Research & Restoration

Never, no, never did Nature say one thing and Wisdom say another.

EDMUND BURKE, Letters on a Regicide Peace

The long history of human influence in the White Clay watershed has left terrestrial and aquatic species stressed and habitats fragmented or destroyed. A goal of the Wild and Scenic Program is to aid our partners in securing grant funding to research issues and restore the impairments by implementing projects supported by scientific research.

The Stroud Water Research Center completed the final year of analysis of volunteer collected stream monitoring data. Macroinvertebrate sampling started in 1991 and continued through 2008. The most significant finding of impairment was found on the East Branch near Avondale. The report lists several point sources that may be contributing to the impairment. Overall the data indicated water quality had not significantly improved nor had it become more degraded since 1972. The final report can be viewed on our website under "What We Do/projects."

In the past, dams were a part of the fabric of historic land use; however most of the seven dams remaining on the White Clay in DE are no longer in use. These dams are proposed for removal to restore the natural flow of the creek and support fish passage. We are continuing to assist our partner, the Water Resources Agency, with planning for the eventual removal of the first dam farthest downstream. Funding was provided for the historic study necessary to document the dam's existence prior to removal.

In the fall, volunteers planted the Speakman Farm in West Grove, PA with 700+ trees and shrubs. In addition, over 100 shrubs were planted by 20 volunteers to form a riparian buffer at the historic Hale Byrnes House in Delaware. Restoring the native trees and forests one acre, one tree at a time helps improve habitat and water quality.

Historic records suggest that White Clay Creek once held at least half dozen species of freshwater mussels. These species would typically fill different niches in streams and reach sizeable populations. Unfortunately, the last time that any live mussels were observed in White Clay Creek was 1999-2000 near Avondale, PA. Repeated surveys by scientific experts over the past 10 years have not found any animals remaining. In 2007-2008, live mussels were deployed in cages in the West, Middle and East Branches of White Clay Creek, and their fitness was monitored for one year to examine if water and food conditions are capable of supporting mussels. Mussels fared very well in this "restoration prioritization" project, holding their condition the same as mussels caged in source streams. Based on these results, the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary has elevated White Clay Creek as a priority for mussel restoration. This is an exciting new restoration opportunity that will be explored in 2012!

Land Preservation - Economic and Environmental Gold

According to the November 2012 Summary Report from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission "...open spaces are productive assets that generate significant economic value for our region. They contribute to our local economies and property values, and they help us save on everything from health care to recreation. They also naturally improve the air we breathe and the water we drink, reducing the cost of providing these basic needs." In the last 10 years the Wild and Scenic funding has played a vital role in filling gaps to help preserve over 2,000 acres of land in the watershed. In 2011, our funding helped with the cost of securing easements on approximately 101 acres in Franklin Township, PA. This preserved land includes 1,000 feet of land adjacent to the Middle Branch of the Creek and a first order tributary. In addition, commitments were made to preserve 150 acres on two other properties that may close in 2012. The market value of these properties is in the millions but the addition of these areas as preserved land to the watershed is as good as gold.



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Outreach efforts to increase community awareness of the valuable natural, recreational and historic resources of the White Clay Creek Valley included:

- Exhibited at Newark Community Day with 20,000+ residents attending.
- Sent "Value of Open Space" educational postcard to 700 Chester County residents.
- Organized **Community Habitat workshop** with Delaware Nature Society - The first of three workshops - to help residents learn the importance of native plants and habitats (30 participants).
- Held the 3rd annual **Creek Fest** with Delaware State Parks and United Water Suez focusing on the tremendous natural, cultural and recreational assets of the White Clay Creek Valley. There were 800 attendees, with 190 receiving water bottles provided by United Water Suez.

School Programs

- Provided funds for a four-hour **stream field study** for 20 sixth grade students through Stroud Water Research Center.

- Supported **Shad in Schools** fry incubation and release in White Clay Creek's mainstem for two DE schools and one PA school for 80 school children.

RECREATION

- Provided comments and coordination regarding proposed trail changes in White Clay Creek State Park. Comments were to help enhance public access while protecting the critical natural habitat.
- Continued support of the Loop Trail and municipal connections in Chester County. The connections will complete a recreationally important multi-jurisdictional pedestrian/bikeway trail in PA.

WATERSHED MONITORING AND PROJECTS

- Completed the **Botanical survey for New Garden Township**; these studies provide information to assist with preservation priorities and grant proposals.
- Received grant award with the City of Newark to **retrofit stormwater ponds** in the Hunt at Louviers.
- Assisted the National Park Service in monitoring development proposals and permit applications for potential impacts to White Clay Creek and its tributaries as designated streams within the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System.

WHITE CLAY WILD AND SCENIC MAXIMIZES FEDERAL DOLLARS!

Like all Partnership National Wild and Scenic Rivers, we leverage National Park Service funding with in-kind contributions from state, county, local governments, partner organizations and the community. This year \$45,000 in open space preservation funds helped secure easement on 105 acres worth \$1.9 Million! A \$20,000 commitment was made to help preserve an additional 150+ acres in 2012.

Other donations and in-kind services to the Management Committee in 2011 included: United Water Suez Grant (\$1000), professional assistance with land preservation, ecological restoration, reforestation planning, events, outreach, mailings, and Management Committee volunteer time. This represents 900+ volunteer hours at total estimated value of \$52,500 leveraged against \$95,500 in federal funding. In addition, our funds were leveraged to secure \$77,500 in grants for habitat and water quality improvement.

PARTNERSHIPS - Cost-Effective, Sustainable, Catalysts

2011 Partners: Coalition for Natural Stream Valleys, Natural Lands Trust, Brandywine Conservancy, Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control, Delaware Nature Society, Chester County and New Castle County Conservation Districts, Friends of White Clay Creek State Park, Hale-Byrnes House, Taproot Native Design, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Stroud Water Research Center, University of Delaware, United Water Suez Environment, White Clay Watershed Association, City of Newark, and Franklin, London Britain, London Grove and New Garden Townships, and Chester and New Castle Counties.