



For Immediate Release from the Lebanon Valley Conservancy

Courtney Reimann, Land Protection Director, TLVC: 717.273.6400

director@tlvc.org | www.TLVC.org | www.facebook.com/lebanonvalleyconservancy

Michael Schroeder, President, QWA:

mjsch313@yahoo.com | www.Quittiecreek.org | www.facebook.com/quittapahilla

Quittie Watershed interns present findings on local waterways

Lebanon, Pa (October 27, 2023) Interns for the Quitapahilla Watershed Association (QWA) recently presented their findings from stream morphology surveys and on-the-ground agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) in relation to some of the main tributaries of the [Quittapahilla watershed](#) in Lebanon County, including Gingrich Run, Killinger Creek and Snitz Creek.

The Lebanon Valley Conservancy (TLVC), a partner and sponsor of QWA, administered the 2023 summer internships, held by Hannah Horengic and Ilyssa McLaughlin, both students from LVC. The students presented a brief overview of their research during a QWA meeting in October. Their stream assessments included livestock access to a creek, severe bank erosion, water-treatment discharge, as well as several sizeable sinkholes. “Two out of the three creeks ended in a sinkhole...Gingrich Run and Killinger Creek,” noted Horengic.

In addition to these impacts, the interns also discovered fallen trees causing creek diversion and a bridge collapsing into one of the streams. “An abandoned bridge... made of brick and stone is currently collapsing into the stream. If that continues, it’s going to create a pretty significant blockage,” shared McLaughlin. The interns will submit a complete report of their findings, including detailed photos, to QWA. “Between all three streams, I think I took close to 3,000 pictures,” added McLaughlin.

The internships were paid through grant money, provided to the Lebanon County Conservation District (LCCD) Lebanon County Clean Water Team, from the Department of Environmental Protection. “The project was a collaboration between QWA, LCCD, TLVC, LVC, and Rocky Powell -- president of Clear Creeks Consulting who provided training to the interns,” shared Courtney Reimann, land protection director for TLVC. “It brought funding into Lebanon County to support our stream health and also provided local students with hands-on monitoring experiences with our waterways.”

The data gathered from the QWA interns will help determine the next steps to improve local stream health. “Local monitoring efforts are important...one-third of streams and creeks in Pennsylvania are considered impaired by pollution, and more than half of Lebanon County’s waterways are impaired,” shared Michael Schroeder, Ph.D., president of QWA. “Now that we have an updated set of data about these three tributaries and the locations of the main sources of agricultural runoff and sediment, we can prioritize our future projects accordingly.”

QWA and its partners are currently seeking volunteers to help monitor streams in Lebanon County throughout the year. Anyone interested in getting involved can contact QWA president, Michael Schroeder, at mjsch313@yahoo.com or Courtney Reimann, TLVC land protection director, at director@tlvc.org.

(more)

About the Lebanon Valley Conservancy Formed in 2000, TLVC's mission is to promote the conservation of cultural, historical and natural resources through public awareness, education and land preservation. TLVC works in cooperation with neighboring conservancies and trusts, as well as local and state governments, to protect and ensure equitable access to these valuable resources in the Lebanon Valley. To date, more than 1,000 acres of land have been preserved. Visit www.TLVC.org to donate, volunteer or become a member.

About the Quittie Watershed Association QWA is a nonprofit organization founded in 1997. Its mission is to improve the water quality of the Quittapahilla Creek and its tributaries; to raise public awareness about the watershed's importance to the local quality of life and to the Chesapeake watershed; and to encourage citizens, organizations and businesses in Lebanon County to help maintain the health and viability of the watershed's streams and ecosystems. More information can be found at www.quittiecreek.org

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