



Musconetcong River News

Fall 2018

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Asbury, New Jersey

MWA Celebrates Wild & Scenic Anniversary with Film Festival

By Karen Doerfer, Communications and Administrative Coordinator

2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act created by Congress in 1968 to preserve the free-flowing condition of rivers that met the established outstanding natural, cultural and recreational criteria.

In 2006, the Musconetcong River was officially added as a Partnership Wild & Scenic River with the MWA and partners creating a River Management Plan and Council to oversee the best interests of our river.

Last summer, MWA Executive Director, Alan Hunt was asked to interview for a film featuring Partnership Rivers on the East Coast. The film, *River Connections*, was then added to the 2018 film library for the Wild & Scenic Film Festival On Tour, and MWA wanted to become involved in hosting.

Sunday, September 9th, MWA hosted the On Tour festival at Centenary University. The day was a success and brought out other environmental non-profit organizations who tabled prior to the films, a panel of speakers who spoke on various topics including ecotourism and local habitat restoration, and finally, a curated selection of films featuring wildlife, restoration efforts and the *River Connections* film in which MWA was featured.

Students, families, current MWA supporters, and other locals left with a lot of new information on local and national ecology, as well as a sense of stewardship for the Musconetcong and Delaware Rivers – both highlighted throughout the day.

For more information on MWA events, please visit our website www.musconetcong.org and look for our calendar of events. 🌐



Panel of Speakers from left to right: Krassi Lazarova (Moderator), Centenary University; Paul Kenney, National Park Service; Mark Zakutansky, Appalachian Mountain Club; Gisele Smisko, Avian Wildlife Center; Andrew Dang, Trout Unlimited; Geoff Goll, Princeton Hydro; James Kearn III, Pohatcong Township Mayor

Musconetcong Anticipates the Addition of 4.3 miles to the National Wild & Scenic River System

This July, the Pohatcong Township Council passed a resolution in support of a lower section of the Musconetcong being added to the National Wild & Scenic River System. The adjoining municipality, Holland Township, has already passed a similar resolution. As a result, 4.3 miles of river from the Hughesville Mill (Cyphers Road) to the Delaware River is now on its way to being added as part of this federally

protected collection of rivers and river segments. The next step is the National Park Service publishing a Notice for Public Comment in the Federal Register. They are already working on this, and MWA will get the word out when there is an opportunity to comment. What a way to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act! 🌐

Asbury Mill Progress Resumes

By Jean Sharp, Asbury Mill Volunteer Committee

With the generous funding recently received from Warren County's Charitable and Municipal Trust, the State of New Jersey Historic Trust, and the Franklin Township Open Space Fund, it's time for MWA to get back to restoring the historic Asbury Mill!

We recently hosted a design workshop with neighbors, public officials, members of the local historic community and our architect, Re:Vision Architecture of Philadelphia, PA. Re:Vision is a green architecture and planning company with extensive experience in both Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

(LEED) construction and the useful repurposing of historic structures. The intention of the workshop was to examine layout options and provide architectural guidance for mapping the interior use of the building. The invaluable input from the stakeholders who attended will guide us as we move forward.

If you have been by the Asbury Mill lately, the scaffolding on the East wall facing Main Street was hard to miss. Our mason contractor, Pat Breslin, removed decades old stucco, cleaned and repointed the wall, and weather-sealed the original underlying stonework with new stucco. Now that the scaffolding has been removed, the wall is beautiful.

The North wall facing the village of Asbury and the South wall along the river will also be repaired and sealed with period stucco. The West wall, facing down river, was never covered with stucco since a portion of that surface had an attached shed that was removed during the last century. The stone on that face of the building will be repaired and repointed to showcase the building's construction details.

As work moves forward this fall, the remaining elements of a more elaborate septic system will be installed. Because the building is located close to the river, we are held to a high standard for septic management. We will install a Clivus Multrum composting toilet just as we

have in the River Resource Center across the street.

We also plan to install new windows on the North wall. They will closely match the Mill's original single-glazed windows, but have a highly efficient double glazing to further help weather-seal the Mill. As construction continues, the other two walls will be finished. We hope that work will be continued late into the fall – if weather permits. Our goal is to have the Mill fully weather-sealed in the spring when we can obtain a temporary certificate of occupancy to permit guided tours.

The Mill's first floor and basement will be reserved for public use as a meeting space for educational activities and community events. As plans develop, we will identify how to best display historic materials and exhibits. We plan to have the Mill serve as an interpretive center and are exploring themes centered on the concept that Asbury has been a good place to live and make a living ever since Paleolithic tribes settled here 13,000 years ago. Their early history will be featured along with the evolution of modern farming and industrial technology from Colonial days. A strong educational element of watershed management will be included as well.

We are always looking for support for the project. Yes, we need funding, but we also need bright ideas as we work toward completion. Contact MWA if you want to put your donations and ideas to work. 🌐



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www.musconetcong.org

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Asbury Mill East wall with new stucco

Proposed Natural Gas Power Plant

By Alan Hunt, MWA Executive Director

This past June, MWA first learned of a 670MW Natural Gas Power Plant proposed by Phoenix Energy Center at the former Warren Paper Mill site in Holland Township and Pohatcong Township. Only preliminary applications have been made for the project, and there is limited information concerning the proposed project's potential for impact on the watershed. More than 15 major permits will be needed including air quality, water quality and quantity, Flood Hazard Area, and permissions to extend existing power and gas transmission lines.

One key factor is the availability of cooling water for the plant. About 80 percent of its cooling water is to come from several active wells on the site, and 20 percent from the Musconetcong River. Up to 5.5 million gallons of water withdrawals per day are proposed with a 1.5 million gallon daily thermal discharge to the Musconetcong River. This represents about 1 percent of the daily average flow of the Musky.

Operations at the Warren Paper Mill ceased in 2007, and the permissions for that volume of groundwater and surface water usage would need new approvals. In response to Phoenix Energy's initial application to the Highlands Council, the volume of water withdrawal was found inconsistent with the water budget availability for that area which is already in a water deficit from existing uses.



Alan Hunt. March 2017 photograph of the former Warren Paper Mill.

There are many interested stakeholders involved in this proposed project. MWA has met with the Holland Township Environmental Commission, Highlands Coalition, and several other environmental non-profit organizations about the project. Since the lower segment of the Musconetcong River is being added to the National Wild & Scenic River System downstream of the site, a National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act review may be needed for this project. This is a project we, and many others, will be following closely. 🌱

The Musconetcong River Management Council Went on a Field Trip

By Alan Hunt, MWA Executive Director

The Musconetcong River has two sewerage treatment plants discharging treated effluent. One is located in Hackettstown and the other is in Budd Lake. These are well-run facilities that meet the NJDEP's Category 1 "anti-degradation" water quality standard. For its August meeting, the Musconetcong River Management Council (MRMC) had a field meeting at the Musconetcong Sewerage Authority (MSA).

The facility has a capacity of 4.31 million gallons a day. It uses mechanical, biological and chemical separation to treat and settle solids and bacteria to process the sewage. An aluminum-based compound is utilized to separate out any remaining solids and metals. Treated bio-solids are transferred to the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission waste water treatment facility for final reprocessing.

The plant serves several towns in the Musconetcong Watershed including Netcong, Stanhope, Mt. Arlington, Roxbury, Mt. Olive, Byram, and Hopatcong. Importantly, it has expanded its service to Lake Hopatcong communities, where rocky and shallow soil conditions limit the effectiveness of traditional septic systems. This



MRMC members are led on a tour of the Musconetcong Sewerage Authority by its Director, James Schilling, pictured at the left.

has improved water quality for Lake Hopatcong as well as downstream communities. As the served communities use groundwater supplies, the MSA transfers that water to the Musconetcong River once it is treated, and this adds to the river's flow. The facility is a well-run, virtually odorless, and an important part of keeping our water clean. MWA and the MRMC thanks the MSA for the tour! 🌱

Welcome New NJDEP Watershed Ambassador to MWA's Office

Ryan Jiorle was born and raised in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, but took a meandering route to get back to living and serving as a Watershed Ambassador for this area. He received a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, followed by a Master of Science in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences from the University of Florida. After graduate school, he spent two and a half years working in Marine Fisheries Management for the State of Virginia before accepting the Watershed Ambassador position. Ryan is excited to use his background in environmental



conservation and stakeholder engagement to increase awareness of watershed issues in the region he is proud to call home.

The AmeriCorps Ambassador program in New Jersey focuses on water quality issues and is run through the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Each year, Watershed Ambassadors serve at different agencies throughout the state and focus on educating the public on watershed stewardship as well as coordinating various environmentally-focused volunteer activities throughout the year. 🌍

Floating Classroom Educates MWA Staff & Board

By Karen Doerfer, Communications and Administrative Coordinator

MWA Board and Staff recently had the opportunity to have a meeting with the Lake Hopatcong Foundation (LHF) on their new floating classroom. The floating classroom is a covered catamaran pontoon boat that travels around the lake and usually serves as an interactive learning center for local schools.

Following the standard meeting that both organizations like to have regularly, LHF Board and Staff showed MWA around the lake, provided classroom samples that they show children, and gave a brief history of different areas of the lake.

“The Floating Classroom has served not just to help us educate more than 1,000 students of all ages this summer, it is also a great

meeting space for us to collaborate with other groups while cruising on the water and appreciating the natural resource that surrounds us,” said Jessica Murphy, LHF President.

Lake Hopatcong is the headwaters of the Musconetcong River so MWA is interested in the health of the lake. MWA and LHF work together whenever possible to continue to improve the health of our shared watershed resource. This includes participating in clean-ups together, sharing water quality monitoring data, creating shared outreach and educational materials and more.

“So much of what we do as organizations overlap, and so it’s wonderful to have the opportunity to discuss issues with each other and plan for the future together,” said Murphy. “The health of the Musconetcong River and the health of Lake Hopatcong are inextricably linked, especially when you start talking about invasive species and water quality issues. Having a partnership is essential as we work to protect these bodies of water and surrounding watershed.”

For more information on how you can visit the Floating Classroom, visit the Lake Hopatcong Foundation’s website www.lakehopatcongfoundation.org.



SAVE THESE DATES!

Saturday, November 24: Post-Thanksgiving Hike at Point Mountain, from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Burn off those Thanksgiving calories at our annual hike on the Ridge Trail of the Point Mountain Reserve. A scenic overlook provides a beautiful vista of distant mountains and farmland. The trail is diverse and challenging at times and includes a steep and rocky incline. Good for novice and expert hikers. Bring a snack, water and binoculars to the gravel parking lot on Point Mountain Road, 0.3 miles from Route 57. MWA Members are free! Non-members are asked to donate \$3 (Not more than \$10/family). For more information or to register, email kyle@musconetcong.org.

Thursday, November 29: Asbury Mill Fundraiser, 6:00 pm at Hawk Pointe Golf Club. Join MWA and support the continued restoration of the Asbury Mill. Cocktail hour is from 6:00-7:00 pm followed by dinner, special guests and a silent auction. Tickets are \$75 per person and can be purchased on the MWA website. There are table options if you would like to sponsor this event. Please call (908) 537-7060 or email karen@musconetcong.org.

CJ's Challenge, Remembering a Legacy



CJ Koop was a very active member of the MWA community. She was a Board Member from 2009 to 2012 and involved in our water quality monitoring program. She was part of the River Watcher team that monitored near the Lake Hopatcong Dam as well as in Hackettstown and Port Morris in Roxbury Township. As a Warren County resident, she was very familiar with the Musconetcong Watershed and worked to protect and preserve the river. She participated in our annual river clean-ups, maintenance of our native plantings, and River Resource Center clean-ups. She also worked on a special project to place underwater data loggers in the upper Musconetcong between Lakes Hopatcong and Musconetcong.

As a testimony to her dedication to both the Musconetcong River and the MWA, CJ left a bequest to the MWA with the wish that it be matched by our network of friends who also care about the river. The \$8,000 gift she left us will go a long way toward furthering our outreach and education programs. However, your match would help further our mission even more and help us meet CJ's Challenge. This year, for #GivingTuesday, MWA is working to spread CJ's story of volunteerism and environmental stewardship with the hope that her donation will be matched. If you would like to donate to CJ's charitable match campaign, please visit our website, www.musconetcong.org. 🌱

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Meetup
Musconetcong
River Area
Outdoor Activities

For more information or to register for any of these events, please email info@musconetcong.org or call (908) 537-7060, unless otherwise noted. MWA River Resource Center (RRC) is located at 10 Maple Avenue, Asbury, NJ.

The Musconetcong Watershed Association

The Musconetcong River Valley is rich in scenery, history, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. The river rises up in Lake Hopatcong - New Jersey's largest spring-fed lake - and is shadowed by 1,000-foot Highland ridges and slices through a deep, limestone river valley, flowing swiftly to the Delaware River. Along the way the "Musky" passes by state and county parks, bustling towns, vital industries, historic villages, and some of the most productive farmland in the state.

The Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) is a non-profit organization formed in 1992 to protect and enhance the Musconetcong River and its related resources through advocacy and environmental education programs, scientific research and river restoration projects. The MWA scope spans the 158 square-mile Musconetcong River Watershed, and includes portions of four counties, and all or portions of 26 municipalities. The Musconetcong River became part of the National Wild and Scenic River System in 2006.

MWA members are part of a network of individuals, families and organizations who care about the Musconetcong River and its watershed. They are kept informed about issues concerning the river and its related resources by receiving quarterly issues of the Musconetcong River News.



PO Box 113
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MWA Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the Musconetcong Watershed Association in which I will receive membership benefits and publications. I have enclosed a check payable to MWA for the membership category listed below:

- \$20 Student
- \$30 Family
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Sustainer
- \$250 Steward
- \$500 Champion
- \$1,000+ Life Member

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