



Catoctin News

Newsletter of the Catoctin Group serving
Carroll, Frederick and Washington Counties

Volume 4 Issue 2

Summer 2017

The Politics of Pollution

By CHRISTINE MACCABEE

"It's the inside work that's most important." – George Dresel

Most people would agree that clean water and air are essential resources that must be vigorously protected. How can there be any debate about this? Perhaps people would have to see what I did to understand how I feel.

I lived in western Maryland and West Virginia in the 1970's. I used to take long walks in places most people never go. One day I heard the sound of rushing water and thinking that it was a stream, ran to see it. What I witnessed was shocking. I saw a swift stream running bright orange in color. I stood transfixed, thinking it was just a temporary problem, but the orange water kept coming. I could not understand why it was orange, but being in coal country it soon came clear that it must have been due to the waste dumped into it by the coal company; later this was confirmed.

While living in Frostburg, Md. I witnessed a mountaintop removal. It was total devastation. Later a group of students, community members and I planted saplings on that rocky wasteland, but many of the trees died due to the poor soil left by the mining company.

Recently I learned that an important Federal Stream Protections Rule for coal mining operations, which has been in force for 7 years, is being repealed. The intent of repeal is probably to save the coal companies money, but may result in more water pollution in some areas. Unfortunately, this appears to be the beginning of a process of deregulation and permissiveness which likely will continue under the Trump Administration. Sadly, the bottom line is no longer purity of water and air, but money and convenience.

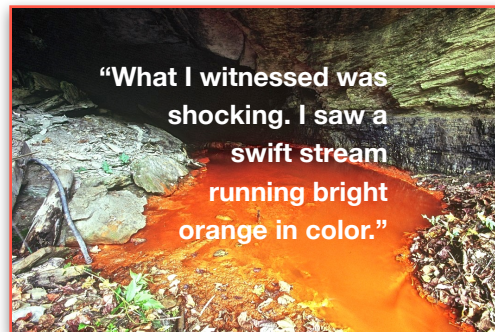
I recently watched a Maryland Public TV film "Keeping the Potomac: the Politics of Water", and

was sickened when I saw a paper mill on the upper Potomac spewing its waste into the river, 24/7, killing all aquatic life below the issuance point. It was beyond disheartening to see the brown gunk coming from the pipes and the harm it is doing downstream. Regulations to control this discharge are badly needed, but apparently do not exist or are not enforced. The question is why?

Pollution is not solely a political or industrial problem. It also is a human problem. We can recycle our waste materials and buy recycled products. We can promote lifestyles that are friendly to the environment and we can be more considerate of our fellow man with respect to the earth's resources. In the case of coal and paper companies, managers and owners should be encouraged,

or perhaps given incentives, to do more problem solving and some real soul searching of their priorities regarding pollution. They might find that developing solutions of their own would be preferable to being forced to comply with governmental regulations.

Because of my experiences outlined above, I have developed a passion to rectify environmental problems and I urge you to join me. Aside from asking our legislators to save the planet, we must do all we can, whether it be at home, at work, or in relationships with others, to change our attitudes and activities with respect to the health of the earth. The true politics of pollution may reside in the human heart. We must examine our spiritual callings to be caretakers of this planet, and then we must learn, teach and act.



Earthjustice Photo, Cabin Creek, WVA

Trees are Life

By JAN BARROW



In 1995, our

family purchased a 17-acre partially wooded property in Myersville, MD. We wanted to improve the environment, promote tree growth, prevent soil erosion and create a wildlife habitat. We also wanted to raise our children to appreciate and enjoy trees and nature. With the assistance of a state forester and a biologist, we developed a Forest Stewardship Plan to plant various types of trees and shrubs on our property.

In 1996, our property became a Certified Tree Farm and in the spring of 1997, our family, along with volunteers, planted 1,800 trees and shrubs. These were purchased from the Maryland State Nursery. An assortment of deciduous trees, non-deciduous trees and shrubs were planted in the lower portions of the property near Catoctin Creek in an effort to establish a riparian buffer.

The deciduous trees included sycamore, green ash, hackberry and black walnut. Lower growing shrubs planted were dogwood, redbud, crabapple and bicolor lespedeza. The shrubs were chosen to provide shelter and food for wildlife. Rabbits and other small animals can live under the bushes and deer can eat the berries. White pine and Norway spruce were planted on the upper part of the property mainly as a windbreak, but they also benefit wildlife. Participants of the program, must thin the trees and shrubs to promote healthy growth.

With the Trump Administration's disregard of climate change, we submitted a request to the Maryland state forester to add three additional acres of floodplain to our riparian forest management

plan. On April 3, with a grant from Healthy Forest Healthy Water, we had 1000 trees planted. All of these trees are native to

Maryland: Sycamore, Red Maple, Black Walnut, Persimmon, Crabapple, Dogwood, River Birch and Swamp Oak.

The benefits of trees are numerous. Trees create provide habitat and food for wildlife. They absorb carbon dioxide and potentially harmful gasses from the air and release oxygen. One large tree can provide a day's supply of oxygen for four people. A tree planted today on the west side of a home will reduce energy bills by 3% in 5 years. In 15 years, the savings will be nearly 12%. Trees can also combat climate change, cool the streets and cities,

prevent water pollution, prevent soil erosion, provide food and wood products, block wind and much more. The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day. One acre of mature forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and generates four tons of oxygen annually. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people. In laboratory research, visual exposure to settings with trees has produced significant recovery from stress within five minutes, as indicated by changes in blood pressure and muscle tension. See "Forest Bathing" in the December 2016 Catoctin Group Newsletter.

As citizens of this planet, we have the duty to do whatever we can to help slow or prevent climate change and the ongoing environmental devastation. However small or large of an impact, if we all do our share we WILL make a difference.

"One large tree can provide a day's supply of oxygen for four people."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mountaineer Gas Pipeline

The Columbia Gas Company is applying through required channels to build a hydro fracked gas pipeline under the C&O Canal and Potomac River just west of Hancock, MD.

The pipeline is a commercial venture and is not needed to support the gas demand in Maryland, or elsewhere in the US. There are many environmental and health risks associated with this venture and a growing list of opponents are taking measures on several fronts to stop it.

Governor Hogan, when asked, has stated he has not thought much about this project.

Your help is needed now!

Please call or e-mail Governor Hogan's office:

410-974-3901 or gov.mail@maryland.gov

and express your opposition. You can simply state:

"I do not want a fracked gas pipeline under the Potomac River."

Multi-vendor Yardsale Fundraiser

Saturday, July 15

8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Mount Pleasant Ruritan Club

8101 Crum Road, Walkersville, MD

Around the corner of Rte. 26 and Crum Road

Please consider donating something for our tables. Suggestions include household goods and appliances, toys, yard and garden supplies, books, tools, gift cards, camping, hiking and survival equipment, CD's and DVD's. Breakfast and lunch fare will be served and there will be a homemade baked goods table.

Contact Lew:

301-898-7910 or lewsherm@comcast.net

In the Streets Festival

Saturday, September 9

11:00 am – 5:00 pm

The Catocin Group will have a table at the downtown Frederick's 35th annual In the Streets Festival. We'll be located on the Green Block on 4th—5th Street. An estimated 75,000 people will attend, and it promises to be a great time to meet and chat with other environmentally concerned people.

Officers/Committee Chairs

Chairman & Energy

Dan Andrews

Treasurer

Anthony Iacovelli

Secretary & Outreach/Social Media

Amy Andrews

Conservation

Anthony Iacovelli

Invasive Plant Removal Stewardship

Carolyn Puckett

Outings

Anthony Iacovelli

Harry George

Membership

Patti Fredericks

Newsletter

Lew Sherman

Further Information

<http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/catocin-group>

Upcoming Catocin Group Meetings

Saturday, July 1

10:00 am-12:00+ pm

Thurmont Regional Library

76 E. Moser Road

Thurmont, Maryland

Lunch at local restaurant to follow.



Saturday, August 5

10:00 am-12:00+ pm

Urbana Regional Library

9020 Amelung Street

Frederick, MD

Lunch at local restaurant to follow.



All those concerned about the health of planet are welcome to attend.