

# STREAM SAMPLES: Updates on Delaware Basin Science

THE ACADEMY  
OF NATURAL SCIENCES  
of DREXEL UNIVERSITY

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October 14, 2015

It was a great pleasure last week to join hundreds of scientists, advocates, practitioners and stakeholders for the 3rd Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum. Let me share a few observations.

First, a shout-out to the indefatigable Kim Beidler, Executive Director of the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed. This is the 3rd (and unfortunately final) forum that Kim has organized, and each has provided a rich array of speakers and programming. For all of us working on the Delaware River Watershed Initiative (DRWI), the forums have become a high point for exchanging ideas and information.

Second, my colleagues from ANS and I were especially impressed by the range of political and civic leaders who expressed their commitment to stewarding the Delaware Basin. The list is long and includes [Shawn Garvin](#), the Regional Administrator of the Mid-Atlantic (Region 3) US Environmental Protection Agency; [Larry Schweiger](#), the President and CEO of PennFuture; and William Penn Foundation's Executive Director, [Laura Sparks](#), who gave an inspiring address to open the forum's second day.

Third, as a lifelong Delawarean (yes, there are a few of us), I was particularly pleased that the forum was held in my home state and recognized our unique space in the watershed. Although Delaware is small, few states are as defined by streams, rivers, and bays. The plenaries by Governor [Jack A. Markell](#), At-Large Representative for the State of Delaware [John C. Carney, Jr.](#), and Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary [David Small](#) all reinforced the need to view the Delaware Basin as an integrated system in which we all have a major

interest.

Finally, I am struck by how much growth and energy we have seen generated in the last three years as the DRWI participants have come together with stakeholders and decision makers of the basin. While there has always been a great deal of hard work underway to protect and restore water quality in the Delaware, the DRWI has

## Tapping our Watershed

### [Tapping our Watershed](#)

ANS' Seminar Series

Oct. 19, 2015

at 6 p.m.

[National Mechanics](#)

22 S. 3rd St.

Philadelphia, PA

On Monday, October 19 at 6 p.m. we look forward to hearing Alan Robinson and Kelly O'Day, consulting experts on the River Litter Management Task Force, present: ***Plastic Trash in our Rivers - What's the impact? What can be done about it?***

Plastics in the Schuylkill River are an aesthetic pollutant in the form of macroscale bottles, Styrofoam, and other large objects and are increasingly being recognized as a threat to ecosystems. A measure of the problem: a Philadelphia team collected 4,600 plastic bottles in 1.5

hours. A summary of current research on ecological and other impacts posed by macro and micro plastics will be given using current data. The technical presentation will be followed by a presentation on

underway to protect and restore water quality in the Delaware, the DRWI has provided an added context and organizing force to harness that work.

The forum is one example of how a diverse learning community is building around the totality of the Delaware Watershed. At meetings like this, scientists learn from practitioners, preservationists from restoration specialists, and land trusts from watershed groups (and vice versa for each). This "cross pollination" may be one of the most lasting contributions of the DRWI. At the Academy, we look forward to future opportunities to support and expand these exchanges.

- Roland Wall

## Mind the Gap

What's the use of a healthy river? The [Pocono Environmental Education Center](#) (PEEC)'s answer is -- **to inspire**.

PEEC is a non-profit environmental and sustainability education organization, located in the 77,000 acre Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. In this part of the watershed, the Delaware River clearly benefits from the protection that the national park designation confers. The river water is clean, the forest is healthy, the aquatic diversity is relatively high, and the surrounding landscape is stunning. But there's a problem: without a water quality crisis to grab their attention, local residents often take the river for granted.

How, then, to turn residents into stewards of the amazing resource in their backyard, which ultimately benefits millions of people in the basin and beyond? Part of PEEC's approach is to provide free guided hiking, biking, canoeing, and kayaking programs for local residents, aimed at turning their experience with the river into conservation action in their daily lives. [William Penn Foundation](#) (WPF) funding has



Bridge the Gap bikers on the McDade Trail.  
Photo courtesy of PEEC.

enabled PEEC's 'Bridge the Gap' program to reach around 1,200 residents annually for the past two years. High demand for the program is one indication of its success. For one recent kayaking trip, some unlucky people never made it off the waitlist.

PEEC employs surveys to evaluate whether its programming is having its intended impact, and the organization is exploring new high-tech solutions for measuring results. Jeff Rosalsky, PEEC's Executive Director, is particularly excited about the prospect of developing a phone app that would allow users to track the number of river or trail miles traversed and earn e-badges in the process. Simultaneously, every use of the app would generate data on visitor use. PEEC will be piloting a lower-tech prototype of the app this year.

be followed by a presentation on the startup of the Task Force with a general discussion and collective brainstorming as to how this fledgling program might grow and produce results.

[Tapping Our Watershed](#) lectures aim to engage students, scientists, and interested citizens in discussions about issues pertaining to the Delaware River Watershed and other aquatic ecology topics. Contact [Allison Stoklosa](#) with questions or suggestions for future speakers.

## Stream School

The [New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Water Monitoring and Standards](#), in coordination with the [Stroud Water Research Center](#), is pleased to offer Stream School to **NJ citizen scientists** interested in learning about stream health. This two-day, interactive classroom and field workshop will enable participants to collect and identify the macroinvertebrates in our streams that are indicators of clean water.

The workshop will be held Oct. 23 and 24, at a cost of \$15 per participant for both days. For more information, contact Toni Heater at [toni.heater@dep.nj.gov](mailto:toni.heater@dep.nj.gov).

## Call for Submissions



PEEC's mission to inspire goes well beyond the immediate vicinity of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. For fifteen years, PEEC has been hosting groups from the ANS' [Women in Natural Sciences \(WINS\)](#) program, which itself is over 30 years old. Five years ago, when PEEC launched its 'Women on the Water' (WOW) program, providing young women from Philadelphia and other cities with an intensive 4-day river experience, WINS was a natural partner for attracting high school-aged participants. WOW now reaches 45 young women annually from multiple cities along the Delaware River, immersing them in everything from first-time camping and multi-day river expeditions to team-building and water quality sampling.



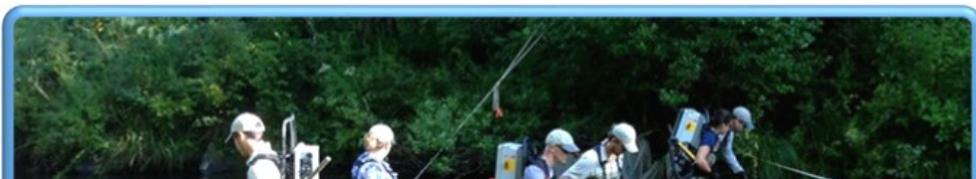
Women on the Water paddlers on the Delaware River. Photo courtesy of PEEC.

Rosalsky remarks on how much the participants grow over the course of the program and is proud that many have returned as WOW mentors and PEEC camp counselors and instructors. A number have also gone on to study biology or other STEM fields. The success of the program has led to calls for developing a parallel program for young men. WPF funding for WOW came at a critical juncture two years ago when a National Park Foundation grant concluded, and Rosalsky is hopeful that program expansion to reach even more promising young people is in PEEC's future.

## Supplemental Monitoring Fund Round II

We are excited to announce that the second round of the **DRWI Supplemental Monitoring Fund** is on track to be awarded. The invitation for applications was sent to organizations on Friday, October 9th. If you are interested in this funding but have not received the invitation to apply, please contact Kathryn Christopher ([kac388@drexel.edu](mailto:kac388@drexel.edu)) to confirm funding eligibility.

## A Window into Fisheries Sampling



Have a **cool photo to share** with DRWI partners? Need us to help **spread some important news**? Contact [Kathryn Christopher](#) for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *Stream Samples*.

## DRWI Mapper



### Quick Link

The [DRWI Mapper](#) is available whenever you need it. Contact [Lin Perez](#) with any questions or comments.

## Stream Samples Archive

### Miss an issue?

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## Contact Us

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ANS fisheries crew sampling in the Upper Lehigh. Photo courtesy of Meg McGuire.

What do **ANS scientists and ghostbusters** have in common? Check out a recent [Delaware Currents](#) story to find out, see photos and video, and read a detailed account of a day of fish sampling on the Upper Lehigh River.

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