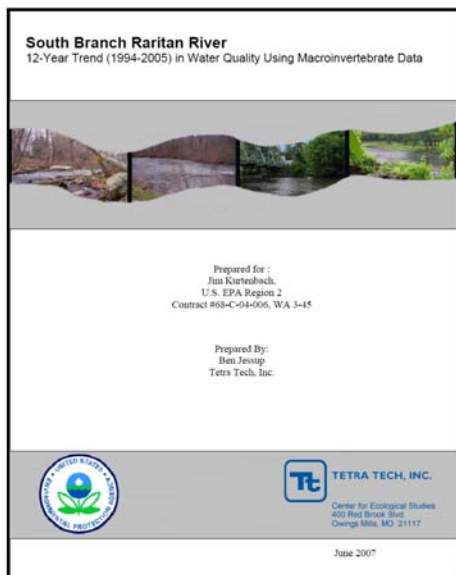


... published quarterly at the *Hermia Lechner House*

## SBWA Comprehensive Monitoring Report Unveiled

By Nicole Rahman, Program Director



Our Volunteer Biological Monitoring Program was initiated in 1994 to study baseline water quality using benthic macroinvertebrate (small critters that live on stream bottoms) communities and is the earliest biological monitoring program in New Jersey. Biological monitoring is a reliable tool for studying the health of water resources. Our monitoring program is designed to sample a representative number of sites to provide data that will identify water quality issues in our watershed.

Most watershed residents use well water and over one million people outside our watershed drink water from reservoirs in our watershed. Our water quality also effects water quality in the downstream portions of the Raritan basin. Therefore, it makes sense that two of the objectives of our monitoring program are to detect changes and document trends in the water quality of our watershed, and to protect and improve water quality throughout the watershed.

The longevity of our monitoring program provides sufficient data to establish trends and make recommendations to address problems.

In order to best use our collection of biological monitoring data for education, trends assessment, and recommendations, we needed to have it compiled and analyzed into a comprehensive report on water quality trends in the South Branch of the Raritan River. Jim Kurtenbach from US EPA Region 2 was able to pull everything together and make this report a reality for us. He was able to secure \$20,000 in funding for the report from the US EPA and prepared all of our data for use by the contractor, Tetra Tech. Ben Jessup, from Tetra Tech, analyzed our data and wrote the comprehensive report.

This much-anticipated long-term trends analysis and comprehensive report based on our biological monitoring data was delivered to us this summer. The report will allow us to look at the water quality trends in the watershed since 1994, give us an idea as to where any sources of impairment may be coming from, and provide guidance as to what steps we should take next for monitoring, restoration, and preservation. It is being shared with our volunteer monitors and advisory committee, the residents of our watershed, others who drink our water, and federal, state, and local agencies that can benefit from the information obtained in the report. Check out the full report on our website: [www.sbwa.org](http://www.sbwa.org)!

**SBWA - Recipient of the  
2007 EPA Environmental Quality Award!!**



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SBWA is a proud member of Earth Share of New Jersey

Please check out our web site!  
[www.sbwa.org](http://www.sbwa.org)



## HIGHLANDS UPDATE

By Bill Kibler, Executive Director

A little over a year ago I wrote to you about the Highlands Act and the efforts of the Highlands Council ([www.highlands.state.nj.us](http://www.highlands.state.nj.us)) to prepare a regional master plan to protect water resources in our region. The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (commonly called the Highlands Act) is intended to help protect New Jersey's drinking water. You most likely get your water from a private or municipal well (80% of people in our watershed do). But the Highlands Region also provides drinking water to over five million people in the eastern part of our state. In the center of our watershed are two of the three largest reservoirs in the state: Spruce Run and Round Valley. They provide drinking water to over one million people outside the watershed.

In the past year, the Highlands Council released a draft Regional Master Plan, conducted several public hearings on the draft plan, received many written comments, and hired an outside consultant to begin revising the draft plan. It's been a busy year, as many key staff changes were made, including hiring Eileen Swan as executive director. All of these activities suggest good progress on the plan and a maturing of the Highlands Council.

We'll be able to see the fruit of those efforts on November 19<sup>th</sup>, when the "next generation" regional master plan will be released for public comment. A public hearing on the plan is scheduled for December 13<sup>th</sup> and the Council will receive public comments on the plan until December 21st. The Council is slated to vote on adoption of the regional master plan on January 31, 2008.

During the last year, many of the arguments for and against the Act, the Plan, and the Council have remained the same. One complaint I've heard many times is that the Highlands Act places an unfair burden on those who live in the Highlands. The Act depresses property values, limits what we can do with our property, and impacts our lifestyle. No doubt, the Highlands Act places a burden on those of us who live in the Highlands. The Highlands and its precious water supply are vital to the economy and livability of our state. It's also true that many other New Jerseyans bear a load for the rest of us. People in Elizabeth living near the port facilities; folks in Newark living in the flyway of the airport; people living in the shadow of major highways or rail lines all see depressed property values and impacts on their lifestyles because their communities support critical pieces of the infrastructure of our state. We all need the airport, the railroads and the highways. And as you may have noticed, there are a lot more people moving into the Highlands than there are people leaving the Highlands for eastern New Jersey.

Certainly, the Highlands Act comes at a cost. But the cost of not acting is beyond measure and the benefits of the Act are also significant. The burden of protecting New Jersey's future by safeguarding its drinking water is a burden that should be shared, but not one that should be shirked.

## Workplace Giving

Does your company offer a **charitable giving program** with payroll deductions to your favorite charity? If so, please have your donations sent to the SBWA! As a member of Earth Share of New Jersey, we are participating in the 2007 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), NJ Employee Charitable Campaign (NJ ECC or SECC), Public Employee Charitable Campaign (PECC) as well as many private corporate campaigns. To direct your donation to the SBWA, you will need a designation code, which varies depending on the type of campaign. Please contact Lynn Becker at 908-782-0422 ext. 13 to get the appropriate code. If your employer does not currently have a workplace-giving program in place, Earth Share of NJ can help you get one started! Call Lynn Becker to learn more.

Some community-minded companies have a **volunteer grant program** that provides grants to qualified organizations on behalf of employees who have given their time as volunteers to that organization. If you are one of SBWA's many dedicated volunteers, and your company has such a program, please inquire with your human resources department about the application process for getting a grant that recognizes your efforts and benefits the great programs of SBWA.

Also check whether your company offers a **matching gift program**. If their program does not include environmental organizations as recipients, please express your concern to them and let us know. Maybe we can "enlighten" them on the importance of supporting such organizations.



## HUNTERDON COUNTY GREEN TABLE 2007 – 2008 Schedule

Nov 15, 2007: *Are You C1? Understanding Stream Classification*

January 17, 2008: *Hunterdon County Open Space Review*

March 20, 2008: *Homeowners & Wildlife, Can't We All Live Together?*

May 15, 2008: *Municipal Planning Incorporating Natural Systems*

NOTE: All forums are held at the Echo Hill Lodge from 8:00—10:00 am.

### A Major SBWA Fundraising Event — Casino Night on March 15, 2008



Want to have some fun with play money? Join us at a Casino Night. SBWA is having a major fundraising event on Saturday, March 15, 2008 at the Flemington Elks. There will be 16 tables of chance. The admission will be \$50 per person which includes \$100 of play money. Additional play money can be purchased.

It will be a fun night for all with theme baskets for a silent auction, and redemption prizes for the money you have won. Also included will be "grazing food" so you can munch and play. The doors will open at 6:30 pm and the event runs from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm.

Please save this date and come support your association while having a good time. Additional details will be published on the SBWA website and in the next issue of *The Current*.

### MARK YOUR 2007 – 2008 CALENDAR

**Community Well Testing** — Also check our web site for additional dates.

**October 3 and 8 — Delaware Township**

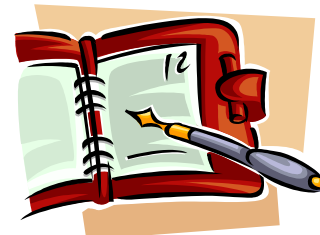
**October 10 — Bedminster Township**

**October 15, 17 and 22 — Readington Township**

**October 24 — Clinton Township**

**October 29, 31 and November 5 — Raritan Township**

**November 7 and 12 — Union Township**



**Hunterdon County Green Table Forums** — See list of dates and topics above.

**Project WET (Watershed Education for Teachers) Teacher Workshop** – **October 17**. Call Nicole Rahman at 908-782-0422 ext. 14 for details.

**Annual River Monitoring Conference** — **November 10**. At the Echo Hill Lodge from 2—4 pm. Call Nicole Rahman at 908-782-0422 ext. 14 for details. See related articles on pages 1 and 8.

**Casino Night Fundraiser** — **March 15, 2008**. See details above.

**Annual Dinner**—**March 28, 2008**. Save the date! Speaker and location TBD.

Visit the Calendar page on the SBWA web site at [www.sbwa.org](http://www.sbwa.org) for dates of other meetings and events throughout the year.

Mark your day to volunteer at SBWA. Please check the SBWA web site for a list of opportunities.



## SBWA Environmental Educator Profiles 2007-2008

*These are our six dedicated part-time Environmental Educators. Their enthusiasm and hard work make our environmental education program, the Waterways Stewardship Project, a great success. Last school year, they taught over 1,100 students about water quality! Thanks to each of you for your efforts!!*  
*Nicole Rahman - Program Director*

### Harold Blackstone



This is my first year working with SBWA. I have spent 38 years in educating young people, and recently retired. Environmental education has always been of great interest to my family and me. I have had

the wonderful opportunity to travel and hike in many of our national parks and other areas of the world. I am hopeful that I will be able to provide the students I teach with interesting and accurate information to help them become stewards of our environment. I hope to blend the training I have received at SBWA and my experiences to bring this to fruition.

### Marie Comerford



Marie Comerford has been teaching for 18 years. Her field is secondary math and science with a Master's Degree in Biology. Marie is also part of the Monarch Teacher's Network which trains teachers to incorporate monarchs into the classroom. This is her second year

with SBWA. Her other interests are performing in community theatre and studying voice.

### Kandi Kacetow



My name is Kandi Kacetow. I have a degree in Elementary Education. I am highly qualified to teach middle school science. I have been with SBWA for three years. In my leisure time I enjoy cooking,

doll collecting, and reading.

### Alan Rennie



Alan has been with SBWA as an educator for three years and has taught in schools for 30 years before this. He is our self-taught expert on macroinvertebrates. His enthusiasm for sharing what he knows about the natural world with students is

contagious. Alan's other interests include making banjoes and playing them in the Long Hill String Band, birding, hiking, kayaking, and canoeing.

### Barbara Rennie



This is my third year teaching for SBWA. I graduated from Rutgers University. I taught for 29 years at Piscataway Township High School and Middle School, retiring in 2003. I enjoy birding, hiking,

kayaking, and canoeing.

### Tom Southard



Tom has a Bachelor of Science degree in Plant Science and Forestry from Rutgers University and an MBA from Rutgers as well. He has recently completed the sixth-month Rutgers Environmental Stewards program in conjunction with the

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. Tom not only serves as an Environmental Educator for SBWA, but is also an active volunteer as well. Tom enjoys getting out in the woods and the water to bird watch and keep an eye on what's going on in nature and the environment. Additionally, he is also a volunteer for NORWESCAP and serves as a team leader for the North Hunterdon Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).



Water Quality Indicator Species Example:

Left - dragonfly nymph.



Right - dragonfly adult.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS *June 15 to September 15, 2007*

Richard and Alice Chen  
Edward Dougherty  
Robert and Juliana Driane  
Frank and Christine Houck

Wayne Paglieri  
Eric and Susan Pepe  
Lisa Rodriguez  
Anthony and Rose Romano

Corrine Tagle  
Marty Trezza and Pia Silvani

It is always a pleasure to welcome new members. Please call us if you need information or have a concern about water quality or potential threats to our watershed.

Also, please stop by our office to learn about volunteer opportunities. We want you to help us continue our important work.



### To All Our Members: Are your friends and neighbors members?

We can help you convince your friends and neighbors that membership in SBWA means helping to preserve a healthy watershed for the future. Recruit five new members for 2007-2008 and get your next annual membership fee free. We have membership kits for prospective members that we can send to you or directly to your friend or neighbor. Please call us at 908-782-0422 or e-mail us at [info@sbwa.org](mailto:info@sbwa.org).

## Member Profile

Names: Constantine and Sally Kallas  
Residents of: Dreahook Road, Stanton, Readington Township  
Members of SBWA since: 1973



Sally and Connie Kallas moved to Hunterdon County in 1971 and were soon paid a visit by Hermia Lechner, founder of SBWA, to recruit them as members. Although Connie was already an avid gardener in his spare time, he credits Hermia with introducing him to "eco-friendly" concepts of landscaping. Connie served on the SBWA Board of Trustees from 1996 – 1998 and was the recipient of the Hermia Lechner Award in 1997.

When Connie retired in 1995, he set his sights on becoming a Master Gardner with Rutgers Research and Cooperative Extension. He has since logged more than 10,000 volunteer hours for that organization. Connie and Sally graciously host garden tours. Connie also enjoys photographing his gardens as a means to teaching others the fine points of gardening. Connie sums up his passion for his garden in these words: "Through our garden, we've developed a more intimate relationship with nature. We've come to appreciate its emotional and spiritual nourishment as much as its visual aspects."

Fly fishing is another of Connie's favorite pastimes that brings him closer to nature. He often recalls Hermia's favorite saying, "a river is a treasure....never to be taken for granted", which always brings to mind our beloved South Branch.

Sally and Connie are grateful to the SBWA for the work that we do to "keep Hunterdon County such a nice place to live".

**SBWA STAFF:** Bill Kibler, Executive Director; Nicole Rahman, Program Director; Ellen Cronan, Watershed Project Manager; Lynn Becker, Director of Development and Member Relations; Dee Ely, Office Manager; Mary Licetti, Accounting; Alan and Barbara Rennie, Kandi Kaczetow, Marie Comerford, Tom Southard, and Harold Blackstone, Environmental Educators; Lauren Theis, Americorps Watershed Ambassador.

**2007 OFFICERS:** *President:* James Hill; *Vice President:* Fred Puelle; *Secretary:* Patricia Stover; *Treasurer:* Ken Jagel.

**2007 TRUSTEES:** Dave Clapp, Raymond Drake, Karen Elbert, Oliver Elbert, Amy S. Greene, John Madden, Kathy Madden, Elizabeth (Tish) Plum, Kay Serebrakian, Sam Stothoff, Johannah Weinhofer, and John Williamson

Contact SBWA at 908-782-0422 or e-mail us at [info@sbwa.org](mailto:info@sbwa.org).



## So, Who's the New Chick on the South Branch?

By Alan Rennie, SBWA Environmental Educator

As my wife, Barbara, and I were driving across the Califon Bridge this Spring, Barbara asked with some excitement, "What's that in the water? There's a lot of movement down there." We made a quick right onto River Road and parked. I ran up to the walkway on the bridge and looked up and down the river. Nothing. I went down to the river and scanned the overgrowth on the banks, and there she was. She and her chicks had been feeding under the bridge. "She" was a beautiful hen wood duck and with her were ten chicks that couldn't have been more than a couple of days old. Wood ducks are not uncommon in this part of the South Branch during the fall and winter, but I have never seen a hen with chicks. Barbara and I had a great time watching the tiny ducklings as they scooted around looking for food, mostly seeds and small bugs.



The female, or hen, is a beautiful buff gray with dramatic white eye markings, which remind me of an Egyptian pharaoh's eye make-up. The drake is so unbelievably decorated that it's hard to believe that a graphic designer didn't create it. If you have never seen one you might want to look one up in a bird book. Even better, watch the banks of the South Branch during the winter, spring and summer. The drakes lose their dramatic plumage during the late summer for a while.

Wood ducks are rather shy and don't gather in large groups as do many other ducks. They are uncommon on small woodland rivers and ponds. They feed mostly on acorns and small seeds. And you'll never see a nest, at least not on the ground. They nest in tree cavities or in nest boxes which people put up in swampy areas and ponds. When the chicks hatch they jump from their hole and hopefully land safely in the water. These tiny youngsters will be vulnerable to a number of predators including large fish, snapping turtles, hawks, and raccoons. Barbara and I will try to keep track of them. We will keep you updated on their progress.



As we were watching, a drake whistled overhead and landed in the water not far from us. But he was accompanied by another hen. Could we possibly have had two families of wood ducks?

### Special Thanks

- Jackie Parrinello — binding all of the student booklets for our school environmental education program this fall.
- Linda Stedman — donating a thesaurus.
- Ben Witherell — donating a laptop computer.

### Wish List...

- Three of our printers have recently decided to retire on their own. We are therefore in need of three LaserJet printers in working condition.
- Digital Cameras - 4.0 megapixels or higher.
- Please call first to see if our need has already been met. Thanks!

### Other Ways to Help ...

- Donate a car or motorcycle to SBWA and get a tax deduction. Go to [www.vehiclemanagementservices.com](http://www.vehiclemanagementservices.com) or call 888-395-3955.
- Use [GoodSearch.com](http://GoodSearch.com) as your search engine and designate SBWA as your cause.
- Shop at [www.giveline.com](http://www.giveline.com)
- Contribute through giving programs at your workplace. See article on page 2.



## The River Watch Club is Launched!

By Lynn Becker, Director of Development and Member Relations

How would you like to join a club that has an entire river as its "clubhouse"? SBWA has launched the River Watch Club to recognize those members who demonstrate their environmental stewardship and appreciation for the South Branch of the Raritan River by making annual contributions of \$150 or more to the association.

Environmental stewardship means taking responsibility for our natural resources to ensure that they are sustainable and managed for current and future generations. What better way to do that than to support the programs of SBWA? After all, SBWA has exemplified environmental stewardship for almost 50 years! The River Watch Club was conceived around the principle that if people feel a personal connection to the river and streams that we all enjoy, they will gladly accept the responsibility of stewardship for them. That is why the levels of recognition and the benefits that accompany them are based on specific sites on the South Branch and its tributary streams. River Watch Club members may select one or more stream monitoring sites for which they would like results from our annual Stream Monitoring program and will receive a personal invitation to our annual Stream Monitoring Conference where the results are presented in detail. River Watch Club members at the \$500 and \$1,000 level will receive a framed photograph of a local river scene by renowned local photographer, Walter Chandoha. All River Watch Club members will receive Certificates of Appreciation and special recognition in our newsletter, *The Current*, and at our annual dinner meeting.

Thank you to our first River Watch Club members for 2007:

- Sandra and John Frisoli
- Wayne Paglieri
- Pat Stover

We invite you to become a charter member of the River Watch Club and join others who understand and appreciate what it takes to protect and enhance our water resources for future generations. To get more details on the River Watch Club, visit our web site [www.sbwa.org](http://www.sbwa.org), or call Lynn Becker at 908-782-0422 ext. 13.



### **Please Donate to SBWA Today!**

Yes, I/we want to support SBWA's efforts to protect and enhance our water resources!

My/our check is enclosed. *(Please make checks payable to "SBWA.")*

\$1,000     \$500     \$250     \$150     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

My company will match my gift. I have enclosed an appropriate form.

I am interested in including SBWA in my will

Please complete this form and mail with your contribution to: SBWA, Lechner House, 41 Lilac Drive, Flemington, NJ 08822

***Thank you for your support!***

SBWA is a 501(c)3 organization.

All donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.





## Discover the Health of the Streams in Your Community

By Nicole Rahman, Program Director

On Saturday, November 10, 2007, we will present the results of the 2007 river monitoring season and showcase the recently completed comprehensive report on the health of the South Branch Raritan River using 12 years of the Association's monitoring data. (See article on page 1.) This annual Volunteer Biological Monitoring Conference will be held at Echo Hill Park Lodge on Lilac Drive in Stanton Station, Clinton Township, from 2-4 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. A presentation by a guest speaker will be the highlight of the event.

Our volunteer biological monitoring program celebrates its fourteenth year of collecting data at 18 sites along the South Branch Raritan River and its tributaries. Every June, trained volunteer "water stewards" collect a "bug" sample at an assigned site within the South Branch Raritan River watershed. Volunteers follow an EPA approved protocol to ensure accuracy and precision in collection of data. The sample is then sent to a certified lab for complete analysis. Different species of juvenile "bugs" that live on the bottom of the river can tell us much about the quality of the water.

Please join us to learn more about the river that flows through our community. For more information about the conference or about becoming a volunteer monitor, please call Nicole Rahman, Program Director, at 908-782-0422 ext. 14, or visit our website at [www.sbwa.org](http://www.sbwa.org).



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ask them to join us as SBWA  
members. Thank you.