



Coalition *for the*
Delaware River
Watershed

9TH ANNUAL DELAWARE RIVER WATERSHED FORUM

SEPTEMBER 29TH-OCTOBER 1ST 2021

Forum Program

9th Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum

The Delaware River Watershed Forum features a mix of engaging speakers and facilitated discussions to work toward shared watershed priorities. 2021 sessions were hosted virtually, with an in-person networking reception at the Logan Hotel in Philadelphia and in-person field trip experiences across the watershed.

-Wednesday September 29th, 2021-

Opening Plenary of 9th Annual Forum, 9:00am-10:30am

Opening Plenary featuring Sen. Bob Casey and Representatives Delgado and Fitzpatrick

[Session Recording](#), Password: TOF5=sHM

Join us to discuss the status of the new bipartisan Delaware River Basin Congressional Caucus, co-chaired by Representatives Antonio Delgado (NY-19) and Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-1) and priorities in the year ahead, including federal funding for key programs and agencies like the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program and Delaware River Basin Commission. Afterwards, Senator Bob Casey will join us for a keynote address and Q&A session about Senate priorities.

Breakout Sessions Round 1, 11:00am-12:00pm

Using Monitoring Data to Generate Impactful Regulatory Change

[Session Recording](#), Password: TOF5=sHM

During this session, the Center for Watershed Protection, American Rivers, and the Watershed Institute will provide an overview of the different tiers of water-quality monitoring, where this information fits within the Clean Water Act framework in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and how this information can create substantial regulatory change. After the presentation, session participants will go into breakout groups based on geographic location, where participants will brainstorm regulatory actions they would like to change, and discuss what type of monitoring would help groups acquire the data needed to drive this change.

Presented by: Ruth Hocker, Pennsylvania Office Director, Center for Watershed Protection; Lia Mastropolo, Urban Stormwater Associate Director, River Network; Kendra McKoy, Delaware Program Advocate, Watershed Institute; and Carol Collier, Senior Advisor for Watershed Management and Policy, The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University

Structural Racism and Federal Clean Water Policy

[Session Recording](#), Password: PDg=2mBv

While the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act have resulted in huge water quality improvements, many waterways have been left behind in what have become 'sacrifice zones.' This session will dive into how this legislation hit the ground in the Delaware River Basin, and how this provided a foundation that set the inequitable implementation of these policies into motion.

Moderated by: Ellen Kohler, Program Director for Water Resources, UMD EFC; Colleen Walters, Delaware River Basin Program Manager, River Network

Presented by: Tykee James, Government Affairs Coordinator, National Audubon Society; Jaclyn Rhoads, Assistant Executive Director, Pinelands Preservation Alliance; Marissa McClenton, Advocacy Team Member, Delaware Nature Society; Jackie Ng, Youth Development Coordinator, Delaware Nature Society

Building Trusting Relationships Between Community Groups and Water Utilities

[Session Recording](#), no password

Authentic and transparent relationships between local community groups and water systems are vital to achieving equitable and sustainable water systems. During this session, the River Network and WaterNow Alliance will share the results of an 18-month long effort outlining what is required to create such relationships and the circumstances from which they last. The information from this project has been synthesized into a series of trust-building practices and case studies, and speakers will share info on how we can further support these partnerships in the Watershed.

Presented by: Katherine Baer, VP River Programs, River Network; Caroline Koch, Water Policy Director, WaterNow Alliance; Patty Elkis, Deputy ED, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission; Erica Rossetti, Schuylkill Action Network Coordinator, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers: A Road Map for Designating Additional River Miles

[Session Recording](#), Password: *P3kH*71

Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers are managed through long-term partnerships between the National Parks System and state, regional, and local stakeholders. During this session, hear more from the National Parks Service and UDel professor Gerry Kauffman about how to tackle on-the-ground planning to determine the feasibility of Wild and Scenic designation.

Presented by: Paul Kenney, River Manager, NPS; Sarah Bursky, Natural Resource Specialist, NPS; Gerald Kauffman, Director, UD Water Resources Center; Hayley Rost, Graduate Research Intern, UD Water Resources Center; Andrew Homsey, GIS Coordinator, UD Water Resources Center

Breakout Sessions Round 2, 1:00pm-2:00pm

What it MEANS to be a Board Member

[Session Recording](#), Password: +mNIB.OV

Non-profit organizations rely heavily on their Board of Directors but many of those individuals accept the role without properly understanding what is expected. During this presentation, we will outline what it MEANS to be a Board member while identifying ways organizations can better utilize their Board members to meet their goals.

Presented by: Brenna Goggin, Mid-Atlantic Leadership Development Manager, River Network

Advancing Environmental Justice: Working to Bring Cumulative Impacts Legislation to Delaware

[Session Recording](#), Password: 2M1mkL?C

For far too long, disadvantaged, burdened communities have taken the brunt of dumping, pollution, and new construction without a say, resulting in adverse public health impacts. A group of motivated partners are working together on environmental justice policy in Delaware that would require additional requirements to obtain a permit for a new or existing facility. This session will explore what's worked well, challenges faced, and roadblocks still to overcome.

Presented by: Shyanne Miller and Willie Scott, Delaware Environmental Accountability Coalition

Restoring Water Quality in the Main Stem Delaware River: Programs, Policies, and Strategies

[Session Recording](#), no password

This data-driven session will explore the evolution of water quality in the main stem of the Delaware River, spanning from before the onset of modern clean water regulatory programs e.g. the 1972 Clean Water Act, through the present day. Learn about how the river's largest polluting sources have evolved over the years, addressing threats such as nutrient pollution, bacteria, salts, toxins, climate change, and other emerging contaminants. This session will take a deep dive into the plans, programs, and policies that have, over the years, driven measurable changes in water quality improvements, and will examine what future strategies may provide a sustainable, more equitably-minded path in these efforts.

Presented by: Delaware River Basin Commission: Steve Tambini, Executive Director, Sarah Beganskas PhD, Water Resource Scientist; Jacob Bransky, Aquatic Biologist; John Yagecic, Manager Water Quality Assessment

Equipping Future Conservation Leaders: How to Build an Inclusive Internship Program

[Session Recording](#), Password: kb70a**5

Internship and other workforce development programs have the potential to bring an array of benefits to the organization and area it serves: participants gain valuable skill sets, land and waterways are improved, and relationships are built between participants and facilitators. This session presents the critical success factors of building an inclusive and diverse internship or related program, covering topics such as recruiting participants, team building online vs. in-person, and engaging facilitators that are suitable role models to your target audience.

Presented by: Renata Barnes, Outdoor Equity Alliance Coordinator, Friends of Hopewell Valley; Lisa Wolff, Executive Director, Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space

Plenary Session, 3:30pm-5pm

DRB Restoration Program: How a Partnership Armed with a Grant Program is Accelerating Conservation

[Session Recording](#), Password: hINMvoT*

The Delaware River Basin Conservation Act established the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program (DRBRP), therein providing an avenue for appropriations to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) to create a technical assistance program and partnership to identify, prioritize, and implement meaningful and coordinated conservation in the Delaware River watershed. During 2021, the Service, in collaboration with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will invest \$9.5 million in on-the-ground conservation action through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF) to support fish and wildlife, water quality, water flow and access for outdoor recreation throughout the Delaware River watershed. Additionally, the Service recently established the Delaware River Watershed Conservation Collaborative (DRWCC) to strengthen coordination across agencies, organizations and partnerships currently working on conservation activities and amplify their collective impact. The Collaborative is working on a Conservation "Blueprint" for the watershed - a plan that will inform where dollars should be spent, ensuring communities share equitably in the benefits of increased public access and improved water quality, and more. But we need YOU! Learn more this initiative and ways to co-create the future of the watershed!

Presented by: Rachel Dawson, Delaware River Program Director, NFWF; Wendi Weber, Northeast Regional Director, USFWS; Mike Slattery, Landscape Partnerships Coordinator, Science Applications, USFWS; Christina Ryder, Delaware River Watershed Program Manager, Science Applications, USFWS

-Thursday September 30th, 2021-

Breakfast Roundtable Discussions, 9:00am-9:45am

*Not recorded

Stream Designations & Antidegradation Across the Watershed

Moderators & Speakers: Doug O'Malley, Director, Environment New Jersey; Abby Jones, VP, Legal and Policy, PennFuture; Emily Bauldaff, Mid-Atlantic Organizer Trout Unlimited

How Market and Policy Solutions Work Together to Protect the Watershed and Local Economies

Moderators & Speakers: Colton Fagundes, Senior Policy Manager, American Sustainable Business Council; Geoffrey Goll, Michelle Deery, Nate Clemmer

Events and Covid

Moderators & Speakers: Kristin Zilcosky, Director of Digital Engagement Conservation Voters of PA and NJLCV; Jess Cadorette, Field Director, Conservation Voters of PA

How to Utilize Constituents in Advocacy

Moderator & Speaker: Julie Slavet, ED Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership

Addressing Plastics Throughout the Watershed

Moderator & Speaker: N.Dini Checko, Project Director, ANJEC

The Impact of Positive Storytelling through the River of the Year

Moderators & Speakers: Sean Jackson, Clean Water Supply Assoc., American Rivers

Breakout Sessions Round 3, 10:00am-11:30am

A River Reconnected: The Perception of Public Access to the Delaware River

[Session Recording](#), Password: tTs6Xp?H

Public access to the Delaware River is a top priority for many communities along the river. The actual process of creating or improving public access is challenging and many communities today remain isolated from the Delaware River. Part of the challenges relating to public access involve issues related to perception of the waterfront as uninviting, polluted, and/or exclusive. This session will explore these perceptions and help continue the conversation of acknowledging and then working to address the negative aspects of these perceptions.

Presented by: Anthony Belfield, Chairman, Bensalem Environmental Advisory Board, Lisa Gaffney, ED, Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County; Aseel Rasheed, Director of Public Programs, Bartram's Garden; Miles Owen, Environmental Planner, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission; Stephanie Phillips, ED, Riverfront North Partnership

Collaboration with an Equity Lens: Priming the Watershed for Clean Water Investment

[Session Recording](#), No Password

Exciting announcements from the Biden Administration about the need for transformational change are providing additional incentives to take actions that reduce environmental pollution, improve community and public health, and provide economic stimulus. The ability to take maximum advantage of these pending federal initiatives will require maximum and sustained collaboration among and between levels of government, varying interest groups, and community members. The need to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are served is imperative. Session participants will be invited to share ideas on how to connect the many moving parts of this effort, joining those with union, sustainable business, academic, youth, and the RoadMap to Clean Water, Jobs, and Justice endeavors.

Presented by: Bartram's Garden: Ammarava Mika-El, Denkyem River Guardians Leader; Chloe Wang, River Programs Leader; Yasir Hall, Horticulture Apprentice and Denkyem River Guardians Leader
Carol Collier, Sr. Watershed Management and Policy Advisor, The Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel; Andy Kricun, Senior Fellow, U.S. Water Alliance; Verna Harrison, Verna Harrison & Associates; Alex Cupo, GSI Partners Manager, The Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia; Alexis Schulman Ph.D, Dolan Fellow and Ass. Research Professor, The Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel; Joe Youcha, Director, Building to Teach; Mungu Sanchez, Deputy Political Director, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice: From Theory to Practice w/ DRW Racial Justice Initiative

[Not recorded](#)

Has your organization been working on learning about the importance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice into your internal and external work, but feel stuck in how to move from the concepts you learn to actual implementation? Is your staff facing hurdles that could be circumvented if you learned about how other organizations navigated similar road blocks? Join the consultants working on the Delaware River Watershed Initiative's Racial Justice Initiative in this session to gain the information and skills needed to advance the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in your own work and within your organization, and to learn how the DRWI is implementing a watershed-wide road map to improving racial justice throughout the basin.

Presented by: Aimee Thorne-Thomsen, Founder, Guerrera Strategies;
Jennifer Driver, Founder, Take Root Strategies; Bianca Velez, Virtual Assistant;
Elizabeth Schroeder -Founder, Elizabeth Schroeder Consulting

Healthy Boundaries: The #1 Superpower For Next Level Environmental Justice Leaders

[Session Recording](#), Password: ^b16g@LV

The poet and activist Audre Lorde said, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Imposter syndrome and other power dynamics may make it feel uncomfortable to draw boundaries for yourself. In fact, when non-profit employees get serious about self-care and set boundaries it increases our wellness capital and benefits the causes we work so hard to promote. This workshop is designed to help you identify your boundaries, learn to communicate them, and what to do when someone crosses your boundaries. By the end of the workshop participants will be able to:

1. Assess 3 common reasons that make setting boundaries difficult
2. Identify strategies for dealing with the guilt that comes with setting boundaries
3. Practice two strategies to help you communicate your boundaries

Presented by: Aisha Moore, Founder, Self Care by Aisha

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership: Identifying Opportunities for Collaboration

[Session Recording](#), Password: i014+vbw

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership reconnects urban communities with their waterways in collaboration with community-led revitalization efforts. During this session, speakers will detail the partnership's goals, as well as collaboration opportunities to advance identified work plan activities within the watershed. Breakout groups will put their heads together and examine how to drive work plan activities to result in success, while incorporating community voices each step of the way.

Presented by: Erica Rossetti, Urban Waters Ambassador, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary; Kathy Klein, ED, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary; Chris Orvin, Urban Waters Team Lead, EPA; Frank McLaughlin, Community Collaborative Initiative, NJDEP; Simeon Hahn, Environmental Scientist, NOAA; Bobbi Britton, Community Organizer, Collaborate Northeast

Plenary Session, 12:00pm-1:30pm

Government Expenditures to Protect and Improve Water Quality in the Delaware River Basin

[Session Recording](#), Password: d&N2.91n

Rutgers University researchers recently completed a compilation and assessment of government expenditures to protect and improve water quality in the Delaware River Basin through land preservation, agricultural practices, green stormwater infrastructure, stream restoration projects and similar projects. More than \$800 million in government expenditures from federal to municipal were identified for the years 2014 through 2019. Experts were also interviewed to discuss program directions trends and equity issues. Now, the Rutgers team is working to improve that database by adding new expenditure categories, filling data gaps, and then extending the database through the years 2020 and 2021. This session will provide a brief overview, discuss implications of the initial findings, and engage the audience in a discussion of ways to improve the project results.

Presented by: Dan Van Abs PhD/FAICP, Professor, Rutgers University; Karen O'Neill PhD, Associate Professor Rutgers University; Nathan Boon, Sr. Program Officer, William Penn Foundation; Meishka Mitchell, VP, Camden Community Partnership; Stephanie Dalke, Program Manager, Environmental Finance Center at UMD

Virtual Speed Networking, 4:00pm-5:00pm

In-Person Networking Event, 6:00pm

Reminisce and Reconnect: A Coalition In-Person Networking Event
The Logan Hotel, Philadelphia, PA

-Friday October 1st, 2021-

Plenary Session, 9:00am-11:00am

Connecting the Dots Between the Watershed-Wide Partnerships
[Session Recording](#), Password: ?S276%e5

Back by popular demand! What if everyone across the watershed came together to solve one problem? While we've had much success in cleaning up the Delaware, we still have trouble crossing the lines of our coalitions, alliances, networks, and initiatives. Whether it's the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed, Alliance for Watershed Education, the Circuit Trail Network, or the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, there are several large-scale initiatives and even more small collaborations and impactful efforts underway. How can CDRW's policy work perform to advance the protection goals that are engrained in the DRWI? How can monitoring efforts contribute to storytelling to engage the outdoor recreation community, which can then advance policy and inclusion/equity efforts? Why is it so hard to get us to work in concert? This session will highlight our collective strengths, the challenges we face, and will get your input on what it will take to start working together toward the same broad goals. Whether you're neck-deep in an initiative, a part of a smaller collaborative efforts looking for support, or a group looking from the outside-in, there's space to discuss how to embark in a wide-spread coordinated effort to make this watershed even more powerful in its efforts for healthier lands and waters. Presented by: Nathan Boon, Sr. Program Officer, William Penn Foundation; Jame McCray, Managing Director, Alliance for Watershed Education; Mark Zakutansky, Director of Conservation Policy Engagement at Appalachian Mountain Club; Lin Perez, Program Director, The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University; Patrick Starr, Executive VP, Pennsylvania Environmental Council

Closing Keynote, 11:30am-12:30am

Unlearning False Racial Myths, featuring Dr. Karen Gaffney
[Session Recording](#), Password: euM0+H^K

In this keynote, Dr. Karen Gaffney, author of *Dismantling the Racism Machine: A Manual and Toolbox*, will highlight false racial myths that perpetuate systemic racism. These myths include the false beliefs that race is biological, that race, including whiteness, has always existed, and that the Civil Rights Movement ended racism. The workshop will share strategies for debunking these myths in order to develop and apply an anti-racist perspective in our personal and professional lives.

Presented by: Dr. Karen Gaffney

Field Trips, 2:30pm

Oyster Shell Bagging with the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

201 N. Church St. Wilmington, DE 19801

Volunteer with the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary's oyster shell recycling program. PDE recycles several tons of oyster shell every year for use in living shoreline and other oyster restoration projects. For these projects the shells need to first be put into mesh bags. Come help with this important task! Volunteers will work together to get the loose oyster shell into the bags. Its a physical job, but rewarding. This activity takes place completely outdoors, please dress for the weather and wear close toed shoes. Bring plenty of water, there will be some light snacks.

LandHealth Institute Native Plant Nursery Tour

49th Street and Parkside Avenue, Philadelphia

Part of LandHealth's mission is to introduce people in our region to the pleasures and benefits of using native plants in landscaping. Our native plant nursery in Parkside, West Philadelphia, specializes in growing plants that occur naturally in our area. We want everyone to know that these locally-adapted plants are attractive and very low maintenance. Native plants have the additional benefit of providing food and cover for other beneficial creatures, including pollinating insects and hummingbirds. Take part in activities, learning, and visioning exercises at the nursery, and outline our crosswalk with on-water and near-water programming for middle and high school students, college interns and co-op students, and adults.

Stream Clean-Up on the East Coast Greenway

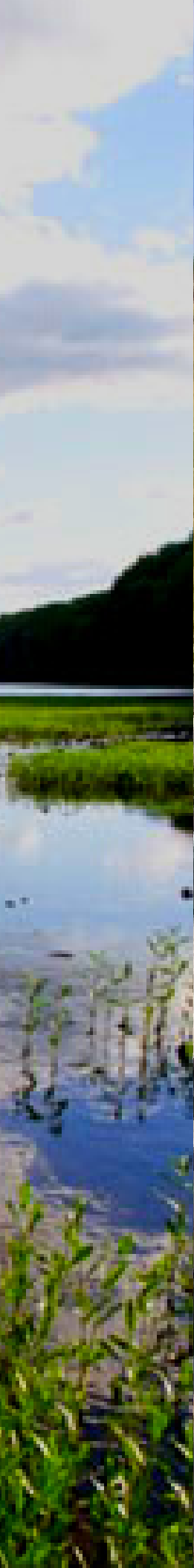
Barry Bridge Park, Chester, PA

The Chester Ridley Crum Watershed Association is holding monthly cleanups at Barry Bridge park in Chester, PA. Join them for their October Monthly clean up and learn about the East Coast Greenway trail, the culverting of the Lamokin Run Watershed, and more while making an impact!

Petty's Island Tour

Petty's Island Bridge, 36th Street & Harrison Ave, Pennsauken Township, NJ

Explore this gem with local historian and author, Bob Shinn, on a hike through time on Petty's Island. Hike along the Delaware River where points of interest will bring history to life! Along our walk we will hear tales of pirates, learn the role of women in the island's history, understand how slave traders used places like Petty's and discuss the importance of preserving urban oases like these.



John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge Tour

Refuge Welcome Center, 8601 Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19153

Celebrated as America's First Urban Refuge, John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum was established in 1972 for the purposes of preserving, restoring, and developing the natural area known as Tinicum Marsh. In addition, the refuge was established to provide environmental education and an opportunity to study nature. Be one of the 260,000 annual visitors and join this trip to learn about the work that Ducks Unlimited has done in the refuge, and how wetlands conservation in populated areas positively impacts both wildlife and people.

Cuddebackville, NY – the Basha Kill, the Neversink and Water Watching 112 Galley Hill Road, Cuddebackville, NY, 12729

NYenvironcom and the Deerpark Rural Alliance (DRA) will host attendees on a brief tour of notable waters in western Orange County in Cuddebackville in the Town of Deerpark – starting from the lower Basha Kill following it down to where it joins the Neversink River. The Neversink is a key tributary of the Delaware and meets it in Port Jervis. Along the way we will stop at one of NYenvironcom's WaterInsight active water quality monitoring stations, where we will introduce the program and the technology. The WaterInsight program trains communities on do-it-yourself water data collection methods to enable citizens to advocate for science-based land planning. It is a tool that allows for the collection of data to enable smart land planning and provide assistance with the restoration and preservation of rural land and communities. Following the tour, there will be light refreshments and an opportunity for participants to meet, greet, and share.

Jenkintown Creek Restoration Project Tour

Conklin Swimming Pool, 15 Church Road, Elkins Park, PA, 19027

For many years, the almost 4-mile Jenkintown Creek has been neglected and polluted, surrounded by development. Fed by runoff, its streambanks eroded each year while harmful chemicals like motor oil and pesticides washed into its waters. In 2014, TTF stepped in to restore and protect the creek, working with schools, religious institutions, and municipalities on pollution measures that work with nature. Join for a tour of projects that are the result of nearly 2 million dollars, and learn how volunteer stream-keepers work alongside staff to help this watershed thrive.

Virtual Field Trips, 2:30pm

Virtual Film Viewing of a "River Reborn"

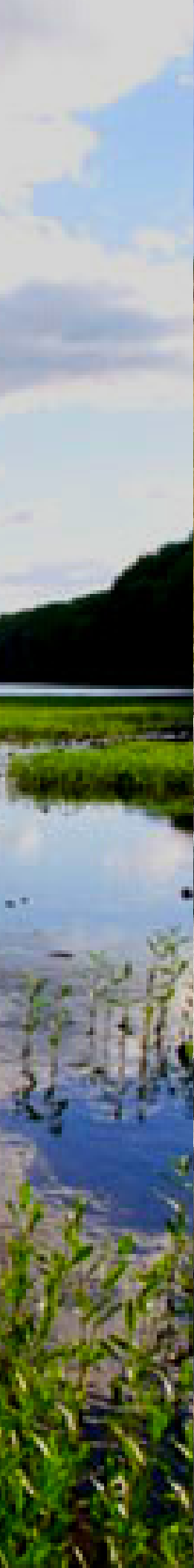
[View Trailer](#)

Join this session to view *A River Reborn*, a compelling new 30 min film about the successful efforts to remediate acid mine drainage along the Little Conemaugh River: restoring the Conemaugh, allowing the return of fish and helping revitalize Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Too often we see how Pennsylvania has failed it's natural environment. The environmental movement needs to see success stories of reclamation & renewals in order to envision success, and this film showcases one of them. *A River Reborn* demonstrates the opportunities that can arise as we work to reverse past failures of stewardship – a lesson to recall while we face the challenges in the Delaware River Basin, including acid mine drainage waste and the legacy of coal mining.

Following a live virtual viewing of the film (approx. 30 minutes), PennEnvironment will have a conversation with award-winning filmmaker Ben Kalina about the making of the film, done in partnership with Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds, and the ways in which the efforts along the Little Conemaugh can be a blueprint for cleanups both within our own watershed and across the country.

Virtual Wetlands of the Watershed Tour

Want to learn about the wetlands of the watershed from the comfort of your own home? Join this virtual wetland tour filmed at various wetlands throughout the Delaware River Watershed region. Learn about natural and manmade impacts of the wetlands, as well as how to identify issues present in these landscapes.



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