



Volume 2010

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Summer 2010



Trickling Trash– an improvement in the Schuylkill

This past May, when Jim D'Agostino, an Environmental Compliance Coordinator for the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD), was on one of his trips on the Pontoon Skimming Boat, he noticed one thing- the trash has been getting harder and harder to find. In past years, he would be able to go out on a trip and easily fill 10 or more bins of trash. This current year, it has been a struggle to fill even 5 to 7 bins. He also noted that high impact areas where trash usually collects in the river have been getting cleaner.

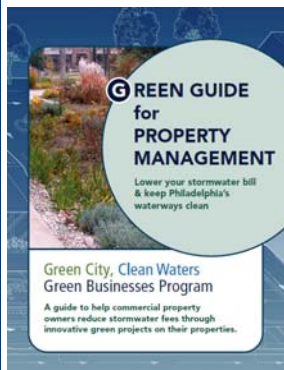
Some of this success can be attributed to the city's recent partnerships with the rowing community on the river. Over the past year, it seems like some measures such as

better trash collection and containment during river events have been successful. Also, the city has been doing a much better job at recycling, which helps to reduce a large percentage of the plastic floatables (or floating trash). Over the past two years, the PWD has been partnering with the Fairmount Park Commission, resulting in the installation of a slip (or dock) for the Skimmer boat and for increased trash collection. More recently, the PWD has partnered with the Philadelphia Streets Department, arranging for the pickup of recyclables that are collected out of the river. At the end of the day, less trash is ending up on the land, which means there is less to wash into the river.



When Jim heads out on the boat for one of these missions, usually 6 times per month, he says that he's out there "hunting for trash". This year, the hunt is getting harder and harder, which is a good thing for the Schuylkill River and a good thing for all of us. Over 1.5 million people get their drinking water from the river. Hopefully this will be a trend that we continue to see over the years.

PWD releases: *Green Guide for Property Management*



The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) in cooperation with the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and AKFR, Inc. just released the *Green Guide for Property Management*, a Green Business Program of PWD's *Green City, Clean Waters* initiative. The guide is intended for commercial property owners, providing them with ideas for reducing their stormwater fees through innovative green projects on their properties.

Included in each PWD customer's monthly water bill is a charge for stormwater management services. Historically, this charge has been based on a property's water meter size, which measures the volume of drinking water being used by a property.

Beginning July 1, 2010, the charges for non-residential and condominium properties will be based on a property's size and surface characteristics. More specifically, non-residential and condominium properties will be charged based on the total size of the property (known as "Gross Area") and the amount of land that doesn't allow water to soak into the ground. Land where rain and melting snow is unable to soak into the ground is referred to as "Impervious Area." Impervious Area includes rooftops, concrete, asphalt, or any other surface where rainwater becomes polluted, runs off into storm drains, and burdens the City's sewer system.

This guide is designed to assist owners who may be eligible for credits to reduce their stormwater fee. To download the guide, click here: http://www.delawareestuary.org/pdf/pwd_green_guide.pdf

SAN Macroinvertebrate Sampling Shows Progress



A water monitoring team led by EPA Region 3 conducted stream sampling on behalf of the Schuylkill Action Network's agriculture workgroup. The team went out in search of Macroinvertebrates (or 'macros' for short), which are animals without a backbone that can be seen with the naked eye (such as insects, worms, leeches, clams, and snails). Some macros are only found in waters that are generally clean, while some are pollution tolerant, meaning that they are sometimes the only thing found in polluted streams. Through careful identification of the different species that were collected, the team was able to get a lot of information about the health of the streams. ([Click here](#) to learn more about macro sampling)

The sampling team, which also included representatives from PADEP, the Berks County Conservancy and Spotts Stevens and McCoy, saw progress and improvement in the health of tributaries to Maiden Creek in the vicinity of Virginville, Pennsylvania. The presence of mayflies, caddisflies, stoneflies, crayfish and salamanders indicate that the work completed by the SAN along these tributaries is successfully contributing to the restoration of these important waterways. Though the tributaries are not likely to be free of all pollution, it is encouraging to witness the ongoing ecological and biological improvements.

To see more pictures from the field, check out the [photo gallery](#) on the SAN Website. Also, check out the [field notes](#) for a complete report on the trip.



Wednesday, June 16, 2010

By: Tony Di Domizio

The Times Herald

FRANCONIA — JBS Souderton Inc., which was known as Smithfield Beef Group prior to Oct. 23, 2008, must pay at least \$8 million in civil penalties and for upgrades to its Franconia plant operation and maintenance.

That is part of a settlement announced Wednesday with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Meat plant Fined \$8M for Waste Water Violations

(EPA) and Pennsylvania.

U.S. Attorney Zane David Memeger and EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin announced the settlement.

JBS entered into a consent decree after failing to comply with the Clean Water Act during plant operations, which resulted in fish kills on Aug. 10, 2007; Dec. 5, 2007; and June 10, 2008.

A total of 24,715 fish were killed in those incidents, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

"The Souderton facility is in full compliance with wastewater discharge requirements as we speak," said JBS spokesman Chandler Keys.

"These problems predated the purchase of this plant by JBS," he

said. "We inherited the issue from the previous owners and worked with the EPA and Pennsylvania state departments to come up with solution to fix this issue."

The meat-processing plant is on Allentown Road.

As of 2004, JBS Souderton's operations, which include a rendering facility, were producing approximately 180 million pounds of boxed beef and 117 million pounds of ground beef, per year. The rendering facility processes the inedible and leftover material from the slaughter operations and processes kitchen grease from various restaurants.

Water from the beef processing and rendering facilities is conveyed to an on-site wastewater treatment plant, treated, and then discharged into the Skippack Creek.

Meat Plan Fined...continued!

JBS must reconstruct its wastewater system and spend \$6 million on a new wastewater treatment plant, according to the Department of Justice.

Keys said those upgrades have already been completed. A \$2.9 wastewater piping upgrade where they are doublewalling pipes to prevent leaks will be done by this month, he said.

"We added a 10 million gallon anaerobic lagoon, which is covered to collect methane gas that we use as alternative fuel in the facility," Keys said. "We added more filtration programs which

treat wastewater and filters phosphorous. We replaced our chlorine disinfection with UV disinfection."

The corporation must also pay \$1.9 million in penalties and \$100,000 in damages. The penalties include \$950,000 each to the federal government and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The \$100,000 in damages will be paid to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

"What we wanted to prove is we wanted to dive right into issue and get it resolved," Keys said.

"We put safeguards in place knowing full well the monetary fine on this. We chose to work on improvements to the plant and making sure the improvements we did put in met with the approval of the regulation agencies. That was our main goal: to get that right and get them comfortable with it."

For the full article, visit:

<http://www.thereporteronline.com/articles/2010/06/16/business/doc4c19469d4aa08434106604.txt>



7th Annual "Hit the Hay"

8.1 Mile Trail Run & Walk

Sunday August 29, 2010

Presented by the Hay Creek Watershed Association

Course design, marking and timing by [Pretzel City Sports](#)

RACE STARTS: 9:00 AM Registration begins at 7:30 AM

LOCATION: Register at the Rustic Park #4 in Birdsboro. Location can be obtained online or GPS by entering 1314 Hay Creek Road, Birdsboro PA 19508.

COURSE: Wind your way past two beautiful pine scented reservoirs, over decaying canal locks, splash through streams and finish in a picturesque park.

AMENITIES: T-shirt to the first 150 registrants and day of registrants **while supplies last.** Refreshments and snacks to finishers, toilet facilities and parking available.

AWARDS: Philadelphia sports package to top male and female winners. Signature Hay Creek Watershed Association prize to top 3 male and female finishers 16-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50-59; 60-69, and 70+. Prizes will NOT be shipped.

ENTRY: \$25.00 if postmarked by August 15, or online by August 25th. Afterwards and day of race: \$30.00. Receive a T-shirt while they last. [HCWA MEMBERS: Receive \\$5 member DISCOUNT when you register online.](#)

QUESTIONS?: Email: info@haycreekwatershed.org or call 484-288-0536.

SAN Dates to Remember

- 8/10: SAN WLC meeting
- 8/11: SAN Teacher Workshop
- 8/12: SAN Planning Meeting
- 8/18 SAN Ag Meeting
- 9/9: SAN Planning Meeting
- 9/22: SAN Stormwater Meeting
- Fall, 2010: SAN Annual Workshop

Schuylkill Stories

From the 2010 Schuylkill River Sojourn Participants



The river is full of boats gliding past each other, paddles dipping in the slivers of water between kayakers. We are one darting flock of colored vessels: yellow and orange and red buoyed on the current like dried autumn leaves beneath the glowing tunnel of trees. There are over one hundred people on the river today, all paddling with the Schuylkill River Sojourn- an annual 112-mile guided paddle trip the length of the river from Schuylkill Haven to Philadelphia.

Launching 100 canoes and kayakers is an orchestrated act of chaos, as everyone is shoved into the current and slowed under the hanging branches until we are ready to move downstream. A guide leads and another sweeps. We follow, a serpentine line of kayakers winding with the current until we bunch up at the throat of a rapid.

River guides marked with trailing orange and pink flagging ribbon maneuver their boats into eddies

below rocks marking obstacles, shouting direction and encouragement as each boat torpedoes through the rush. Those who have already gone through, bob in the calm pools below, and cheer for the paddlers receiving the greatest lap-full of water. Rocking and dragging our boats through shimmering shoals of rocks, we remind ourselves of something one of the Sojourn's veteran paddlers, Fran Griffin said earlier: "A boat without scratches has never lived."

Continue reading [Sierra's story](#) from the 2010 Schuylkill River Sojourn and check out [other participant's stories](#) on the Schuylkill Sharing Section of the SAN Website.



SAN Strategic Planning



Over the past 2 months, the Schuylkill Action Network (SAN) held a series of listening sessions throughout the watershed, providing watershed stakeholders with an opportunity to have their ideas and strategies incorporated into the next SAN strategic plan.

If you were unable to attend one of the sessions, but would still like to share your ideas and strategies for a cleaner and healthier watershed, please take a moment

and complete the [short online survey](#). The responses that are received from this survey will help ensure that we have the right goals and strategies in place to tackle all of the pressing issues facing the watershed. Your participation is very important- we can't achieve this without you.

Strategic Planning Survey Link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HHDBZ72>

Ideas for the next edition of SAN Connections?

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