



BIG SPRING WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Winter 2021 Newsletter

Update from the President by Mark Spicka

I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe. In November I was honored to be elected President of BSWA after serving as Treasurer for over fifteen years. The Board and I would like to thank Tom Smithwick for his extraordinary leadership as President of BSWA. We deeply appreciate all that he has done to protect, restore, and preserve the Big Spring.

Despite the pandemic, we have stayed busy. During the spring and summer of 2020, Mary Blakeslee and her crew maintained and expanded the native plantings garden at the corner of Nealy and Big Spring Rds. BSWA was recently awarded a \$4550 Land Partnership Grant from Cumberland County to continue work on the garden and provide educational signage. BSWA also partnered with the Central PA Conservancy to eradicate invasive plants, including purple loosestrife, along the spring. In October 2020, we conducted a socially-distanced cleanup, picking up trash and debris that accumulated along Big Spring Rd. An area of concern that has developed is the apparent loss of flow that Big Spring is experiencing between Nealy Rd. and the stone arch bridge. We are in contact with the PAFBC to continue to monitor the situation. If you have not done already, I ask you to renew your membership to BSWA. As the pandemic subsides, we hope to continue our work. I hope to see you on the spring as the weather improves!



PAFBC officer holding a nice brook trout at electroshocking in August 2020.



Tom Smithwick and Linda Watson talk to a Girl Scout Troop before the fall cleanup.

Upcoming Activities: Fly Tying Lessons via Zoom

We will be holding weekly fly tying lessons starting January 21, 2021. Tom Smithwick will demonstrate various patterns, explain what they imitate, and describe how to fish them. Contact Linda Watson for more details at fishmorekane@gmail.com.

Spring Cleanup

We will hold a socially-distanced cleanup along the spring on April 10, 2021. For more details, contact Linda Watson at fishmorekane@gmail.com.

Native Plantings Garden Maintenance

Mary Blakeslee will be leading work on the garden this spring and summer. Contact Mary at blakbock@verizon.net if you would like to participate.

Birding Along Big Spring

BSWA birders will resume leading socially-distanced bird walks on the first Saturday of April. Contact Bill Franz for more details.
wlfraenz1@yahoo.com

Officers:

Mark Spicka: President
Tom Smithwick: Treasurer
Laszlo Bockh: Secretary

Birding Along Big Spring

The Big Spring Watershed Association sponsors a bird walk on the first Saturday of every month at 7:00 AM, beginning at the headwaters parking lot. The walk is guided by expert birders.



Fly Fishing Along Big Spring

Anglers from around the world visit Big Spring to fish for large brook trout. The first reach of Big Spring holds 250 kilograms of brook trout per hectare; the second reach holds 150 kilograms per hectare. No stream in North America holds more brook trout per surface hectare.



Big Spring Watershed Assn.

P.O. Box 52
Newville, PA 17241
<http://bigspringwatershed.blogspot.com>



Membership Application

Dues – Basic \$10.00/year

Founder Level - \$25.00

Sponsor Level - \$50.00

Lifetime Member - \$500.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Email _____

Mission Statement

The Big Spring Watershed Association (BSWA) is organized for charitable, scientific, and educational purposes, more specifically to protect and enhance the quality of the Big Spring Watershed.

The Big Spring Watershed Association was formed in 2001 with the goals of protecting and managing wild native trout populations of the Big Spring, and other natural, cultural, and historical resources of the watershed. We hope to aid in restoring the stream and reestablishing a wild, natural reproducing brook trout population in its waters, as well as protecting the stream for residents, visitors, and future generations.

The Big Spring Creek is the 5th largest spring in Pennsylvania. It is one of the world's most productive limestone spring creeks. In the past, the Big Spring was considered by anglers to have been the premier limestone brook trout stream in the Eastern United States.

Our organization is made up of concerned citizens, scientists, fishermen, birders, and others who recognize the Big Spring's value and wish to restore and preserve it.



Watershed Restoration Project

Phase 1 was completed October, 2010.

Phase 2 was completed August, 1013.

This is part of an ongoing effort to improve habitat for all wildlife along the stream.



Barrel Factory

This picture from October 2010 shows the extent of the re pointing and exterior repairs that have been completed on the Barrel Factory. We thank mason Richard Zarnowski for his time and efforts in the work.

We have also installed a new roof, and have built a new cedar shake overhang for the front door.