



Robert Hoffmann &lt;rahoffmann93@gmail.com&gt;

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## Deep Creek Watershed Summer Update

1 message

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**Deep Creek Watershed Foundation** <david@myerberglaw.com>

Sun, Jun 2, 2019 at 4:45 PM

Reply-To: david@myerberglaw.com

To: rahoffmann93@gmail.com

Summer 2019 Newsletter



## Deep Creek Watershed Foundation

### *Today's Choices, Tomorrow's Future*

The dynamic partnerships established by the Deep Creek Watershed Foundation keep expanding to pay for the increased sustainability of the Deep Creek Watershed.

- Fish, frogs and vegetation in the streams and in Deep Creek Lake can live because acid mine drainage from Cherry Creek is being neutralized in the watershed.
- Brookfield Renewable Power can use new lake-level predictions to anticipate drought conditions more accurately, and plan its releases of water through the Deep Creek Lake dam in a way that benefits everyone in the watershed.
- The Maryland Department of Natural Resources can see the success of its boat-cleansing precautions, and determine if there is a need for more intensive action to keep destructive Zebra Mussels out of Deep Creek Lake.
- The University of Maryland Extension Service can reach broader audiences to demonstrate the consequences of stormwater runoff from private property, and the use of rain gardens to effectively nurture flowers and plants, and prevent erosion.



## Predicting New Lake Water Levels



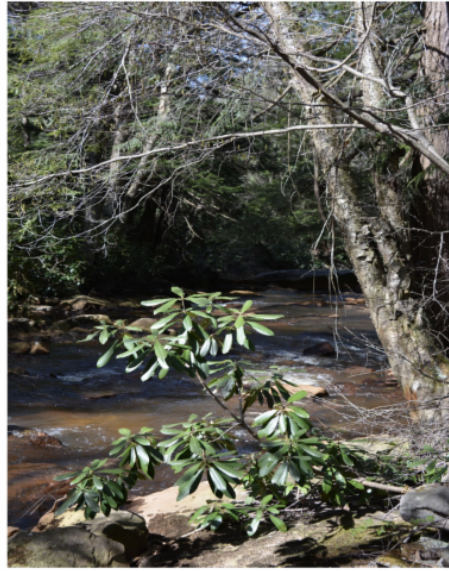
We paid \$97,000 for the development of a new method for predicting the water level of Deep Creek Lake. Called the Water Budget Model, it will help the Brookfield Renewable Power Company that operates the dam on Deep Creek Lake, to plan water releases from the dam in light of the anticipated level of the water in the lake.

The level of the water in the lake as measured at the dam is prescribed by a set of rule bands for each month; the lake level should remain between a stated upper and lower rule band. These requirements are set out in the power company's permit to operate the dam, granted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Ideally, the water releases from the dam are chosen to simultaneously benefit the needs of the power company, the whitewater community (the lake empties into the Youghiogheny River, a major whitewater site), the trout fishing site below the dam, and the Deep Creek Lake homeowners and recreation interests.

The challenge for the power company is to plan the water releases so that the water level of the lake is kept high enough to satisfy all of the people who benefit from the water in the lake.

After paying for developing the Water Budget Model over the past two years, the Foundation has presented it to MDE and the power company for their use. Brookfield Renewable Power told us it is looking forward to incorporating the Water Budget Model in its on-going planning of when to release, and how much water to release from the dam, especially in very dry years.

## Neutralizing Acid Mine Drainage



We paid an initial \$10,000 to help fight acid mine drainage from Cherry Creek into Deep Creek Lake. Cherry Creek is one of the major streams in the Deep Creek Watershed, and a major route for water flowing into Deep Creek Lake. There are three abandoned coal mines that put acid mine discharge into Cherry Creek. According to the MDE's Bureau of Mines, the largest of these mines near Cherry Creek, called the Everhart Seep, alone now discharges an average of 60 gallons of acid mine drainage per minute.

The U.S. Department of the Interior and the State of Maryland have worked to neutralize the acid in the water with projects that include a limestone doser (originally paid for by the Sprenger Lang Foundation), that releases regulated amounts of acid-neutralizing limestone into the water. We are now joining our strength with these partners by paying for the limestone that goes into the doser.

Photos courtesy of Maryland Department of the Environment - Abandoned Mine Lands Division.

## Managing Stormwater Runoff



We, along with the Garrett College's Continuing Education & Workforce Department, and the Garrett County Government, sponsor the University of Maryland Extension Service's (UMES) public presentations on managing stormwater runoff for homeowners.

The problem is especially severe when rainwater runs over hard surfaces in the watershed, such as driveways and rooftops, picking up sediment, chemicals, debris and toxins that are carried into local streams and the lake. The Extension Service's presentations cover the use of rain barrels and cisterns, rain gardens, conservation landscaping and riparian buffer planting, among other ways to ameliorate runoff and prevent erosion.

These ongoing sessions are presented by UMES's Ashley Bodkins, who also is an advisor to the Deep Creek Watershed Foundation.

## Watching for Zebra Mussels



Between 2018 and 2019, we have provided \$6,000, and joined with Brookfield Renewable Power, to help the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) test the waters and habitats in Deep Creek Lake to see if there are any indications that the lake has been invaded by the terribly destructive Zebra Mussels, a species originally native to the lakes of Russia and Ukraine.

These mussels, which have invaded other lakes in the U.S., including some Maryland lakes, are usually carried into lakes on the bottom of boats. DNR's launch stewards have found zebra mussels attached to boats about to be put into Deep Creek Lake.

Zebra mussels have sharp shells that are a danger to swimmers who step on them, they can clog hydroelectric dams, they attach to boat bottoms, docks, and boat props, and they are suspected of being the source of a toxin that has killed thousands of birds.

The tests so far have yielded the good news that Deep Creek Lake shows no presence of Zebra Mussels, and, while the lake's water could support these intruders, the level of calcium needed for their survival is too low right now. So DNR is continuing its boat-cleaning, warning and education programs, and we are continuing to help fund the watch for these dangerous invaders.

**Let us tell you about us, and let us hear about projects you'd like to see us fund!**

Deep Creek Watershed Foundation Board members have been talking with homeowner associations and other groups about the work of the Foundation, and asking about projects that the Foundation might consider funding. If you have a group that wants us to visit and present our information, and have us hear your suggestions



for projects we might fund in the future, please let us know by contacting [madray@drayrai.com](mailto:madray@drayrai.com).

## Our Funding & How We Choose Our Projects

Our investments in these and future projects are possible because of the generous, tax deductible gifts we get from those of you around Deep Creek Lake, throughout the Deep Creek Watershed, and beyond.

Each of our project choices comports with the recommendations of the Deep Creek Watershed Management Plan. (See <https://www.garrettcountry.org/watershed/dcwmp>.) Each project is closely examined by the people who make up our Board of Directors, and they are the people who make the selection of each project for funding. Each member of our Board of Directors, and each of our advisors, is a volunteer who has a strong connection to the Deep Creek Watershed. Their varied backgrounds and expertise make the Board of Directors and the advisors a highly effective organization for funding projects in the Deep Creek Watershed. The Board members and advisors are all profiled in our website, [www.deepcreekwatershedfoundation.org](http://www.deepcreekwatershedfoundation.org).

**Please consider a tax deductible contribution to support these important activities.**

[Click here to donate.](#)

Deep Creek Watershed Foundation | P. O. Box 376, Oakland, MD 21550

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Sent by [david@myerberglaw.com](mailto:david@myerberglaw.com) in collaboration with



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