

# Water Ways

November 2009

December 2009

(717) 948-6780

[www.susquehannarivertrail.org](http://www.susquehannarivertrail.org)

## Nature Trail Cut on Byers Island

SRTA island campsite 120a is now the home base for a new nature trail just constructed on Byers Island. Trail work was organized by Boy Scout Daniel Baylor as part of an Eagle Scout requirement. Dan led a group of eight people, including SRTA Co-President Keith Smalley, spending an eight hour day clearing a trail originating at campsite 120a.

This campsite is located on the west side of Byers island, downstream of the power plant low level dam, but upstream of the Shady Nook launch ramp. The two and one half mile long island is the home of three widely spaced campsites and an active bald eagle nest. The SRTA's recently purchased, heavy duty, brush hog got a lot of use, helping the volunteers clear a path through the heavily knotweed-infested vegetation.

## New Launch Site and Mapping Information on Web Site

The Susquehanna River probably will continue flowing in a southward direction as it passes Harrisburg, but how fast it travels and how deep it is, are important to River Trail users. There are many other reasons, however, to check the web site periodically, such as trail developments and geographic points of interest.

Two of the most useful launch sites, Marysville and Shady Nook, are also the most challenging to find by car. The Marysville ramp at mile 77W is ideally located for day trips in the Harrisburg area and very convenient for users of the services of Blue Mountain Outfitters (BMO). Shady Nook, the former PPL-owned ramp at mile 120 in Hummels Wharf, is the first launch area downstream from the Fabridam and the power plant dam below Sunbury.

Detailed maps and written directions for both sites can now be found on the SRTA web site. Go to the Trail Information page via the link at the top of the home page. While there, check out the aerial image of the entire trail where you can get close enough views to count the number of cars at any particular ramp.

The approach to the Marysville ramp is complicated by the number of railroad lines located between the river and the highway. Approach is counterintuitive via a sharp-angled, jug handle turn away from the river to reach the tunnel entrance that then takes cars directly to the ramp. BMO staff have had to help many boaters get that last ¼ mile!

Shady Nook had signs indicating turns from Rt. 11/15 to the ramp. When it was sold last year, the ramp became the property of Monroe Township. However, the River Road approach was sold to camp owners along the river who then gated it. The Township does have an unmarked direct access road to the ramp from Old Trail Road. PA Fish & Boat Commission funding will assist them in repairing the ramp and provide signage. They will begin work in spring 2010.

This ramp also provides direct, below-dam access to 2 ½ mile long Byers Island, the site of three SRTA island camps. Local Boy Scouts, under the direction of Co-President Keith Smalley, have begun an extensive project to develop trails on the island for the benefit of wildlife observers and portagers.

Webmaster Brady Stroh has just added *Cool Geo-Tech Links* to the top of the home page, enticing the viewer to explore a number of Geo-Tech web sites that will feed the curiosity of any earth, space-based, wheeled, winged or computer screen traveler. Be prepared to spend some time browsing.



*Above High Tide!*

## New Island Identification Signs Posted

Plenty of water on October 30 allowed two jon boats, three SRTA volunteers, and three PA district foresters, to visit the majority of the SRTA islands. They posted the new, highly visible campsite identification signs at island landing areas and the upstream ends of most islands. Further postings and modifications will be made next spring.

Log book boxes were also collected to review entries and to be restocked for the 2010 season.

## UPCOMING SRTA MEETING

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Thursday November 19  
Susquehanna Room  
Ranch House  
Restaurant\*

Amity Hall

Business Meeting

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

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Attendees may arrive  
early and purchase  
dinner to be served in  
the meeting room

6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

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**\*Ranch House Restaurant:**  
**Located in Amity Hall on the**  
**west side of US 11/15, 1 mile**  
**north of the interchange with**  
**US 22/322**

## **Election of 2010 SRTA Officers**

Ballots for the election of 2010 officers have just been mailed to all 2009 paid family membership addresses. They must be returned to the SRTA office by November 15 to be counted. Election results shall be announced no later than the December Association business meeting.

## **November Meeting One Week Earlier**

Although the usual SRTA meeting date is on the fourth Thursday of each month (except a one month holiday hiatus in December), we will meet on the **third** Thursday, November 19, because of the Thanksgiving holiday. The meeting will be at the usual time, 7:00 p.m., at the Ranch House Restaurant in Amity Hall. All current, past and prospective members and interested persons from the community are welcome to attend. There will be no December meeting.

## **Go Green and Get Your Newsletter Copy on Line**

Throughout the year some issues of this newsletter, *Waterways*, are mailed to only a limited number of readers - those for whom we don't have email addresses. Notifications of upcoming meetings and availability of the latest newsletter edition at the SRTA website are announced by email to those who have supplied their electronic addresses.

We have found that any number of our email messages never reach their intended readers as a result of over-selective spam filters. We want to keep our members and community stakeholders updated on activities and resources for Susquehanna River users and supporters.

The November/December issues will be sent by U.S. Postal Service so that readers can see their membership status as it appears on the top of their mailing label. Between meetings and newsletter issues, special announcements, along with river user information will be posted on the SRTA home page as they become known: [www.susquehannarivertrail.org](http://www.susquehannarivertrail.org) For individual information requests, please call the SRTA Message Line at 717-948-6780. The line is checked weekly and acted upon. **If you haven't been receiving monthly SRTA meeting reminders in your email box, check your spam filter and/or add [bbishoff@paonline.com](mailto:bbishoff@paonline.com) to your email address book.**

## **Fourth Annual Great River Adventure Scheduled for June 26**

Hold open Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, on your calendar for another Great River Adventure (GRA). SRTA will be holding the fourth annual river adventure on that date. The planning committee under the leadership of John Meister has begun planning for the event. Make plans for yourself, family and friends to join us. Look for some new activities at new places in 2010.

## **Pennsylvania Water Trail Committee Continues Series of Meetings**

On October 22, SRTA joined representatives from other PA water trails in meeting with stakeholder groups including the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), Susquehanna Greenway Partnership (SGP), PA Fish & Boat Commission, PA DCNR, and National Park System Water Trail Program. Chaired and organized by Hannah Hardy of PEC, the group met to further develop a representational organization to serve the needs of water trails in the state.

Because the agenda focused on the interests of a group of emerging organizations, the topic discussions ran out of time before they ran out of issues!

## **It's Time for SRTA Membership Renewal**

Check the "Renew Membership" date on your mailing label for this issue. If it says "12/31/09" or earlier, this would be a good time to send in your renewal fee. SRTA is a non-profit, all volunteer organization. Use the application form at the back of this issue, and make copies for friends.

All funds used to develop, maintain and improve our amenities for river travelers on the Susquehanna River between Sunbury and Harrisburg come from users and supporters such as you, from agency grants and from thoughtful personal and organizational sources.

Although all 24 of our island campsites are on Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry managed land, SRTA equips and maintains the campsites. The volunteers include individual boaters and their families, as well as scouting and water user groups. The Bureau of Forestry does provide invaluable technical, logistic and sweat equity assistance as well.

The end product is a string of welcoming island campsites that help make river users' experiences on the river memorable. Our annual summary of user comments, as abstracted from the logbooks located at each site, are reported in an off-season issue of the newsletter. The comments tell us that there are a lot of people out there that appreciate the river. And, to love it is to want to take care of it. This care will benefit all residents and visitors in the river valley.

Enjoy, and help us make it happen!



➡➡➡➡ LIST OF TRAIL GUIDE VENDORS ⚡⚡⚡⚡

Copies of the Susquehanna River Water Trail Map (Middle Section) are available at the following locations:  
(Links to further information are provided on the SRTA website home page)

Bellefonte – Tussey Mt. Outfitters  
Binghamton NY – Eureka! Camping Center  
Harrisburg – Wildware Backcountry  
Lewisburg – Susquehanna Valley Visitors Bureau  
Lock Haven – Rock River & Trail Outfitters  
Marysville – Blue Mountain Outfitters

Montoursville – Country Ski & Sports  
Montoursville – Lyon Camping and Supply  
State College – Eastern Mountain Sports  
Sugar Run – Endless Mountain Outfitters  
Sunbury – Southside Bait and Tackle  
Wilkes-Barre – Country Ski & Sports  
Wrightsville (Long Level) – Shank’s Mare

**Secure credit card purchases may also be made by internet** through Hike-advice.com – by going directly to their order page via the SRTA website: [www.susquehannarivertrail.org](http://www.susquehannarivertrail.org) More in-store locations will be announced on the SRTA website as they become available. There is also a limited supply of flat, unfolded trail guides.

**Contributions and Gifts-in-Kind**

Unless otherwise designated, additional contributions to SRTA made by members and readers will be directed toward development of island trail facilities. Example: Purchase and installation of “flood proof” fire rings at all campsites.

Karen Donovan                      Mary & Doug Gibson & Greg Liskow

**New Memberships and Renewals**

Carolyn & Bill Fairl  
Cliff Dillmann  
Karen Donovan

Mary & Doug Gibson  
Greg Liskow  
Cindy & Craig Dunn

Michelle & Don Linn  
Drew & Dytlan Linn