

The Flyline



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President's Message

by Randy Buchanan

If you received this newsletter and are reading it before April 4th and still haven't decided to come to this year's banquet, you still have time to call Gary or me to get a ticket and help support the Chapter. If you are reading this newsletter after April 4th and you did not come to this year's banquet to support the Chapter to which you belong, you missed a nice time.

Attending our banquet isn't the only way to support the Chapter. The people who are the Chapter's officers and board members put in a great deal of time ensuring that the Chapter runs smoothly. We have people who help organize community outreach. Trout in the Classroom programs, for some members, require a lot of time to keep this program

going for so many years. There are road and streamside clean-up projects, some dating back more than twenty years. Stream improvement projects have had the support of many chapter members for more than twenty-five years.

The above mentioned projects are just a few that Chapter members support and all could use more help. All that support for the Chapter requires that you give up is a little of your time to join the other members to make MLTU a better Chapter.

Catch one!

Randy



PA's Statewide Opening Day of Trout Season:

April 18

Be safe, don't litter, and enjoy!

The following is an editorial that appeared in the “New York Times” by several authors, including the President of National Trout Unlimited. In Pennsylvania, there are protections for headwater streams and wetlands through the state Chapter 102 and Chapter 105 permit requirement regulations. The impact of this roll back of protections will be felt hardest in the many states that do not have the same state protections as we have in Pennsylvania.

However, this reduction of protections will provide those in political power in Pennsylvania the empowerment to reduce the state’s protections using the argument that the state regulations should not be more stringent than the federal regulations. Legislation has already been attempted to fire all the PA Department of Environmental Protection permitting staff, and this federal weakening of the Clean Water Act will elicit even greater attempts to undermine Pennsylvania’s protections.

For the record, this is just one of dozens of the current administration’s ongoing efforts to reduce and eliminate long standing environmental protections that have positively and properly protected our coldwater and other essential natural resources.

Trump Weakens the Nation’s Clean Water Efforts

By Chris Wood, Collin O’Mara and Dale Hall

Mr. Wood is president of Trout Unlimited, Mr. O’Mara is president of the National Wildlife Federation and Mr. Hall is a former director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Feb. 10, 2020

The Environmental Protection Agency made a startling admission last month when it announced that many of the nation’s streams and wetlands would no longer be protected under the Clean Water Act, perhaps the nation’s most successful antipollution law.

The agency said it could not predict how many miles of streams and acres of wetlands would lose their protection because of “existing data and mapping limitations.”

In other words, the E.P.A. was sharply narrowing the reach of a landmark environmental law without understanding the consequences of its actions.

This is flat wrong on every level. We do know the consequences. And we can say unequivocally that this ill-informed policy will reduce water protections to a level not seen in more than a generation.

We understand the impact not just because the three of us have spent decades working to protect fish and wildlife, and not just because our organizations have an intimate understanding of the significance of the now-jeopardized headwater streams and wetlands that are so critical to healthy wildlife, waterfowl and wild trout.

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We know this because we did what the E.P.A. apparently did not do: We dug into the best available mapping resources to find out what will happen.

Last year, Trout Unlimited [analyzed detailed](#) United States Geological Survey stream and topographic maps and other resources, and while these maps did not tell us whether a particular stream, lake or wetland will be protected or not under the new policy, they did help us reach larger conclusions.

Trout Unlimited's [research suggests](#) that more than six million miles of streams — half the total in the United States — will now be unprotected by the Clean Water Act, because they flow only after rainfall. More than 42 million acres of wetlands — again, about half the country's total — will no longer be protected because they are not immediately adjacent to larger waters.

This will make it easier to pollute streams and fill in wetlands that safeguard our water supplies, reduce flood risks and provide for healthy fish and wildlife habitat. And it will make it harder to provide sensible oversight of oil and gas projects, pipeline construction and major housing development. The impacts will be felt nationwide.

In [Arizona](#), for instance, home of the threatened Apache trout, almost all streams are dry except during and after rainstorms. As a result, 83 percent of Arizona streams will lose protection under the E.P.A.'s new policy, according to state officials, along with 99 percent of lakes. Because the state does not have its own regulations, 98 percent of the permits that limit pollution discharges into waterways will simply no longer be in force.

The situation is similar in [New Mexico](#), where the new rule will effectively invalidate permits controlling the levels of mercury and PCBs running off the heavily contaminated grounds of Los Alamos National Laboratory and into the Rio Grande, Santa Fe's main drinking water supply.

In West Virginia and Virginia, there will no longer be federal protections for some 82 small streams that are to be excavated if the 600-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline is built, based on surveys by Dominion, the pipeline's developer.

In the Great Plains, the E.P.A. will no longer conserve freshwater marshes known as [prairie potholes](#) that fill with water in the spring and provide critical, timely habitat for more than half of North America's migratory waterfowl. In the flood-prone [Houston](#) area, federal permits will not be required to develop coastal and prairie wetlands that absorb excess rainwater and provide habitat for migrating songbirds and waterfowl.

The E.P.A.'s new policy comes with a price tag. It's not just that it threatens an \$887 billion American outdoor recreation economy powered in part by anglers, duck hunters and wildlife watchers.

When the E.P.A. stops protecting these streams and wetlands, states will have to foot the bill for regulatory oversight; many states may decide not to step in at all. When developers fill in wetlands, local communities will be on the hook for cleaning up more frequent flood damage. When headwaters are polluted, cities downstream will pay to treat their drinking water.

Save-the-Dates



- April 2 – MLTU meeting 6:30 PM Directors, 7 PM Members at Richland Municipal Bldg.
- April 4 – MLTU Annual Fundraising Banquet at Holiday Inn in Downtown Johnstown. Doors open at 5 PM. Contact Randy Buchanan or Gary Cooper for details.
- April 5 – Benscreek Litter Cleanup, 9 AM, meet at Jim & Jimmies
- April 11 – Little Paint Creek Litter Cleanup, 8:30 AM–11:30 AM, meet along Berwick Road
- April 23 – Shanksville TIC Release Day, 8:15 AM, Shanksville Elementary School
- April 24 – Divine Mercy TIC Release Day, 8:30 AM, Greater Ferndale Sportsmen’s Club
- April 25 – Yellow Creek Litter Cleanup, 9 AM, meet at Frontier Restaurant
- April 28 – Blacklick Valley TIC Release Day, 8:15 AM, Howells Run & Lake Rowena
- May 1 – Bishop McCort TIC Release Day, 8:15 AM, Greater Ferndale Sportsmen’s Club
- May 3 – Yellow Creek Coalition meeting, 2 PM, Bowers Cabin
- May 7 – Shade-Central City TIC Release Day, 8:30 AM, Reitz #1 AMD system & Shade Sportsmen’s Club
- May 7 – MLTU meeting 6:30 PM Directors, 7 PM Members at Richland Municipal Bldg.
- May 9 – Shade Creek Litter Cleanup, 9 AM, at the old Iron Bridge
- May 19 – Forest Hills TIC Release Day, 8 AM, United Methodist Church
- May 26 – Conemaugh Township TIC Release Day, 8:15 AM, Greater Ferndale Sportsmen’s Club
- May 27 – Shanksville Outdoor Day, 9 AM, Central City Sportsmen’s Club
- June 4 – MLTU meeting 6:30 PM Directors, 7 PM Members at Richland Municipal Bldg.
- June 9 – MLTU Newsletter Submission deadline, 5 PM, mreckner@brandywine.org
- June 12 – Family Fishing Program @ Que, tentatively 5-8 PM, hosted by PA Fish and Boat Commission and SCRIP

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You need only consider the name to recognize what’s happening here. What was the Waters of the United States Rule is now the Navigable Waters Protection Rule. This signals a narrow concern only for commerce but not, illogically, for the network of tributaries and wetlands that keep navigable waters healthy.

It also completely misses the point of the Clean Water Act, which is to protect the health of all the nation’s waters.

If we are to reach that goal — if we are to keep our streams and wetlands safe for fish and wild-life, recreation, and drinking — we must not allow this flawed and misguided rule to stand.

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NatureWorks Summary

by Melissa Reckner



*MLTU members at NatureWorks.
Photo by Melissa Reckner.*

The fourth annual NatureWorks was held March 7 in the Cambria City section of Johnstown. Sue Konvolinka, a board member of the BottleWorks Ethnic Arts Center, and myself, Program Manager at Penguin Court, a Preserve of the Brandywine Conservancy, coordinated this event, which brought 23 conservation and outdoor recreation organizations and state agencies together for a day of fun! Over 434 people were counted at the door. Adding that figure to the 80 staff, volunteers, and organization representatives, 514 people participated in NatureWorks—a new record!

Smiles were seen on everyone's face as families touched Cambria County Conservation District's reptiles, dissected owl pellets with Prince Gallitzin State Park, tested water properties with Nathan's Divide Watershed Education Center, tied flies with MLTU, crafted dragonflies with Stackhouse Park,

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www.mltu.org

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learned which modes of transportation are allowed on area trails, viewed Jack Paluh's amazing artwork, and so much more!

REI, MLTU, SCRIP, Walmart (Johnstown), Bottle Works and Penguin Court were generous sponsors of this year's event, which remains free to attend.

Thank you to everyone who participated and made NatureWorks a great success!



Left, Jocelyn Fresch, a MLTU member, explains macroinvertebrates to a young guest. Below, Scott Jones, a PA Master Naturalist Trainee, helps a young man assemble a bluebird box. Bottom left, Denny Ritko, a volunteer with the Cambria County Conservation District, allows children to touch a snake. Photos by M. Reckner.

