

# **GREAT EGG HARBOR NATIONAL SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL RIVER COUNCIL**

## **2009 Newsletter, Issue 2**



**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 \$54,641 to Implement the Comprehensive Management Plan**

Started in 2001, the River Council has issued 25 grants totaling \$54,641 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 8 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.

**Restoration and Enhancement \$7,738:** Two vegetation stabilization projects were funded at the bluffs in Kennedy Park in 2003 and 2006 and included volunteer labor from the Dawes Avenue School. One project was for strategic plantings in both Weymouth and Estell Manor. In 2008 a grant of \$2,000 was provided for the installation of 15 Osprey nesting platforms in the Great Egg Harbor Estuary.

**Watershed Education and Outreach \$9,634:** 7 grants were awarded for education and outreach, including three river cruises on the Duke-O-Fluke, \$1,000 to the Egg Harbor Township School's Adopt-A-Stream program, \$975 to Weymouth Twp. for GIS hardware and \$200 for the South River trail brochure. In 2008 \$5,000 was invested in the production and airing of 30 chapters for the Watershed Minute Radio Program and \$1,000 was provided to sponsor the Friends of the Atlantic County Parks annual Folk Arts Festival and their advocacy for county parks.

**River Stewardship \$9,500:** Four separate river cleanup projects were funded during the last 8 years in Hamilton Township, Corbin City, and Upper Township including support for 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.

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

**Science and Research \$1,000:** One grant of \$1,000 to Richard Stockton College for fish species data.

**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 and trailer.

# GREAT EGG HARBOR RIVER COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

As of February 18, 2009

Municipality	Term	River Councilor	Status	Alternate Councilor	Status
Buena Vista Twp	2/09	Julie Akers	Current	No Appointment	
Corbin City	2/10	Richard Foster	Current	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 8 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 – 9:00pm on the third Wednesday of every even numbered month as follows:

**February 18, 2009, April 15, 2009, June 17, 2009, August 19, 2009, October 21, 2009, December 16, 2009, February 17, 2010**

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

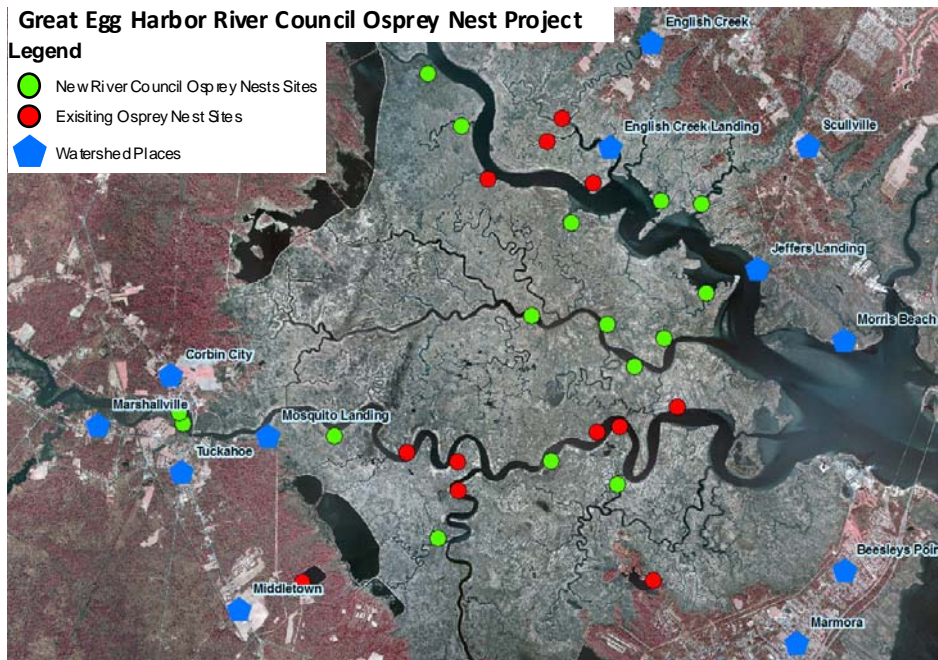
Please send correspondence to: Great Egg Harbor River Council, P.O. Box 109, Newtonville, NJ 08346

# 2008 GREAT EGG HARBOR RIVER COUNCIL PROJECTS

## Osprey Nesting Platforms

The Great Egg Harbor River Council along with partners and volunteers added 15 new Osprey nesting platforms to the Great Egg Harbor Estuary in 2007- 2008.

With the addition of these 15 new manmade nest sites to the 12 nest sites that were already existing in the Great Egg Harbor Estuary, the Osprey will be helped to expand their future nesting population from a record low of 68 pairs statewide in 1975 back up to the 500 pair benchmark recorded in the 1950's before the use of DDT, other toxic chemicals, and habitat loss caused the breeding population to crash here in New Jersey.



The first 5 of the new platforms were installed in partnership with Life Scout Adam Day and Tuckahoe Boy Scout Troop 55, who raised funds to cover material costs, built and hauled the large structures, recruited volunteers, and installed them on the Tuckahoe River on November 4, 2007. The remaining 10 were installed by the River Council and its partners and volunteers on October 12, 2008 (6) and November 1, 2008 (4).

The B.L. England Generating Station provided a \$2,000 grant to the River Council and a smaller grant to Troop 55 to help cover the costs of materials and transportation. Brooke Koeneke donated the use of his Duke-O-Fluke 45 foot pontoon boat to get the volunteers out to the estuary. Conservation Resources, Inc. also promoted the project on their website.



11/1/08 Volunteers Installing Osprey Nest Platforms in the Great Egg Harbor Estuary

## **Support for Avian Science and Research in the Great Egg Harbor Watershed**

In 1992, the United States Congress designated the Great Egg Harbor River into the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program based partly on the Outstanding National Resource Values of threatened and endangered species and resting, breeding and feeding areas for water fowl. Since many of these threatened and endangered species are birds, the River Council recognizes the importance of gathering avian species and habitat usage data to better target management initiatives that will provide adequate long term protection of these outstanding resource values.

The River Council plans a significant investment in avian science and research this year to produce a summary report of the last 5 years of collected data and expand the past winter surveys to include spring and fall migration data and summer breeding data. Winter Raptor and Waterbird Survey Reports for the Great



**Picture 2: Black Skimmer COLONY - Malibu Beach - Longport Sodbank - 10-10-08**

Egg Harbor Estuary for the past 5 years can be found online at <http://www.gehwa.org/newsletter.htm>

## **Watershed Radio Program**

Starting in 2008, River Council Chair Greg Gregory promoted the idea of creating a Watershed Radio Program with Watershed Minute spots to be produced and aired on radio station WIBG 1020 AM. At a cost of about \$20 per spot, the River Council moved to invest in this method of educational outreach about the Great Egg Harbor River and its natural and human history.

River Administrator Fred Akers writes the approximately 200 word scripts on river topics of public interest, Greg Gregory reads the scripts into the microphone, and Harry and Don Hurley produce the spots into MP3 files with theme music, an introduction, and a closing. 30 spots were written, produced, and aired 6 days a week for over a 10 month period in 2008.

Public feedback from the Watershed Radio Program has been very positive, so the River Council voted to continue the program for another 5 months in 2009 from January through May. 10 new Watershed Minutes have already been produced this year, and all 40 scripts can be found on the River Council Website at <http://www.gehwa.org/RC%20Documents.htm>.

## **Future River Council Projects**

The Great Egg Harbor River Council proposes the following projects to protect, restore, and enhance the river and watershed.

The River Council recognizes the time, effort, and cost to own, manage, and protect the growing open space inventory in the watershed, and therefore supports the dedication of its staff and other resources for a strong partnership with public land owners to protect and preserve our open spaces. To promote and assist with the planning and implementation of enhancements for passive recreational access and to restore environmental damage, the Council offers the following summary list of possible areas where they are willing to target their resources:

1. Stream bank stabilization on the South River adjacent to the Artesian Well area in the Estell Manor County Park.
2. Wetlands restoration and public access creation on the Atlantic County's Isard properties near Patcong Creek.
3. Rebuild the foot bridge over Babcock Creek at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Mays Landing to enhance the outdoor classroom created at that location for the Saint Vincent DePaul School.
4. Create an outdoor classroom behind the Hess School on Atlantic County's Tunney parcel at Gravelly Run.
5. Restore Adams Branch near Babcock Creek on Atlantic County's Cologne Associates parcel to reconnect the water to the damaged wetlands, reduce the water quality degradation to Babcock Creek, and increase the storage capacity and the ground water recharge of this tributary.
6. Stop the illegal Off Road Vehicle traffic across and in the bed and banks of Gravelly Run at the Tunney parcels and restore the bed and the banks to reduce erosion and enhance fish habitat, especially for anadromous and diadromous fish.
7. Develop a partnership between NJ Fish and Wildlife, NJ Natural Lands Trust, National Park Service, NJ Marine Police, Atlantic County, GEHWA, and the River Council, to post and enforce speed restrictions on the tidal Wild and Scenic South River in the sections adjacent to county and state preserved lands that are narrower than 200 ft.
8. Remove over 1,000 illegally dumped tires on critical habitat in the Mizpah section of Hamilton Twp.

