

NewsStreams

Because Clean Water Can't Wait



Judy Petersen
Executive Director

A Letter From Our Director

Happy Spring!

I know this newsletter is long overdue, but when you read about all of the wonderful things we've had going on in recent months you'll understand why. We have welcomed two new staff members: Development Director Jeffrey Jewel and Communications Director Aaron Sole.

We have also been hard at work on a new strategic plan to guide our way as we develop exciting new programs and increase our capacity to protect more of Kentucky's streams, lakes, and rivers over the next several years.

It is also my bittersweet duty to tell you that Tessa Edelen has had a wonderful opportunity open up and will be leaving us in June. Tessa has been our Watershed Program Director for nearly eight years and she will be sorely missed.

Thankfully, our own Tim Joice has asked to fill her position, so we're

searching for a new Water Policy Director! By the time you read this, I hope to have tendered an offer for our newest staff member.

We're also trying something a little different for our annual meeting this year - an early summer picnic at Bernheim Forest! Make plans to join us for a meal, a hike, and to meet all the new faces at KWA! Come and hear about our plans for the next few years. With all the changes taking place, we decided it was also time to update the look of our newsletter as well. We hope you enjoy it.

Change is hard. Change is exciting. For me personally and for our organization all these changes have been both. One thing that hasn't changed is KWA's commitment to protecting and restoring Kentucky's waterways. I am, as always, humbled by your support for KWA. Thank you!

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Brad is glad to get to help clean Bacon Creek -Mark Howell, KWA Agricultural Coordinator



Farming For The Future

Tessa Edelen - Watershed Program Director

Farmers understand the land in ways most of us will never know. They rely on it to make a living, but it's more than that. Many farmers have a sense of legacy; they want to leave something better behind for the next generation.

Brad and Karen Hines are such farmers. They raise cattle and grow corn and tobacco in Hart County, KY. Brad is a fourth generation farmer in this part of the world, and he has worked hard to make the family farm

a showcase of conservation practices. "Brad is glad to get to help clean up Bacon Creek," says KWA Agricultural Coordinator Mark Howell. "His optimism impresses me." Howell works with Hines and other farmers in the area to put best practices on the ground.

The Hines' farm sits at the very start of Tampa Branch on Bacon Creek. They know all too well that what we do on the land impacts the water. Brad has fenced his cattle out of the

creek to keep manure and sediment from washing in, he knows it's better for the cows, too. Instead of drinking from the creek, the cows now use an automatic livestock waterer for fresh, clean water anytime they want.

Hines also implemented heavy use area protections, again to mitigate nutrients and sediment running off the farm's fields. The couple even invited the public out to share what they're doing at a Farm Field Day in the fall of 2015, and from the looks of it, they are just getting started.

They have plans to create a stream crossing and do repair work to his pastures. Howell notes, "He's all in, and he's doing it for the right reasons." Sounds like good reason for optimism.



The Hines Family

Fourth Generation Farmers Brad, Karen, and their son Rylan.



Lawsuit Victory

Tim Joice - Water Policy Director

Over the past two years, KWA and several allies have been engaged in a lawsuit with U.S. EPA and the state of Kentucky.

Our groups sued regarding changes to the state's selenium and nutrient water quality standards, which EPA had approved. We had reason to believe that the new standards were weaker than the previous standards. We also didn't think the state had sufficiently followed consultation procedures regarding the Endangered Species Act.

We Won... Mostly.

The gist of it is this: we received assurance that EPA would reconsider the approval and consult with The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the changes; that while they will likely approve part of the selenium standard, the state will also include a previous component to ensure adequate enforcement; that while they will likely approve the nutrient change, the state explicitly stated their implementation approach on the nutrient standard to ensure it is proactive rather than reactive to nutrient pollution.

Now, we have to make sure the nutrient and selenium standards are enforced appropriately. Onward!

Microbeads & The Future

If you hadn't heard, Congress passed the Microbead Free Waters Act in December, and the President signed it into law!

While we were fully supportive of this new law, it didn't go far enough to deal with existing microbead pollution. Over the last few months, KWA worked with Kentucky Conservation Committee to try and get support for a resolution in the General Assembly related to plastic microbeads. Our drafted resolution would have supported the new law, and then would have asked for studies to be done to determine the extent of current microbead pollution in Kentucky's waterways. We were unable to get enough support to move the resolution forward, but this is not the end of our efforts on microbead pollution.

Recent research has found that the microbead issue is much worse than many suspected. The new federal law focused solely on "rinse-off" cosmetic products, like face washes and hand soaps. But there are other "leave-on" cosmetic products that are utilizing microbeads that are far smaller than those in other rinse off products.

Dow Chemical manufactures "Sunsppheres," particles of 0.0003 millimeters that are used in sunscreens. According to the UN's Environmental Program, microbeads are found in leave-on products that include deodorant, lipstick, shaving cream, insect repellent, anti-wrinkle creams, moisturizers, eye shadow, mascara, and more. Much of the content in these products eventually gets rinsed off and finds its way into our aquatic environment. We will continue to push for microbeads to be phased out of all cosmetic products!





A New Communications Director

Aaron Sole
Communications Director

Howdy All,

Aaron Sole reporting in for my very first newsletter article with KWA. I'll be serving as our new communications director and though I've been told that there simply is no replacing Mr. Will Willis I promise to do my best.

I've been an avid outdoorsman and environmentalist for as long as I can remember, I'd pretty much rather be in the woods or on the water than anywhere else. I am ecstatic to get the opportunity to work full time at protecting the streams and rivers that have brought me so much joy over the years.

Prior to joining KWA I worked with The Life Adventure Center, a small NPO that provides outdoor learning opportunities for underserved youth, as their media developer and outdoor facilitator. I also attended Eastern Kentucky University, graduating with my BA in Broadcast & Electronic communications.

I'm extremely excited to have the opportunity to jump on board with the alliance, and to get a chance to help out with the great work these guys & gals have been doing. Thanks for having me.

Every Drop Counts

Tessa Edelen - Watershed Program Director

Beargrass Creek has a stormwater pollution problem.

A lot of rain results in water running overland and into the creek, carrying with it various pollutants and garbage. For years, the Beargrass Creek Alliance (BCA) has been advising folks

rain gardens.

These last two are recommended by BCA in good faith, in all seriousness, and with the best intentions. For most people, though, these things are much easier said than done.

Digging up part of one's yard to put in a



to do their part to keep the creek clean by either eliminating the pollutants on the ground that could be picked up by water or letting more rain soak into the ground so it doesn't run off in the first place. The Pledge recommends all sorts of practical ways individuals can help. Many of the items are pretty straight forward like picking up pet waste and keeping storm drains clean. Some of the items seem to surprise – reducing or eliminating lawn and garden fertilizers or making sure automobiles are not leaking oil or antifreeze. Then there are the ones for directly soaking up rain water – namely, rain barrels and

rain garden can be quite intimidating. BCA is hip to this reality and now has a plan to help. It's a new program called Every Drop. The idea is simple: in order to reduce



stormwater pollution in the watershed, Every Drop helps select, design, install, and pay for one of four Best Management Practices on residential properties: a rain barrel, a rain garden, a native tree planting, or a native plant garden. BCA sends volunteers to homes (with permission!) to help decide which option works, and then pay for 50% of it! Amazing! Sign up today!



April was AVEDA Earthmonth and Kentucky Waterways Alliance was once again the clean water partner in Kentucky. We would like to thank all participating Aveda salons and stores for their support! From fashion shows, to wine tastings, to local restaurant nights, the Kentucky Aveda team is making great strides toward clean water in Kentucky. Check out the Lexington Aveda store in the Fayette mall and the Louisville store in the Shelbyville Road mall for a chance to win one of two beautiful rain barrels painted by local artists Katy Kane, Stacey Luddeke, and Kristin Messina.



A Love Letter To KWA

Tessa Edelen - Watershed Program Director

I can't be sure if when I started back in 2008, I knew exactly what the word watershed meant.

Today, I would find that pure blasphemy. Everyone should know what it means and, further, in what watershed one lives. Acting locally, on a watershed level, is the best way to effect change. I get it now. This is a sign of how much KWA has done for me.

Being the Watershed Program Director has been my dream job. I've had the opportunity to fight the good fight, and win or lose, I certainly poured my heart into it. I think, too, that I have become a (slightly) more sophisticated environmentalist.

We teach our children that the world is not black or white; life is full of nuance and compromise. I learn this lesson a little bit every day. The work that we do is really hard, but KWA is the best there is.

The time has come for me to move on, but I carry with me the kindness and generosity that so many of you have shared with me. Thank you - and keep up the good fight. ♥ Tessa

Tim Joice
New Watershed
Program Director

I have thoroughly enjoyed the policy arena, standing up as a voice for healthy waterways and healthy communities.

I have learned more than I could have imagined, and hope that I have served all our membership well in that capacity. However, after giving it much thought I have agreed to take on Tessa's role as Watershed Program Director.

The timing was right for a new challenge. I am passionate about KWA's work, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to continue to move KWA forward as the next Watershed Program Director. Fortunately, my organizational knowledge as current staff and my background prior to coming to KWA apply well to the work in the watershed program.

I think I speak for all of the staff when I say that we are all very sad to see Tessa leave. We all love Tessa's personality, her witty humor, and all the work she has done with the Watershed Program over her time here. I hope to continue to move the Watershed Program forward in the years to come!



2016 Annual Meeting - Pollinator Picnic

Join us **Sunday June 12th** at **Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest** for our annual member meeting. Enjoy a nature hike with other wonderful KWA supporters, and a picnic on us. Visit, kwalliance.org and check under our upcoming events for more information.



This is one of our favorite events throughout the year bringing together new and current members for a night of local and national films. We would like to give a big thank you to our generous sponsors Quest Outdoors, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Councilmen Tom Owen and Bill Hollander, Wiltshire Pantry, and AVEDA for helping to make our 8th annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival a huge success!

Louisville plant guru, Cindi Sullivan, did a wonderful job as the emcee for the evening's festivities. It was a fantastic night of inspiring activism and we hope you will join us next year.

Mark your calendars for next years festival March 10, 2017!

Jeff Jewel - Development Director

I look forward to working with my new colleagues, our members, and our soon-to-be members.



I was delighted to join the KWA team in January of this year. My professional experience includes extensive development, administrative, and community relations work with 501(c)3 organizations in Texas, Colorado, and Oregon. I also have a good deal of governmental experience in Ohio and Indiana including extensive grant writing and project management. I hold an Associates degree in Earth Science from Vincennes University, a Bachelors degree in General Studies from Indiana University, and a Certificate in Public Management from the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs. I'm really pleased to be able to put my education and experience to use helping protect and preserve one of Kentucky's most precious resources.

I was born and raised in historic Vincennes, Indiana, in a house situated, quite literally, on the banks of the Wabash River. When you grow up watching the ebb and flow of a major river every day, you appreciate the beauty and power, but you also become aware of the constant threats due to pollution and development. I feel it is incredibly important that we work to protect our river systems, including their related wetlands, for future generations to experience. One of my favorite accomplishments was successfully working with the Wabash River Heritage Corridor program to preserve 40 acres of endangered wetlands and to restore an adjacent WPA-era river front park just north of Vincennes University. The preserved wetlands now serve as an outdoor classroom and it's also become a favorite spot for birdwatching. I look forward to working with my new colleagues, our members, and our soon-to-be-members, to grow our capacity to do even more good work. Together we can ensure that Kentucky has clean, safe water for all of us and the generations to come.



Mammoth Green River Cleanup 2016

Jessica Kane - Community Engagement Director

2016 marks the National Parks Centennial and Mammoth Cave National Park's seventy-fifth anniversaries.

This year we are joining forces with Mammoth Cave National Park, The Nature Conservancy of Kentucky, Western Kentucky University Green River Preserve, Friends of Mammoth Cave, and US Fish & Wildlife Service celebrating the Green River and taking our annual river cleanup to Mammoth Cave National Park! We will have two routes this year from the WKU Preserve to Dennison Ferry and the Dennison Ferry to the Green River Ferry. We are also including a trail cleanup for those that prefer not to be on the river! This is a very exciting year and we hope you all will join us! Check out our website and register for your spot online!

KWA Only Works Because Of You - Jeff Jewel - Development Director

For well over 20 years Kentucky Waterways Alliance has been restoring and protecting our rivers, lakes, and streams. We have brought a higher standard of protection to 90% of Kentucky's water bodies and had a major impact on how water is protected nationally. We have helped create watershed groups around the state and we remain the state's leading watchdog protecting our waters from illegal pollution.

In 2016 we plan to vastly expand our capacity to protect and restore our state's water resources. Our plan calls for the addition of two new staff members located in and serving the eastern and western parts of the state. These new positions

will support local citizens in the formation of new watershed groups, engage in watershed planning, river clean-ups and advocacy work. We will also double our capacity to monitor developments that impact our waters and intervene when action is necessary.

As the Kentucky affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation we are embarking on an exciting new Backyard Certified Wildlife Habitat campaign. The goal of this program is to provide wildlife with a healthy habitat with the appropriate food, clean water, and plants these animals need to survive. These certified habitats will help wildlife thrive in backyards across the state

while also protecting our watersheds from pollutants and enhancing onsite waste water practices.

Our work would not be possible if it were not for the members and donors that support us. Thank you for helping further our efforts. Your gift promotes very visible local efforts such as our Beargrass Creek Program and Green River clean-ups. You'll also be helping with large scale advocacy to promote major watershed protection such as our work with the Mississippi River Collaborative. Members like you are the key to protecting our waterways!

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