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DWRI Conference

BRC Celebrates 10 Years of Work with Five Conservation Partners

Over 200 guests attended a full day workshop on January 16 and helped BRC, Brandywine Conservancy, Stroud Water Research Center, Natural Lands, The Nature Conservancy and University of Delaware Water Resources Center celebrate 10 years of work in the Brandywine-Christina Watershed. The work was part of a highly collaborative Delaware River Watershed Initiative with generous funding from the William Penn Foundation that included planning, implementation and monitoring of key strategies to improve water quality in our watershed. These action strategies included land preservation, agricultural practices, riparian forest plantings, stream restorations and municipal policies and ordinances all focused in four geographical areas including Honey Brook (upper Brandywine Creek), White Clay Creek, E. Branch Red Clay Creek and Plum Run.



Visit BRC'S YouTube page @brandywinewatershed to view a film highlighting projects in each of these areas.

Summer Camp

Camp 2025 is just around the corner! Registration opened in early February.

As the result of our new registration software (SmartRec powered by Amilia), camp registration is much more streamlined and simpler this year. There are still openings in many camps... all availability is easily viewed as you register.

We are also offering camp scholarships for families in need. If you know of any family that may benefit, please refer them to our website.

All links and instructions can be found on our Summer Nature Camp page on our website.



Thanks to funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation, BRC recently completed a refresh of our website.

Visitors to **brandywineredclay.org** can view pages on each of our preserves, information on the history of our organization, upcoming events, and stay updated on our watershed conservation and land preservation projects. All of this is now available to be translated into five other languages as well.

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL CHECK IT OUT!

Upcoming Events

Wild & Scenic Film Festival

Thursday, March 20th

Red Clay Valley Clean Up

Saturday, March 29th

1st Day of Trout Fishing in PA

Saturday, April 5th

1st Day of Trout Fishing in DE

Sunday, April 6th

Brandywine Hills Point-to-Point Races

Sunday, April 6th

Brandywine Clean Up

Saturday, April 12th

Trout Rodeo

Saturday, April 26th

1st Day Summer Camp @ Myrick Conservation Center & Chandler Mill

Monday, June 23rd

Summer Music Series- Thursday Evenings

Actual dates to be TBD
July & August

Dead Fest

Friday, September 5th

Red Clay Day

Saturday, September 20th

Annual Dinner @ The Mendenhall Inn

Thursday, October 16th

FIND EVENTS HERE



WILD & SCENIC[®] FILM FESTIVAL
where activism gets inspired

March 20, 2025 at 6pm

Hosted by Trail Creek Outfitters
at Upland Country Day School

Benefits: Brandywine Red Clay Alliance, STROUND WATER RESEARCH CENTER

Wild and Scenic

On March 20, the 18th Annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival will be held at Upland School in Kennett Square.

Trail Creek Outfitters sponsors the event, with proceeds going to BRC and Stroud Water Research Center. Attendees will enjoy food and drink from local restaurants, raffle items, and a 90-minute curated selection of nature films. We would like to thank the event sponsors and donors and look forward to seeing you there! Tickets are \$45 each or two for \$80 and can be purchased at trailcreekoutfitters.bigcartel.com

Attention Eagle Scouts

Looking for an idea for your Eagle Scout project?

OUR EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS TWO!



- A mobile PVC "water park/misting station" built for our summer camps... easy setup/takedown.
- A mobile "exploration" table with HD wheels built for programming. Will need drawer and cabinet storage for microscopes & discovery items.

If interested, please contact our Education Director, Alexa Hart at ahart@brandywineredclay.org.

Are you interested in becoming a Pennsylvania Master Naturalist?

BRC is offering this program Tuesday evenings at our Myrick Conservation Center beginning August 2025 and running through October 2025.

Registration will open in early March. Please stay tuned to our website and social media for more information, or call our office at 610-793-1090.



PUT YOUR PASSION INTO ACTION

BECOME A PA MASTER NATURALIST

PENNSYLVANIA Master Naturalist

Do you love being outside? Would you like to know more about the landscapes, plants and animals around you? Are you looking to give back to your community through volunteer service? If this sounds like you, apply to become a certified PA Master Naturalist today!

FALL 2025
APPLICATIONS OPENING SOON!

Fall Training Locations:
Lancaster | Chester | Adams | Delaware
Montgomery | Allegheny | Butler | Centre
Cambria | Westmoreland

Visit our website for more information:
<https://pamasternaturalist.org/>

Educational Programming

2024 came to a close as we saw participants from 45 schools & groups for 110 programs.

We can't wait for spring so that we can get back outside and work with community groups! Our programs are not just for schools, we offer scout programs as well as programs suitable for the general public. For schools, we have some openings in early April and June... but most of May is sold out. Please check out our education brochure and refer to our website to inquire about scheduling a program.

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR EDUCATION BROCHURE.



Public Programming

Our early education programs are in full swing for spring. Books & Boots meets the first Friday of every month at the Myrick Conservation Center, while Nature Play is running the third Thursday of every month at the Chandler Mill Nature Preserve.

In addition, we're bringing back our holiday youth programs...stay tuned for our April Easter "egg" program...where we will take flight and get creative using our feathered friends as inspiration.

BRC will also be running the Pennsylvania Master Naturalist program in fall of 2025.

KEEP AN EYE ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION.

Announcing Our New Education Coordinator

We Are Growing!

Join us in welcoming our new Education Coordinator, Citlaly Weed. Citlaly is a Kennett native who graduated from NYU. She has a passion for education and experience with scouts and school programming. Watch for new public programs as Citlaly will be growing those programs back to our pre-Covid offerings.



New Watershed Conservation Assistant

BRC is pleased to welcome Sarah Newman as our Watershed Conservation Assistant.

Sarah has earned a BA in Biology from SUNY University of Buffalo and has been a certified Master Watershed Steward with Penn State Extension since 2021. We welcome her skills in native plant and tree planting and community outreach to this new position. Sarah will be leading our riparian buffer projects including a DCNR grant to plant 7 acres of new riparian buffers in the Red Clay Creek Watershed among other watershed projects and outreach programs.



Welcome to Our Accounting Assistant

Amanda Church recently joined BRC as our Accounting Assistant.

She grew up in Yorkshire, UK and moved to America 25 years ago. Having been involved with various non-profit organizations, Amanda works with David, our Business Director, assisting in various aspects involved with the financial running of BRC. In her spare time, she enjoys being outdoors and appreciates the dedicated work her fellow staff at BRC do to help preserve open space for future generations to enjoy.



Office History and Renovations

In April of this year, it will be 44 years since BRC (then BVA and RCVA) moved their offices from downtown West Chester's F&M building to the Myrick Conservation Center.

The staff moved the office in cars and a pickup truck in one day. The office had been Ray Myrick's home, which he had not finished, and was converted into the office in about 3 months. Over the years the building has expanded, changed some colors, and in the past year we have been working on some much-needed upgrades to our wiring, infrastructure and furnishings generously funded by Crystal Trust. Our normal office hours are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. We'd love to see you if you stop by to take a walk or have any questions about what we are working on!



BRC Office Present Day



Spring Litter Clean-ups Coming Soon!

Red Clay Valley Clean Up is scheduled for Saturday, March 29 from 8 am to noon.

Volunteers will clean up over 98 miles of roads in Chester County, Pennsylvania and New Castle County, Delaware meeting at Ashland Nature Center in Hockessin or Kennett Township Pennsylvania.



Brandywine Valley Clean Up is scheduled for Saturday, April 12 from 8 am to noon.

Volunteers will work out of four sites to clean up litter along roads and trails including in Modena, Downingtown, Pocopson in Chester County and First State National Historical Park in Delaware.



Photo credit Chris Barber

**TO REGISTER FOR THE SPRING CLEAN-UPS, VISIT
BRANDYWINEREDCLAY.ORG**

Twelve Years of Work on E. Branch Red Clay Creek Culminate With Three New Projects

This past fall BRC was very busy working on three stream restoration and riparian buffer planting projects on the Upper East Branch Red Clay Creek in East Marlborough Township:

At **North Walnut Road Project area on the E. Branch Red Clay Creek** we completed a 2,225 foot stream restoration project on Quartz Creek, a tributary of the Red Clay Creek just upstream of the first project on this stretch of stream completed in 2013 with Kennett Golf and Country Club. This project included three other property owners and involved grading back eroding stream banks, removing a collapsed roadway that obstructed the stream channel and caused road flooding and installed two farm stream crossings. We also planted 437 trees and 75 shrubs along a total of 3,520 feet of stream.

Across the road at **Lynn Lane**, BRC revisited a riparian tree planting from 2014 that had over 50% mortality of trees due to the highly invasive reed canary grass and meadow voles present at the site. We also needed to remove 50 dead ash trees to allow room for the new riparian tree planting. Working with four landowners and private contractors with experience growing trees in these conditions, we re-planted the buffer with 300 trees on over 2 acres of floodplain. To combat the reed canary grass, we used trees 4- 6 feet tall and plan to mow between rows of trees two to three times a year. Stone mulch and tree tubes were used to reduce deer browse and bark damage from meadow voles.

Upstream at the top of the watershed at the **East Doe Run Road** project area, BRC completed a stream restoration on 1,360 feet of stream that included stream bank grading and in-stream erosion control structures. This coming spring we'll plant over one acre of new riparian buffer with over 200 trees. This project is the culmination of three years of work at the headwaters of this stream that included a wide variety of agricultural best management practices that included 2 new grass waterways, relocating horse paddocks from a headwater pond, a biochar filter, and a riparian buffer around a headwater pond.

These projects were funded by several grants from: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, William Penn Foundation, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Finance Authority, E. Kneale Dockstader Foundation and E. Marlborough Township.



Work Begins on West Branch Red Clay Creek

Last winter, BRC was pleased to complete our ninth Watershed Assessment and Restoration Plan with a new plan focused on West Branch Red Clay Creek. Wasting no time, BRC began work on two stream restoration projects.

A new stream restoration project was completed in November on **Bucktoe Creek**, a tributary of the West Branch Red Clay Creek in New Garden Township. This stream restoration project on 1,850 feet of stream reduced erosion on steeply eroding stream banks with streambank grading, in-stream erosion control structures and a stream crossing. This coming spring over 220 new trees and shrubs will be planted in the riparian zone along the stream. This project was funded by grants from PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Finance Authority, and New Garden Township.

BRC is pleased to have been awarded grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, PA Department of Environmental Protection and Kennett Trails Alliance for a new stream restoration along 2,100 feet of the West Branch Red Clay Creek with 6.8 acres of new riparian buffer. This project is part of a comprehensive master plan for the Parrish Trail and adjacent property to be developed with a bicycle pump park, restoring the Parrish Trail and passive recreation with improved access to the stream for fishing, wading, nature study and relaxation. We're looking forward to working with our partners at Kennett Township, Borough of Kennett Square, Kennett Trails Alliance, and South Mill Champs on these projects.



Everyone has the opportunity and the responsibility to become a watershed steward. The Brandywine and Red Clay Watersheds are critical natural resources that you can help protect by practicing "good watershed housekeeping" in and outside your home.

POINT-TO-POINT

82nd Running of the Brandywine Hills Point-to-Point - Sunday April 6th!

BRC and the Brandywine Hills Point-to-Point Committee are looking forward to spring and race day. We hope you will join us on Sunday April 6th for an action-packed day of pony races and timber races including a side-saddle race, parade of foxhounds, bouncy pony races in the finish line stretch and a variety of children's activities. This is a fun family event and a great way to entertain clients, family and friends.

BIG NEWS FOR 2025

- An Online Auction is replacing the raffle. Check out the items at 32AuctionsLLC; bidding begins on February 23rd at 8:00 AM & closes @ 2 PM on Race Day.
- Jumbotron and upgraded sound system for a better spectator experience.



Parking costs range from \$25 to \$350. Sponsorships are available; if interested please contact the BRC Office at 610-793-1090 and speak with Betsy Stefferud.



Side Saddle Race Participant over the Last Fence.

Photo by Tisa Della-Volpe



Over the Stone Wall.

Photo by Jim Graham



Leadline Pony Race Participant.

Photo by Jim Graham



Over the Last Jump.

Photo by Jim Graham

PROCEEDS FROM THIS EVENT BENEFIT BRC'S ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND WATERSHED CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.

LAND PRESERVATION UPDATE:

BRC continues to expand its land preservation efforts as we move into 2025 with a number of active projects spanning multiple townships and two states.

Beyond conservation easements, the land preservation team secured a PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant to convert lawns to meadows, which we will be moving forward with this year. We are excited to show how homeowners can naturalize their properties for the benefit of area wildlife while also creating a cost savings for themselves by reducing time and resources spent on property management.

Converting large areas of mown lawn is a win for conservation because lawns tend to be a monoculture with limited benefits for wildlife. Meadows are mowed infrequently and can be done as little as one time a year depending on the target goals for the property. At our Chandler Mill Nature Preserve, we converted a former pasture to a natural meadow and have seen a large reduction in sediment passing across the parking lot when the Red Clay Creek floods. The meadow plants bounce back quickly and continue to provide habitat and food for area birds, insects, and mammals. Converting lawns alongside waterways provides additional stormwater absorption and filtration benefits in flood events.

Working on this project during the upcoming year is exciting for BRC as a demonstration of what Chester County resident and renowned author Doug Tallamy calls the Homegrown National Park. He has calculated that there are approximately 40 million acres of lawn in the continental United States that could be converted to habitat for our native wildlife. This first Lawn to Meadow grant received by BRC may only be targeting seven acres, but we hope this project will inspire others to consider shifting their focus from the traditional concept of lawn to an abundant habitat for our wildlife.

PLEASE KEEP AN EYE OUT ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA FOR FUTURE UPDATES ABOUT OUR PROJECT!

PROTECT. RESTORE. ENGAGE.



Tiger swallowtail taking a break by the pollinator meadow. Monarch caterpillar in the meadow.



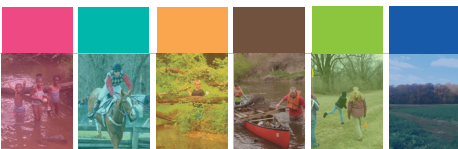
Photo credit: Carl Hutchinson

2025 **SPRING**

Wish List

- YOUTH CAMERA** (up to 8) – For our Public and Summer Camp Programs
- SAND PAINTING LIGHT BOX** (up to 8) – For our Early Education Programs
- ARCHERY, FISHING and FLYFISHING** Supplies

PLEASE CONTACT BRC FOR FURTHER DETAILS.






**CATCH &
RELEASE EVENT**

EARTH DAY - TUESDAY, APRIL 22ND
5PM - 8PM

250 KING MANOR DRIVE STE 300
KING OF PRUSSIA

Speckled Stream IPA Launch

**10% OF PROCEEDS FROM THE
EVENT WILL BE DONATED TO
BRANDYWINE RED CLAY
ALLIANCE**







**SCAN HERE TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT OUR
PARTNERSHIP &
UPCOMING EVENTS**