

RIVER VIEWS

SHARK RIVER CLEANUP COALITION NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2007



TREES VS. TAR

by Jerry Meyer



The rateables chase is the single biggest reason why New Jersey is losing land 2.3 times faster than the increase in population. The growing and largely unnecessary loss of nearly 50 acres of open space a day to development hurts everyone because it puts our drinking water at risk, increases flooding and storm runoff, and reduces tourism dollars" (Asbury Press 1/19/07).

According to David Peifer (Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissioners) it can be shown that ratables produce higher taxes. This assessment appears to be validated throughout the State. Additionally several authorities predict at the current rate the world population is likely to double in the next 40 years, and that New Jersey will be "built out" in the next 20 to 50 years.

It would seem there is a mentality that trees are expendable. Not true!

Human encroachment on our valuable wetlands is continuing to cause irreversible damage, some of which is well disguised. When trees are sacrificed for tar, the impervious surface allows trash and pollutants to wash into our water supply, as well as lakes and oceans.

The Legal Corner

This past winter President Ed Lippincott and Board Attorney John P. Brennan Esq. attended a Tinton Falls Planning Board meeting to express our reservations about a proposed development called Traditions at Tinton Falls. The proposal was to build over 250 condominiums on a branch of the Shark River known as the Reevey Branch. The Reevey Branch is a Category One wa-

Most new developments are ordered to plant a token amount of greenery, just enough to satisfy an ordinance. Even after 20 years these saplings will never replace the foliage removed. Not only did the removed plants cause a loss of beauty, they served multiple other purposes:

- Filtration of surface water.
- Absorption of airborne contaminants.
- Flood prevention
- Sound barriers.
- Recycling oxygen, by absorbing carbon dioxide.
- Protecting streams by preventing erosion.
- Providing homes for wild animals.

Here are some proposals:

- High rise multi-family units only. Parking within building. These cost less to maintain, heat, and control.

- Mall construction with parking under or over buildings.
- Tree ordinances encompassing inventories, and mandatory maintenance programs.
- K-12 education and participation in agricultural programs.
- Replacing storm drains with improved designs to filter out floatable trash.
- Large-scale tree planting programs.
- Screening systems to trap floatable trash.

These are only some of the obvious samples, however the bottom line is tree loss causes an ecological imbalance, hence contribution to atmospheric changes and global warming.

Jerry Meyer is a retired engineer and resident of Neptune. He is a member of the Neptune Environmental Commission and the Deal Lake Commission.

SPRING CLEANUP DAY IS MAY 12!

terway and has been identified by the Monmouth County Health Department as the cleanest stream in Eastern Monmouth County. Our concern was that the proposed development infringed upon the 300 foot buffer insured by C1 status, with outfall structures to remove stormwater runoff. According to the developer's own experts, the builder could eliminate the offending outfalls

by placing the stormwater detention basins underground, and the Coalition team made the case that all measures needed to be taken to protect the Reevey Branch. The Planning Board agreed with the SRCC's arguments and voted unanimously to approve Traditions with the underground basins and no infringement of the 300 foot C1 buffers.

SWEEP YOUR SIDE OF THE STREET

By Jeff Hoffman

"If each of us sweeps in front of our own steps, the whole world would be clean."
-Goethe-

Who knew that Goethe was such an environmentally conscious person? Some days it all seems so overwhelming. We ask ourselves what can I do that will make a difference? I believe that is why we have the SRCC, strength in numbers.

It may only be a drop in the bucket but when we sweep up in front of our doorstep and add up our collective effort as a group, we can achieve so much more. Just take a look at our web site to see what individuals working together have accomplished.

If you are encouraged to participate in the SRCC efforts to protect the Shark River watershed, join us at our Spring Cleanup May 12th, go to

a town hall meeting and voice your opinion, pick up plastic bottles and soda cans that might otherwise wind up in the river when you are out for a walk.

Some other things you can do to make a difference:

- Fix leaky faucets
- Use eco-friendly detergents and soaps
- Catch downspout water in rain-barrels for use during dry spells
- Install a rain garden.
- Install low flow shower heads and toilets

It might seem like a small thing but every drop in the bucket helps keep our river clean.

Oh and don't forget to renew your membership and get others to join!

Adopt a Stream

The Shark River Cleanup Coalition has designed a visual monitoring program with the help of Americorps volunteer Jenna Provost that is going to insure the health of the Shark River Watershed for years to come. We need volunteers to sign up for a visual assessment of the waterway over a set length at least four times a year. Volunteers will go out in teams of two and walk along a section of the river once during each of the four seasons: winter, spring, summer, and fall. We have a visual assessment form that will get filled out each time along with maps and basic directions. Training will be provided as well as detailed instructions on where to go and what to look for. By collecting data over an extended period of time, we can insure that the Shark River Watershed continues to be the ecological gem we all know and love. Go to our website for more information or call 732-681-0059 to enroll and adopt a section of stream.

Shark River Cleanup Coalition Membership Application

The SRCC is a nonprofit 501(c3) corporation. All contributions are tax deductible as allowable by law

Please print

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

Enclosed is my check for:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| Student, Junior or Senior (under 18 or over 65) | \$25 per year _____ |
| Individual member (\$1 per week) | \$52 per year _____ |
| Family Membership (\$10 per month) | \$120 per year _____ |
| Sponsoring Family Membership (\$1 per day) | \$365 per year _____ |
| Business Donor | \$250 per year _____ |
| Business Sponsor (free 1 year ad on website) | \$500 per year _____ |
| Donation only (any amount) | _____ |

**Make checks payable to SRCC and mail to: PO Box 2241 Neptune City, NJ 07754
Phone 732-681-0059 New Jersey Charity registration Number CH 2165700**

SPRING CLEANUP TO BE HELD MAY 12

SRCC Board of Directors

Ed Lippincott - President
James McNamara - VP
Jeff Hoffman - Treasurer
Kirsty Brown - Secretary
Bill Sciarappa, PhD
John Brennan, Esq.



Kayaker participates in Shark River Cleanup

Get ready for the Shark River Cleanup to be held on Saturday May 12. The SRCC is again organizing this environmental event to promote public awareness of our estuary and stimulate municipal repair programs. You can help strengthen and protect our vital natural habitat by joining this shoreline cleanup at 9:00 am during low tide or join a kayaker cleanup at 1:30 pm during high tide. Cleanup supplies and refreshments will be provided but bring your own watercraft if that is your volunteer method.

We will meet at Memorial Park in Neptune City. To get there, take Route 35 south past the Exxon gas

station, and then right on either Green or Bell to Riverview. We plan a free BBQ from 12-1:15. Collecting and removing various forms of debris and pollutants will improve our recreational and drinking waters and help bolster populations of threatened species like horseshoe crabs, ospreys, and bald eagles. Plus, it's a lot of productive exercise and fun meeting old friends and making new ones in a worthy cause.

For more kayak information, contact Ann Mancuso at 732-493-0762 or email dr-ann@hotmail.com. For general information and shoreline program contact SRCC Presi-

Bacterial Source Tracking Detects Pollution Culprits

A seminar entitled *Bacterial Source Studies in Shark River* was sponsored by Monmouth University and Rutgers Cooperative Extension on Thursday evening, March 15, at the Belmar Boro Hall. This event was hosted by Mayor Ken Pringle, a leading environmental public official. Mayor Pringle introduced Associate Dean John Tiedemann of Monmouth University, who is also the Associate Director of the Urban Coastal Institute. Tiedemann summarized this important project of tracking and identifying sources of indicator bacteria such as *E. coli* found in various parts of the Shark River watershed. Such indicator bacteria have frequently been found in standard board of health testing that have exceeded safety limits for swimming, bathing, drinking, and shell fish harvest. As a result, the small beach at Memorial Park in Neptune City has been closed for over 15 yrs. Health concerns include contaminated shellfish, skin rashes, infections of eyes, ear, nose and throat, among other medical problems.

Utilizing a new laboratory technique known as MAR-microbial antibiotic resistance – Dean Tiedemann explained how bacteria from different species are unique and distinct from one another, which can provide comparative results from representative water samples. This scientific method can show any significant contributions of *E. coli* bacteria stemming from human sources, pets, water fowl, domestic livestock, and terrestrial wildlife. In the Shark River, preliminary results of this study clearly implicated human sources such as could derive from untreated sewage, improper septic systems, and boater toilet dumping. While humans were of primary concern, other important sources included waterfowl like geese and gulls. Notably, pet sources were not found to be a significant contributor, which may verify that pooper scooper laws are working. A surprising source of bacterial pollution was feral cats – those wild cousins of domestic cats that can be separated by their bacterial resistance profiles to antibiotic treatments.

Dean Tiedemann handled many good questions from the attentive audience concerning this environmental detective work and how best to use it. After considerable feedback and comment, the group focused on future actions to improve water quality in the Shark River. Hopefully such new technology as well as upcoming DNA methods will speed detection of these bacterial culprits and enhance solutions to improving our local water resources.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

By Ed Lippencott

As spring approaches our thoughts head outdoors and some of us are getting ready for another summer in the water. The Shark River Cleanup Coalition has been working hard all winter to protect The Shark River Watershed and planning a busy summer for our membership.

We have plenty of opportunities for you to help us fulfill our mission:

The Shark River Cleanup Coalition is designing a volunteer water-monitoring program we are calling "Adopt-A-Stream." With the help of AmeriCorps volunteer Jenna Provost, volunteer teams will be trained to do a visual assessment of stream sections several times a year (see article this issue).

Are you someone who loves to plan parties? Then we could really use your skills to help us organize fundraising events for the fall and winter. We are moving *Riverfest* to the fall this year to take advantage of the better weather. We are working on the details now and could really use your help.

Our Spring Cleanup is scheduled for May 12 at Memorial Park Beach in Neptune City. We are hoping for good weather and can't wait to see who's going to show up. The cleanup starts at 9 am for the land based crew and the kayakers are going to help in the afternoon. If you want to help out with

the kayak cleanup but don't have a watercraft, let us know and we may be able to help you.

Our third annual spring Horseshoe Crab survey will start on May 29th. What began as an Eagle Scout Project has turned into an annual spring event and we are excited to get started. If you have never seen Horseshoe Crab spawning, it is a great opportunity to learn about these fascinating creatures and help protect their habitat and the wildlife that depend on them.

The SRCC is nothing without our membership and with your help we can make a huge difference for water quality in our area. We look forward to your help.



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