

# GREAT EGG HARBOR NATIONAL SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL RIVER COUNCIL

## 2008 Newsletter, Issue 1



**Buena Vista Township  
Corbin City  
Egg Harbor Township  
Estell Manor  
Folsom Borough  
Hamilton Township  
Hammonton Town**

**Monroe Township  
Somers Point City  
Upper Township  
Weymouth Township  
Winslow Township  
Great Egg Harbor Watershed  
National Park Service**

### Creation and Purpose of the Great Egg Harbor River Council

The Great Egg Harbor River was studied and designated into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by Congress in 1992 based on its outstandingly remarkable cultural, historic, recreational, and natural resource values and became a cooperatively-managed unit of the National Park System.

The Township of Buena Vista, the City of Corbin City, Township of Egg Harbor, City of Estell Manor, Borough of Folsom, Township of Hamilton, Town of Hammonton, Township of Monroe, City of Somers Point, Township of Upper, Township of Winslow, and Township of Weymouth all have certain acreage of their municipalities located within the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River corridor as defined by Public Law 102-536, Section 3(a). These municipalities all recognized that their economic and cultural vitality are supported by their close proximity to the Great Egg Harbor River and designated tributaries, and that the health of the Great Egg Harbor River is dependent upon the economic, cultural and environmental policies of their surrounding municipalities.

Working together as the Great Egg Harbor River Planning Committee with the National Park Service and county and state agencies starting in 1990, these municipalities assisted in the preparation of Local River Management Plans and a Comprehensive Management Plan for the long term management and protection of the federally designated segments of the Great Egg Harbor River and its tributaries.

During this planning process, it was determined that it would be necessary to continue a formal organization to monitor implementation of the Comprehensive Management Plan and assist the twelve municipalities, individually and collectively, in dealing with matters concerning the Great Egg Harbor River system.

Therefore, it was agreed that the twelve municipalities and the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association would establish the “Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Council” to provide on-going monitoring, coordination and assistance to the participating municipalities in implementing the Comprehensive Management Plan and to the National Park Service in addressing issues in accordance with the organizational structure and procedures as set forth in the Comprehensive Management Plan and the Bylaws of the River Council.

The River Council was officially organized and started in 2001, and its purpose is to assist municipalities in effectively implementing the **Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Comprehensive Management Plan** and **Local River Management Plans** with the National Park Service. This includes:

1. Presenting the Comprehensive Management Plan to municipal officials in the designated Great Egg Harbor River corridor, other governmental officials and the public.
2. Providing direction and coordination in the implementation of the plan.
3. Providing a forum for open discussion of river corridor management issues and projects.
4. Providing a vital communication link between the twelve municipalities and four counties for insuring that all river related planning activities are performed on a corridor-wide basis.
5. Providing technical assistance to the twelve municipalities in the watershed on water quality, water quantity and watershed management issues.
6. Establishing a public education program to improve understanding of watershed management issues, particularly in the Great Egg Harbor River Conservation Zones.
7. Coordinating an on-going water quality, water quantity, and watershed monitoring program to document the ecological and hydrological condition of the Great Egg Harbor River and its tributaries.
8. Providing annual updates of water quality, water quantity, and watershed management activities in the designated river corridor.
9. Performing, coordinating and/or overseeing scientific research projects on the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River and its watershed.
10. Updating the Comprehensive Management Plan from time to time in cooperation with the National Park Service as required and recommend these revisions and related regulatory measures for adoption by municipalities in the Great Egg Harbor River designated boundary.
11. Assisting municipalities in updating Local River Management Plans to address resource protection needs.
12. Reviewing compliance with Local River Management Plans.

# **The Great Egg Harbor River Council Grants \$46,391 to Implement the Comprehensive Management Plan**

Started in 2001, the River Council has issued 21 grants totaling \$44,279 to implement the management plan for the river under the federal Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. The purpose of the River Council, comprised of 12 municipalities, the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, and the National Park Service, is to assist municipalities in effectively implementing *the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Comprehensive Management Plan* and *Local River Management Plans*.

Primarily supported by congressional appropriations, the River Council has granted funding over the past 7 years in the following areas:

**Land Preservation \$4,032:** Two grants were given to support survey costs for possible land acquisition. \$2,032 was given to Weymouth Township in 2004 to survey 1,800 acres for threatened and endangered species habitat, and \$2,000 was given in 2007 to the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge in Buena Vista Township to assist with appraisals for the acquisition of 37 additional acres.

**Law Enforcement and Recreation Management \$15,125:** Two grants were given to the Hamilton Township Police Department in 2001-2002 to implement the staffing of the River Patrol, which was started by the National Parks Service in 2000 with a donation of a motorboat, trailer, and other equipment to the Hamilton Township Police.

**Stream Bank Stabilization \$5,738:** Three grants were awarded for vegetation projects. Two of these projects were at the bluffs in Kennedy Park in 2003 and 2006 and included volunteer labor from the Dawes Avenue School, and one was in both Weymouth and Estell Manor.

**Watershed Education and Outreach \$2,725:** Four grants were awarded for education and outreach, including two river cruises on the Duke-O-Fluke, \$1,000 to the Egg Harbor Township School's Adopt-A-Stream program, and \$1,000 for fish species data from Richard Stockton College.

**Watershed Signage \$7,612:** 60 specially designed signs with stream names were installed at 30 locations where watershed roads crossed federally designated stream segments.

**River Stewardship \$9,500:** Four separate river cleanup projects were funded during the last 7 years in Hamilton Township, Corbin City, and Upper Township. The River Council provided substantial funding to support two local Boy Scout Troops in Upper Township and Corbin City who waged major cleanup campaigns on the Tuckahoe River and in the Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area.

**Miscellaneous Projects \$1,659:** Other projects included the donation of a wide format printer for Weymouth Township's GIS mapping, and brochure printing for the South River Nature Trail.

## **River Council raises \$3,700 of non-federal funding in 2006**

Early in 2006, River Council Chair Greg Gregory, Somers Point, organized a partnership with the Dawes Avenue School and the River Council staff to create a “Save the Bluffs” program at Kennedy Park in Somers Point. With a big grant from Hewlett Packard to get students outside, the Dawes Ave. School teachers and students inspired the donation of \$1,500 from the Somers Point Bayfest Committee to the River Council to stabilize the shoulder of the bluffs.

As the project planning to plant 160 shrubs on the bluffs in spring of 2006 was beginning to take shape, Greg Gregory’s father, Elmer Gregory, passed away. The Gregory family requested that all memorial contributions go to a special fund for Kennedy Park, and the outpouring in honor of Elmer Gregory added an additional \$2,200 to the Bayfest Committee grant for a total of \$3,700.



That May, 160 bushes were planted by the Dawes School on the bluffs, and then in November the students and teachers came back to replant and mulch the project. This was the start of an annual partnership between the Dawes Avenue School and the River Council.

\$1,150 is the current balance obligated for the Save the Bluff project by the River Council going into 2008. There are plans to host an educational event and clean up for the students again this Spring.

## **First and Second Phases of Watershed Sign Project Completed**

In 2001, the River Council obligated a budget of \$6,000 from National Park Service funding to implement a “Watershed Awareness Signage” project. The River Council’s vision was to facilitate a greater connection between the people in the Great Egg Harbor Watershed and the rivers and streams whose great natural value enabled their federal designation into the Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1992. Today few citizens of the watershed realize that sections of the Great Egg Harbor River system are actually a Unit of the National Park System with over 160 channel miles and 321 water frontage miles nationally designated by Congress as part of this vast and special area, in the Pinelands and in Atlantic, Cape May, Gloucester, and Camden counties.



To start, 36 signs were installed at 18 locations where watershed roads cross streams that are federally designated, and in municipalities represented by the River Council. Each sign is actually two signs; the top round sign is the River Council logo with the Striped Bass, and the bottom rectangular sign is the name of the river or stream that the watershed road crosses.

With the successful and “under budget” installation of the first set of signs, late last year the River Council moved to purchase 24 additional signs for 12 locations on Somers Point Mays Landing Road (Rte 559). The Council again partnered with the Atlantic County Road Department for the second phase installation early in 2008.

There are now 60 signs installed at 30 locations where watershed roads cross streams that are federally designated. The National Park Service supported this project with a grant of \$7,612, and Atlantic County and the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association volunteered substantial

in-kind services for the management and installation of the signs.

## **The Great Egg Harbor River Council Supports Open Space Preservation**

From the beginning, there has been a strong consensus on the River Council that one of the best ways to protect the river is to permanently preserve natural lands in the watershed through direct acquisition. Not only has the Council supported all open space land purchases by Green Acres, Atlantic County, Egg Harbor Township, Weymouth Township, and Monroe Township, but the Council has provided \$4,032 in grants to facilitate additional open space purchase in Weymouth and Buena Vista Townships.

In addition to these actions, the Council passed 2 resolutions last year in support of the renewal of the Garden State Preservation Trust. The Council recognizes the critical value of state Green Acres dollars to match the local open space dollars approved by taxpayers from Atlantic County, Egg Harbor, Weymouth, and Monroe Townships. Fortunately, thousands of acres of new open space lands have been purchased since 2001, and many more acres will be purchased in the future.

# GREAT EGG HARBOR RIVER COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

As of February 20, 2008

Municipality	Term	River Councilor	Status	Alternate Councilor	Status
Buena Vista Twp	2/09	Julie Akers	Current	No Appointment	
Corbin City	2/10	No Appointment		Thomas Walker	Current
Egg Harbor Twp.	2/10	Gary Theno	Current	Joseph Stewart	Current
Estell Manor	2/09	Jim Owen	Current	William Donath Sr	Current
Folsom	2/10	Joel Spiegel	Current	No Appointment	
GEHWA	2/09	Dick Colby	Current	Ed Curry	Current
Hamilton Twp.	2/09	Bill Christman	Current	Michael Dupras	Current
Hammonton	2/10	Keith Kendrix	Current	Michael Torrissi, Jr.	Current
Monroe Twp.	2/08	Rick Coe	Current	No Appointment	
Somers Point	2/10	Greg Gregory	Current	No Appointment	
Upper Twp.	2/10	William Handley	Current	No Appointment	
Weymouth Twp.	2/10	Bill Egan	Current	No Appointment	
Winslow Twp.	2/10	Clark Sprigman	Current	Harry Cook	Current
National Park Service Advisor – Paul Kenney			River Administrator – Fred Akers		
<b>Founding Members Since 2001, Congratulations for 7 Years of Service!!!!</b>					

The River Council conducts meetings at the Warren E. Fox Nature Center, Estell Manor Park, Route 50, Estell Manor, New Jersey, from 7:00 – 9:00p.m. on the third Wednesday of every even numbered month as follows:

**February 20, 2008, April 16, 2008, June 18, 2008, August 20, 2008, October 15, 2008, December 17, 2008, February 18, 2009**

Please contact River Administrator Fred Akers at 856-697-6114 to confirm meeting dates or receive additional information.

Please send correspondence to: River Council, P.O. Box 109, Newtonville, NJ 08346