

Raccoon Creek News

Changing the World One Tributary at a Time

A Message from the Chairperson

Dear Raccoon Creek Partnership Members,

Happy Fall to everyone! This has been an exciting and eventful summer for Raccoon Creek Partnership. RCP held two highly successful summer camps in June and August partially funded by a grant from Ohio EPA's Ohio Environmental Education Fund. Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is working on several new projects and maintenance projects in the watershed including projects at East Branch, Harble Griffith and the Orland Gob Pile. We are continuing to pull hundreds of tires out of the watershed and held two cleanups during the Ohio River Clean Sweep—one by land and one by boat led by Raccoon Creek Water Trails Association. As you can see, it's all go at Raccoon Creek, hopefully we'll see all of you at a festivals this fall or at the RCP Annual Dinner on October 16 at the New Marshfield Community Center!



Natalie Kruse, Raccoon Creek Partnership Chair

2011 RCP Annual Dinner – October 16th

Amy Mackey, Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator

Everyone's invited to the 5th annual Raccoon Creek Partnership Annual Dinner! This year's dinner / meeting will be held on Sunday, October 16th, at 4:00 p.m. at the New Marshfield (Waterloo) Community Center across from the Post Office in New Marshfield. ***Note the location change from our usual Waterloo Aquatic Education Center!*** This year, Derek Mills will be hosting an Apple Tasting of many varieties of his locally grown apples. The dinner will be a potluck, so please bring a dish to share. The annual dinner is a great time to renew your membership for the upcoming year, and get caught up on everything that is going on with the Partnership and Raccoon Creek! There will be a silent auction featuring gift certificates, crafts, and food items, from many local businesses, artists, and gardeners. There will also be a 50/50 raffle. RCP board elections will be held during the annual meeting as well. This year, we are accepting nominations for 5 board member positions. Nominations must be received by October 2nd and may be sent to RCP board member, Molly Gurien at molly@freestylecanoeing.com. Hope to see you all there, make sure to write it on your calendar so you don't forget...October 16th, 4:00 p.m., New Marshfield Community Center!!

Raccoon Creek Partnership - Current Board of Directors

Natalie Kruse (Chair), Heike Perko (Vice-chair), Amber Brookins (Treasurer), (Secretary, Vacant)
Molly Gurien, Dick Hogan, Helmut Paschold

Some Big Changes in Raccoon Creek Staff!!

Amy Mackey, Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator

Wow! Summer 2011 has been huge for staff changes at Raccoon Creek! It's always sad to see old faces leave, but exciting to meet the new ones. So...who left? At the end of July, Brian Blair – Raccoon Creek Water Quality Specialist, moved to Missouri with his family. Also at the end of July, Mitch Farley AMD Program Supervisor from ODNR Division of Mineral Resources Management (DMRM) in Athens retired! In early August, our 2010/2011 AmeriCorps members (Sarah Landers and Kara Walton) completed their year of service. Best Wishes to everyone in their new towns, new jobs, and retirement...we will miss you!! So...who's new? Sarah Landers (last year's AmeriCorps) was hired by Ohio Valley Resource Conservation and Development to fill the Water Quality Specialist Position. Ben McCament (past Raccoon Creek Coordinator and ODNR-DMRM Environmental Specialist 2) moved up to fill Mitch's position at DMRM. (continued on page 2)

ATHENS

GALLIA

HOCKING

JACKSON

MEIGS

VINTON

Some Big Changes in Raccoon Creek Staff!! (cont.)

continued from page 2

Kim Brewster and Kristin Kindler have proudly been sworn in as the new 2011/2012 Raccoon Creek AmeriCorps members, and Kenner Sims was hired as the ODNR summer intern. Congrats to everyone and welcome aboard!! See short stories below from past and present staff members.

A Look Back at Raccoon Creek

By Brian Blair

My time with RCP has been too short. For the rest of my life those words will be how I describe my time in Ohio and my tenure as your water quality specialist. Over the last two years I've gotten to know many of you well and others I feel like I know through legends passed down from folks who've been here for years. I've explored the reach and depth of your watershed with the finest crew of individuals I've ever known and come to know exactly how much I still had to learn from watershed professionals with decades of experience and love for Raccoon Creek and its recovery.



The completion of remediation projects in East Branch, the beginning of work in West Branch, and the groundwork for future projects in Middleton Run (the largest remaining aluminum loader to Little Raccoon) are just a few of the major strides in recovery that I have had the honor of working toward. As one of my last acts as Water Quality Specialist I can report with pride that things are getting better for Raccoon Creek and wish you all the best in your efforts to bring life back to your waters and hillsides.

So it is with a heavy heart that I have to say good-bye. Though my family is moving on for a wonderful opportunity, we'll forever regret what we've been forced to leave behind. I've moved around a lot in my life and I've never looked back. But when it comes to Raccoon Creek, I look back every day to the people, places and progress that mean so much to me and I wish you all the very best. Though only for a while, Raccoon Creek was home, and it's where a piece of my heart will always be.

Thank you all so much,

Brian Blair, Water Quality Specialist: March 2010 – July 2011

The AmeriCorps Experience: Kara and Sarah

Kara Walton: I can't believe my year of service with RCP is over. It was a great experience and I met so many wonderful people and learned so many valuable career and life skills along the way. I will miss working with RCP, but know that the new AmeriCorps Members will do a fantastic job and I wish them luck in the next year. I want to thank everyone at RCP for making my year of service one of the best years ever! =)

Sarah Landers: There is nothing like the feeling of finishing a hard day of field work, going home with a sense of accomplishment, and knowing that today, I made a positive impact on the world around me. This year was truly a life changing and meaningful experience. I have been so fortunate to belong to an organization full of compassionate people committed to a common cause.



Kara and Sarah at the Wellson Public Library



Kenny Sims, fish shocking during an RCP camp

Raccoon Creek ODNR Summer Intern 2011

Hello, my name is Kenny Sims and I am a fish management student at Hocking College. I will finish Hocking this fall and will be attending the University of Rio Grande where I am pursuing my bachelor's degree in Wildlife and Fish Conservation & Management.

I needed to do an internship to finish my degree with Hocking College, and as soon as I heard about the position with Raccoon Creek I really wanted to work with this watershed group especially. I am a local to southern Ohio and very aware of the condition that Raccoon Creek was in twenty years ago. To see the drastic impact this organization has made on the creek really is amazing. This has been one of the best summers of my life and I feel very fortunate to get to work with such an incredibly great group of people and see the drastic improvement of the water quality first hand. I am a very avid bass fisherman and now because of the hard work put forth by this organization, Raccoon Creek is one of my favorite small streams to catch bass.

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone that I work with for this incredible experience, along with everyone in our local community for all of the support that you give us. I hope everyone takes the time to get out and enjoy this wonderful creek as much as I do.

Welcome New AmeriCorps 2011-2012



Kristin Kindler: Before moving to Athens, Ohio, I got my degree in Veterinary Technology. I have minimal experience with the watershed but I have assisted with taking water samples from Dow Lake and The Hocking River. I have also volunteered at one of Raccoon Creek's summer day camps at The Waterloo Aquatic Education Center. I am looking forward to learning more about the watershed, planning public outreach and events and taking water samples. I am also very excited for the day camps as I would like to help educate children about Ohio's wildlife and the watershed. I am excited and looking forward to see what is to come for this year!



Kim Brewster: Before beginning my AmeriCorps service, I was a student in the Master of Science in Environmental Studies program at Ohio University. I recently completed my leadership practicum project with RCP, through which I gained experience with water quality monitoring and learned about acid mine drainage remediation in the watershed. I look forward to taking part in environmental education, community outreach and restoration efforts and I'm very excited to see what this year has in store for RCP!

2011 Summer Camps at WAEC

Kim Brewster, RCP AmeriCorps Member and 2011 Camp Volunteer

The 2011 Summer Science Day Camps brought many campers to the Waterloo Aquatic Education Center, eager to learn about their watershed! June's camp featured a Watershed Health theme and included activities such as a fish electroshocking demonstration, a watercycle activity, and learning about Ohio's geology on a visit to Hocking Hills State Park. In August, an older group of campers learned about Ecotourism and Environmental Stewardship by interacting with environmental science professionals to explore their careers. Hands-on activities included building solar ovens, making medicine bags, and going to the Lake Hope Nature Center. The camps were a great success and were partially funded through a grant from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund.



Toward an Earth/Land Ethic for Our Time

Dick Hogan, RCP Board Member

Early this year, The Aldo Leopold Foundation Released a movie titled, *Green Fire - Aldo Leopold And A Land Ethic For Our Time*. The RCP Board is screening and preparing to reflect on this historic documentary that features the life and legacy of Aldo Leopold. His 1949 book; *A Sand County Almanac With Essays on Conservation From Round River*, has become an international classic read by millions, inter-generationally around the world.

How might the observations and engagements on Aldo's life journey, help stimulate, inform and inspire contemporary explorations and expressions of an Earth-Land ethic for these times? Heavy extraction, consumption, extinction, as well as profound soil, water, atmospheric, social, economic and climatic disruption gives us pause, to urgently shift our conscious energy toward restorative and regenerative behavior and practices most everywhere. How can we encourage sufficiency and well-being in all our local places, communities, watersheds, foodsheds and basins? There will be public screenings and conversations in the fall. With questions or for more information, please contact Dick Hogan at greenfirecenter@gmail.com.

Water Trails Update

Molly Gurien, RCP Board Member, Raccoon Creek Water Trail Association Chairperson

Raccoon Creek Water Trail Association has had a busy year! We made lots of new friends at the Southeast Ohio Tourism Expo in Rio Grande and at PaddlePalooza, a human powered recreation expo in Columbus! We had two successful float trips on the Raccoon this spring, despite flooding and high water levels. The morning of the first scheduled float it was raining and water levels were a bit high. Still, a few intrepid paddlers showed up and with a forecast of more rain and thunderstorms, we made a group decision to paddle on the creek anyway. The rain soon let up and water levels were near perfect. Despite a few strainers, we had a great float down the creek, with 4 kayaks, 5 canoes and a dog!

The second float was held in June in conjunction with the Ohio River Clean Sweep, where we cleaned up a lot of garbage from our canoes! If you missed any of these events, we will sponsor another float in early October. We will also be at the Pawpaw Festival this year, with canoes for public use on Lake Snowden. We will once again be raffling off a kayak at the Pawpaw Festival!



Glenn Stout collected a canoe full of garbage during the river sweep

The Water Trail Association meets regularly on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. We welcome your participation and encourage anyone with a love of paddling and interest in protecting our natural resources to become involved. We hope you can join us for future floats on the river, or at one of our monthly meetings. For more information, contact Molly Gurien at

molly@freestylecanoeing.com, or visit our web page at www.raccooncreek.org.



Raccoon Creek Project Update

Sarah Landers, Raccoon Creek Water Quality Specialist (Ohio Valley RC&D)

In August I transitioned from AmeriCorps member to Raccoon Creek Water Quality Specialist. Brian Blair left some big waders to fill and I look forward to carrying on his great work. So, let's pick up where Brian left off and familiarize ourselves with RCP's current projects and initiatives.

East Branch Phase III – This is the final remediation project for the East Branch of Raccoon Creek. This steel slag leach bed project was completed in early 2011 and post construction chemical water quality sampling has shown a pH of 12.3 discharge from the steel slag bed and an overall project tributary discharge of 11.5.

Harble Griffith Phase I – This is an un-reclaimed ridge top surface mine in southeastern Hocking County that has been contributing acids and metals into the West Branch Headwaters of Raccoon Creek. Preconstruction chemical water sampling was completed in July and construction began shortly thereafter. A preconstruction project tour took place on July 27th with around 20 people in attendance,



including some local landowners. Construction is underway and scheduled to be completed this fall.

Orland Gob - This is a coal spoil reclamation project in Swan Township of Vinton County in the West Branch of Raccoon Creek. The project consists of re-grading a five acre gob pile, incorporating lime into the gob, construction of an open limestone channel to convey water, and re-soil and re-vegetate the site. Construction began on August 15th and will be completed this fall.



Other Water Quality Activities

This summer we conducted 3 weeks of macroinvertebrate sampling; covering 36 sites! Biological sampling has continued into the end of summer and fish shocking and chemical sampling will continue for the duration of the year. A new electroshocking boat has been constructed in cooperation between Ohio University and ODNR Division of Mineral Resources for use in larger streams. This winter we'll begin updating the Little Raccoon Creek Acid Mine Drainage Abatement and Treatment Plan. Whew!

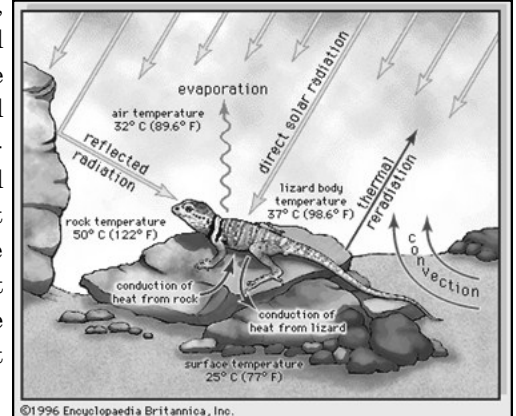
Check out the RCP website for remediation project updates and www.watersheddata.com for more information on Raccoon Creek's leaps and bounds toward restoration.

Sarah can be reached at sdlanders@gmail.com

Snake Fact #1

Kristin Kindler, RCP AmeriCorps Member

Have you ever wondered how snakes can stay warm? Snakes are in the reptile family and all reptiles are Ectotherms or in other terms cold blooded creatures. The reason they are called ectotherms is because their temperature varies with their surroundings and adjusts very closely to the temperature of the environment. Snakes and other reptiles maintain their body temperature by moving to and from warm places; temperature is not controlled internally, as it is in mammals. Snakes can withstand cold temperatures but it is very unlikely that they can survive in freezing temperatures as their body temperature would be below freezing. When the temperature falls below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, they will become inactive and will begin to hibernate. Their chance of survival depends on if the snake can evade frost. Snakes can hibernate anywhere that frost cannot penetrate such as holes, stumps and rock crevices. Snakes are extremely sensitive to the cold and sometimes there can be large numbers of snakes that congregate in a hole until winter is over. Snakes can also be very sensitive to extreme heat and sometimes will succumb to the hot weather. Snakes can live almost everywhere except for Antarctica, New Zealand and Ireland because of the cold weather. There are also a number of ways for a snake to get cool or get warm. For a snake to get cool, a snake can get into water, find some shade or lie on a cool surface. For a snake to get warm, a snake can lie on a hot rock, lie in the sun or inflate the body. Well, now that you know how a snake can regulate temperature; keep an eye out for our next newsletter to find out more interesting facts about snakes.



RCP UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Visit www.raccooncreek.org for more details about upcoming events and activities., as well as event and meeting locations. Dates and times subject to change!

Monthly RCP Meetings are held the Last Wednesday of every month

Monthly RCWTA Meetings are held the Second Wednesday of every month

Sept 16, 17, & 18

Come and visit our booth at the Pawpaw Festival in Albany!

Oct 1

Fall Day Camp at WAEC

Early Oct (date TBA)

Fall public RCWTA float

Oct 8

Fall Day Camp at WAEC

Oct 16

RCP Annual Dinner, 4:00 at the New Marshfield Community Center

Oct 29

Come and see our booth set up at ROAR

Help RCP through the Kroger Plus Card You Use Everyday!

Thanks to the Kroger Community Rewards Program, you can give to RCP every time you use your Kroger card and still keep your fuel discount! Sign up Today by Following These 6 Easy Steps:

1. Go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com and click "Sign in/Register" at the top of the screen.
2. Click on "Sign up Today" on the Right hand side of the screen.
3. Simply fill in the requested information and a confirmation email will be sent to you.
4. Click on the link provided in the email from Kroger, and "Sign in".
5. Click on the "Edit Community Rewards Information" near the bottom of the screen. This will open a new window. In the "Find Your Organization" field, type in "Raccoon Creek Partnership". Follow just a few more easy steps, and you're done!
6. Swipe your Kroger Rewards Card every time you shop and help RCP grow!

"Like" us on Facebook!

To find RCP on Facebook, type "Raccoon Creek Partnership" in the search box and "Like" our page!



Send To:

Athens, OH 45701

The Ridges, Bldg 22

Voinovich School

c/o Amy Mackey

Raccoon Creek Partnership

Place
Postage
Stamp
Here



RCP Membership Application

*A local partnership working towards conservation,
stewardship, and restoration of the watershed
for a healthier stream and community*

Individual Membership

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yellow Warbler	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wood Duck	\$30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kingfisher	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Great Blue Heron	\$500

Organizational Membership

<input type="checkbox"/>	Channel Catfish	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grass Pickerel	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spotted Bass	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/>	Muskie	\$1000

Yes, I (we) would like to help protect Raccoon Creek

Name
Address
Phone
E-mail

Your contributions are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to the:

Raccoon Creek Partnership

and send to:

Raccoon Creek Partnership

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c/o Amy Mackey

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