



# THE TINKERS CREEK TRIBUTARY

News of the Tinkers Creek Watershed

Volume 1, Issue 3

Fall 2007

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## From the Chair

by Harry Stark

Over the past year, I have had the honor of serving as the Chair of the Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners Organization. I become energized when I see interest in our group grow, which comes from our members and those we are able to network with. During the Watershed Day event in September, it was great seeing the attendance throughout the day, and hearing how people were truly interested in learning more about the watershed and how to help protect it. I have seen great momentum in our organization, and have seen support for our group build from those we have been able to network with. We have been able to build our membership base with individuals, businesses, and communities. This support will enable us to continue to grow, and to help do some good for the watershed.

In September, we held our second annual watershed day event at the Twinsburg Wastewater Treatment Plant. The day was great and we had a very good turnout. During the day, we installed a rain garden in collaboration with the City of Twinsburg. In addition, we are currently planning the 2008 Northeast Ohio Stormwater Conference. This conference is going to be held May 21-22, 2008 at the Cuyahoga Community College - Eastern Campus in Highland Hills. This area is the headwaters to Hawthorne Creek, which is a tributary to Tinkers Creek.

I want to take the time to personally thank all of you for being a part of the Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners organization. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming years. I encourage all of you to become involved. Once you become involved, and see some change from your involvement, it will forever change your perspective on environmental issues and our great resource - the Tinkers Creek Watershed.

## From the Watershed Coordinator

by Mike McNutt

The Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners held its second annual Watershed Day at the Twinsburg Wastewater Treatment Plant on Saturday September 13<sup>th</sup>. It was a smashing success with over 150 patrons who were delighted by the education, food, fish shocking, treatment plant tours, and hands-on participation in installing the 900 square foot rain garden. Moms, Dads, and children of all ages were fascinated by the biology of Tinkers Creek demonstrated by the EPA-sponsored fish shocking. Ten different species of fish were caught and shown to the kids who were fascinated by the different textures of the fish scales and skin and the different appearances of the fish themselves. In addition, an enormous rain garden was installed to catch roof runoff from one of the buildings located at the treatment plant. 192 native Ohio plants were planted after all of the dirt and mulch had been spread. After a long day of fishing and gardening, the watershed day came to a close. Thanks to all of you who came and participated in the event.

The Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners also facilitated a stream clean-up in North Randall on Saturday October 13<sup>th</sup>. The participants, including several Cuyahoga County Board of Health employees, Mayor David Smith of North Randall, Chuck Horvath, the Building Commissioner, and three North Randall council members all worked very hard to remove discarded trash from a tributary to Tinkers Creek. The group met at 9:00am and worked diligently until noon. We removed over 2 dumpsters full of trash, 10 shopping carts, a kitchen counter, several tires, enough clothes to start a clothing line, and mountains of plastic bottles and bags. All who participated felt as if they had accomplished something great for the environment and for the betterment of their community. The Watershed Partners plan on holding a stream clean-up annually at the same location.

## North Randall Stream Cleanup

On Saturday, October 13, a group of volunteers met at North Randall Village Hall for a stream cleanup. A portion of a tributary of Tinkers Creek, located between Emery Road and Miles Road in North Randall, was cleaned for 3 hours that morning. Several dumpsters were filled with trash and other items that were found in the creek. The trash collected included bottles and cans, plastic bags, clothing and shoes, tires, shopping carts, and even a kitchen countertop!

The TCWP will be planning another stream cleanup in the spring. Please come out and help us clean up Tinkers Creek!



## Tinkers Creek Watershed Photo Contest

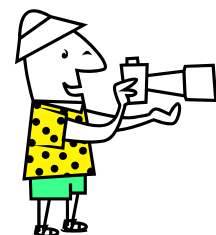
Winning photos will be featured in the Tinkers Creek Watershed Calendar. Photos will be accepted until April 30, 2008. Contact Mike McNutt with any questions or for more information.

Phone: 216-201-2001 x1224  
E-mail: [mmcnutt@ccbh.net](mailto:mmcnutt@ccbh.net)  
[www.tinkerscreekwatershed.org](http://www.tinkerscreekwatershed.org)



### Rules for Submittal:

1. All photos must be taken within the Tinkers Creek Watershed.
2. Entrants must submit a physical print 8x10 inches in size. A digital copy of the photo must be available upon request. The following information must be included with the entry: Name, address, phone number, e-mail address, location where photo was taken, and T-shirt size.
3. All photos should accurately reflect the subject matter as it appeared. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization (cropping, adjustments to color & contrast, etc.) will be disqualified from the contest.
4. Photos must be postmarked by April 30, 2008 and sent to:  
Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners  
Attention: Mike McNutt  
5550 Venture Drive  
Parma, OH 44130
5. Submission of a photo conveys a non-exclusive license to TCWP to use the image for any display, publicity, public relations, educational, or promotional use without further compensation to the copyright holder.
6. All photo submissions will become the property of TCWP.
7. Entrants retain ownership and all other rights to future use of their photographs. The TCWP shall have the right to verify, in their sole judgment, winner eligibility.
8. Previously published material for which non-exclusive rights were granted may be entered as long as the entrant still warrants full rights. The entrant must disclose when and where the photo appeared previously upon submission.



## Planting Prairie Plants - Part of Ohio's Heritage

by Sandy Barbic  
Education Specialist, Summit SWCD

Would you like to help restore Ohio's native vegetation and wildlife habitat, while improving stormwater quality at the same time? You can, by choosing to plant some native prairie plantings as part of your landscaping plan. Prairie plants are not only a beautiful feature from Ohio's historical scenery, but the roots also serve to prevent sediment erosion and to filter out pollutants in the stormwater runoff. Prairie grasses and flowers also provide food and shelter for our native wildlife species. Many species have been extirpated (eliminated, or driven from) our state and we would like to encourage their return.

Our prairie "roots" here in Ohio go back a long way. The end of the last great glacial period, known as the Wisconsinian, occurred about 12,000 years ago. When the glaciers retreated, they left huge deposits of ground-up bedrock, gravel, and grit, which formed the rich black soil in the prairies of the upper Midwest. Fine silt particles from old glacial riverbeds and sand grains from the sandy riverbanks combined with this soil to form "loess." The highly permeable loess was the perfect medium for deeply rooted grasses, which out-competed trees. When the first explorers came to this part of North America, they found Native American settlements thriving in

harmony with a prairie that seemed to stretch from the western border of what is now Pennsylvania to the Mountains in the West.

Since then, of course, agricultural, industrial, and residential development have erased the prairie from a huge portion of our continent. Currently, there are efforts being made to reclaim this magnificent piece of natural history. You can be a part of this effort.

Some landowners in Northeast Ohio have acidic, poorly drained soils, while others have excessively drained sand or gravel due to glacial influence. Wet meadows can thrive on the acidic soils, while the dry meadows do best on the sands and gravels. Both of these contain many attractive species with great conservation value. They also provide valuable habitat for mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and insects. On most sites, a real Ohio prairie can be planted and enjoyed in just a few years.

Here are some important points to remember when planning your prairie garden. Wildflowers take more moisture than grasses to germinate. The optimum rainfall period, severity of the winter, and the dormancy of the seed will determine the most favorable time to plant wildflowers and prairie

grasses in your area. Spring planting requires more watering. Fall planting allows the seeds to break dormancy, but there is also the risk of early germination and freezing. Once an established wildflower or prairie site exists, weeding is very minimal. You will also need to check with your locality or homeowners' association concerning landscaping ordinances. Some areas do not allow plants to grow beyond a certain height. It might be a good idea to start a small prairie garden area that can be contained. In a natural setting, prairie plants depend on a cycle of burning, which can't be accomplished safely in urban/suburban areas. However, there are other ways of scarifying and preparing the soil that can serve as substitutes. So go ahead and give it a try, and enjoy your beautiful prairie garden.

For more information, contact:  
Summit SWCD  
2795 Front St., Ste. D  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221  
330-929-2871

References:  
<http://www.prairiefrontier.com>, Ohio Prairie Association Bulletin, July 11, 2007, *Field Guide to the North American Prairie*, Jones, Stephen R., and Cushman, Ruth Carol, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston-New York, 2004

## Support the TCWP - use GoodSearch.com

GoodSearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. You use it just as you would any search engine, and it's powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results.

Just go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and be sure to enter Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners as the charity you want to support. Please spread the word!



## Biophilia

by Miles Reed  
Natural History Film Maker



What does this strange word mean? Often it seems as if the world of academia throws out new words just to keep the common folk (like me) from understanding the coded language of the scientific community. Well brace yourselves, here it is! Biophilia is the term used to describe our love for living systems, and living things. See, that wasn't so hard, now was it? Biophilia is also the title of a book by the world renowned biologist and author, E.O. Wilson. The word biophilia was first coined by the social psychologist Erich Fromm (1900-1980). In his hypothesis he attempts to describe humans' psychological orientation of being attracted to living things. Erick Fromm tries to answer questions like, "why are we so attracted to the faces of baby animals, and what are the advantages of this behavior?" The biophilia hypothesis basically heads towards a theory that our love of living things ultimately helps to sustain life itself. Great! Now I see that my self-confessed status as a tree-hugging, granola-eating, baby-animal-face-loving person actually has a

socially redeeming quality. With every duckling I cuddle to my cheek I am acting on a response that sustains life itself. Stand back folks, there is a world that needs to be saved, and I'm just the man for the job! How heroic of me! Well, it would be nice to think so, but to be honest, I have selfishly pursued my love of nature for the most personal of reasons (so I thought). It's also what I do as a profession. I am a nature film maker. My love of nature has taken me to some of the most exotic places on our planet. In my career as a biophilic I have been snorted at by rhinos, peed on by monkeys, I've had my head inspected by headhunters in the Amazon, and have been told that I was crazy by Maasai warriors in Africa. To think it all is owed to my biophilia. No, I don't need an ointment to cure my biophilia; although it could be contagious, we now see that a little biophilia never hurt anyone. In fact, it might be a small step towards saving the world.

## Streetsboro's Hidden Treasures

Streetsboro, Ohio is located in the Southern part of the Tinkers Creek Watershed. The community is developing quite rapidly, which is negatively impacting seldom seen Fens. What is a fen? A fen is a type of wetland characterized by cold groundwater and a limestone base, which makes the water alkaline. Most vegetation in fens is from Northern Canada, but has found refuge in these wetland habitats created by retreating glaciers millions of years ago. Streetsboro has three fens located within its political boundaries: Herrick Fen, the largest and most visited; Beck Fen, found off of S.R. 303; and Gott Fen, the smallest of the three.

Increased impervious cover, stormwater runoff, and habitat

reduction from unconstrained development have put these areas in jeopardy, due to a reduction in water quality and increased advancement of invasive species competing with the existing fen flora. The Streetsboro Parks and Recreation Department offered a tour of Herrick Fen, during which Mike McNutt discussed the Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners and the need for community residents to get involved in their local governments. Leah Tuttle from the Nature Conservancy provided an in depth analysis of Herrick Fen and showed the participants many of the plants associated with fens. These plants include Tamarack, Poison Sumac, Skunk Cabbage, and Sphagnum Moss, which acts like a sponge. The group

appreciated the tour and enjoyed the beautiful day spent at Herrick Fen.



## Bottled Water - Is it Healthier?

by Pam Sawchyn

Cuyahoga County Board of Health

When my pediatrician asked if I give my infant bottled water in her formula, I asked, "why?" If so, she would have to have a fluoride supplement based on which bottled water I was using. That got me to thinking about how healthy bottled water is, and with the cost, is it worth it?

Americans today are most likely not getting adequate fluoride, according to researchers at Case Western Reserve University and The Ohio State University. Research compared the bacterial content and fluoride levels of 57 samples of bottled water with tap water from each of Cleveland's four water treatment plants. Findings showed that only three bottled waters had fluoride levels within the range recommended by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; 54 other brands fell short of the recommended 0.08 to 1.30 milligrams of fluoride per liter. All Cleveland tap water samples were within the acceptable range. One reason why people choose to drink bottled water instead of tap water is because of the perceived purity of bottled water. The results showed that 39 samples of

bottled water were indeed purer than tap water. However, 15 samples of bottled water had significantly higher bacteria levels than tap water.

Americans have come to pay good money – two or three or even four times the price of gasoline – for a product they have always gotten and can still get, virtually for free, from taps in their homes. For example, you can buy a half-liter bottle of Evian for \$1.35. This water may seem cheap, but only because we aren't paying attention. If you bought and drank a bottle of Evian, you could refill that bottle once a day for 10 years, five months, and 21 days with tap water before that water would cost \$1.35. Put another way, if the water we use at home cost what even cheap bottled water costs, our monthly water bill would run around nine thousand dollars!

American generations raised on tap water and water fountains now go through a nearly four billion gallons of bottled water a year, and they're raising a generation that views tap water with disdain and water fountains with suspicion. We buy bottled water because we think it's healthy, which it is,

of course: every 12-year-old who buys a bottle of water from a vending machine instead of a 16-ounce Cola is inarguably making a healthier choice.

The bottles themselves are even more problematic. The plastic that they are made of is PET, polyethylene terephthalate, which is made from crude oil. To meet Americans' demand for bottled water requires more than 1.5 million barrels of oil annually, enough to fuel some 100,000 U.S. cars for a year. According to the Container Recycling Institute, 90 percent of PET bottles end up in landfills, at a rate of 30 million a day – more than 10 billion a year. Once there, they take 450 years to break down. If recycled, the raw materials from those bottles could be used to make 660 million square feet of carpet, 650 million extra-large T-shirts, or 144 million sweaters, among other things.

So is bottled water really healthier than tap water? With its cost being up to four times higher than gasoline, along with the environmental cost of producing the bottles, is it really worth it?

## TCWP Members

### **Individual**

Dale Godbey  
Brian Malone  
Belinda S. Miles  
Seth Wilmore

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David & Georgette Hague  
Fred Losi  
Tom & Fran Schultz  
Laura & Chris Travers  
Gary Truxton  
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Mershona Parshall  
Judith Zala

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Denny Linville  
John McLeod  
Marion Olson  
Jerry Piasecki  
Harry & Rosanne Stark  
Stanley Stine  
Chris Vild  
Jeff Wyatt

### **Creek Partner**

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Northfield Park Associates  
Lisa Perry  
Katherine Procop  
Larry Szuhay

### **Businesses & Organizations**

Cuyahoga County Board of Health  
EnviroScience Inc.  
FMSM Engineers  
Summit County Health District

Thank you for your support!

To become a member, please fill out our membership form on page 6.

For more information, contact  
Mike McNutt at  
[mmcnutt@ccbh.net](mailto:mmcnutt@ccbh.net)  
or visit  
[www.tinkerscreekwatershed.org](http://www.tinkerscreekwatershed.org).

# TINKERS CREEK WATERSHED PARTNERS

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## Member Communities

Bedford Heights

Glenwillow

North Randall

Oakwood

Reminderville

Valley View

Walton Hills

## Membership Information

*I would like to be a member of the Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners!*

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

E-mail

### Yearly memberships

- Individual \$10
- Family \$15
- Sponsor \$25
- Benefactor \$50
- Creek Partner \$100
- I would like to volunteer my time

Please make checks payable to:  
Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners  
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Twinsburg, OH 44087