



River Currents



Winter 2023

www.gehwa.org

Issue 76

ATV Damage at Gravelly Run

The Great Egg Harbor River Council was established to manage the long-term protection of the natural, cultural, and recreational values for which the Great Egg Harbor River and Bay were designated by Congress in 1992 as a National Recreational River and a Component of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Included in the designation are 2.52 miles of Gravelly Run, in the Township of Hamilton from the confluence to the bike path.

Today, 2,400 ft. of the bed and the banks of the designated segment of Gravelly Run have been profoundly damaged by illegal ATV riders. This abuse has been happening for over 20 years. It has been cleared and now has an ATV trail, right in the stream. A stream where River Herring were observed making a run up this same section of damaged river while trying to reproduce on 4/27/2022. Almost the entire Gravelly Run subwatershed is classified as Rank 5 forest and wetlands by the NJ Landscape Project. Over 2,000 acres of the Gravelly Run subwatershed, including the federally designated and damaged stream segment are in the Hamilton Preserve.

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust (NJNLT), created in 1968 by the Legislature as an independent agency in but not of the Division of Parks & Forestry in the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) owns and operates the Hamilton Preserve.

...continued on page 2

ATV Damage to the Banks and Bed of Gravelly Run 9/17/22



...continued from page 1 The mission of the NJNLT is to preserve land in its natural state for enjoyment by the public and to protect natural diversity through the acquisition of open space.

The NJNLT has posted numerous signs along Gravelly Run that prohibit ATV use. It has not worked to stop the ATV use of and damage to Gravelly Run. The NJNLT has also placed stumps at several entry locations to try and prevent ATV access to the

Hamilton Preserve that haven't worked. There are currently many unblocked access roads and trails that allow easy access to the Preserve by ATVs and by cars and trucks

The White Points Represent 40 Locations where the ATVs go in and out of the stream. At an average of 8 ft. per point, at least 320 ft. of pristine stream banks have been destroyed by ATVs at Gravelly Run.



that dump trash there. At a zoom meeting on 9/16/22, the NJNLT Board stated that they did not have the resources or a plan to protect Gravelly Run.

At the 12/21/2022 Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Council (GEHRC)

ATV Damage to the Banks and Bed of Gravelly Run 9/17/22



meeting, the River Council, by resolution, respectfully requested that the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust fulfill its mission to preserve land in its natural state at Gravelly Run in the Hamilton Preserve. The River Council requests that NJNLT adequately block all the entry points to the Hamilton Preserve, including those entry points at the powerline right of way at Ocean Heights Ave. that are currently ...continued on page 3

...continued from page 2 wide open. It also requests that NJNLT participate in a new strategic plan created by the River Council, the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, the Township of Hamilton, the County of Atlantic, Atlantic City Electric, and any other stake holders interested in protecting the Hamilton Preserve from unpermitted motorized recreational damage. Copies of the resolution were sent to all potentially interested parties for the protection of the Hamilton Preserve, including NJDEP Commissioner LaTourette and Assistant Commissioner Golden, and the National Park Service.

ATV Damage to the Banks and Bed of Gravelly Run 9/17/22



The GEHWA is now able to have 3 full time staff following an increase in funding, by Congress, for the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program. This has shown to be extremely advantageous in helping GEHWA execute its mission for long term protection of the Great Egg Harbor River and Watershed.

The new position of a full time Operations Manager has been filled by Fred Akers, and the Assistant River Administrator, Brooke Handley, is now the full time River Administrator. Both positions have been full time since October 2022. Lynn Maun remains as the full time Education and Outreach Coordinator.



Left to Right: Fred, Lynn and Brooke

2022 - Successful Year for the GEHWA/GEHRC Osprey Nesting Colony

Ben Wurst, NJ project coordinator of the “Osprey Project” stated that he felt the weeklong nor’easter in early May had a negative impact on nests. Sea Isle had a 72% failure rate, Avalon 82% and Sedge Island had 1/2 of all nests fail.

This was not the case with the osprey nests west of the Parkway Bridge on the Great Egg and Tuckahoe Rivers. Of the 48 nesting platforms monitored by the GEHWA/GEHRC Osprey Project, 31 were active with a total chick count of 68. It would seem that the nests west of the parkway were just inland enough to be protected from the strong coastal winds that had a negative impact elsewhere.



Above: Adult Returning to Nest, Right: Osprey Chick Close to Fledging



Calendar of GEHWA and GEHRC Meetings 2023

(Check out our calendar at www.gehwa.org for additional information about upcoming events)

Our hybrid meetings are held at the Warren Fox Nature Center in Estell Manor and via Zoom. Meetings begin at 6:30 PM. The Zoom link will be sent by email.

Tuesday, January 24, 2023- *GEHWA Member Meeting - “Lenni-Lenape History and Culture in Beesley’s Point NJ - Who was found? What was found? Where were they, it, found?”*

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 - *Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Meeting—Annual Reorganization Meeting*

Tuesday, March 28, 2023- *GEHWA ANNUAL Member Meeting, Program and Election of GEHWA Board of Trustees*

Wednesday, April 19, 2023 - *Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Meeting*

Tuesday, May 23, 2023- *GEHWA Member Meeting—Annual Frog Walk (Location details will be provided closer to the event)*

Wednesday, June 21, 2023- *Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Meeting*

Tuesday, July 25, 2023 - *GEHWA Member & Friends Picnic and Campfire (Location and details will be provided closer to the event)*

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 - *Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Meeting*

Saturday, September 30, 2023 *GEHWA— Annual Canoe/Kayak event on or near the Great Egg Harbor River*

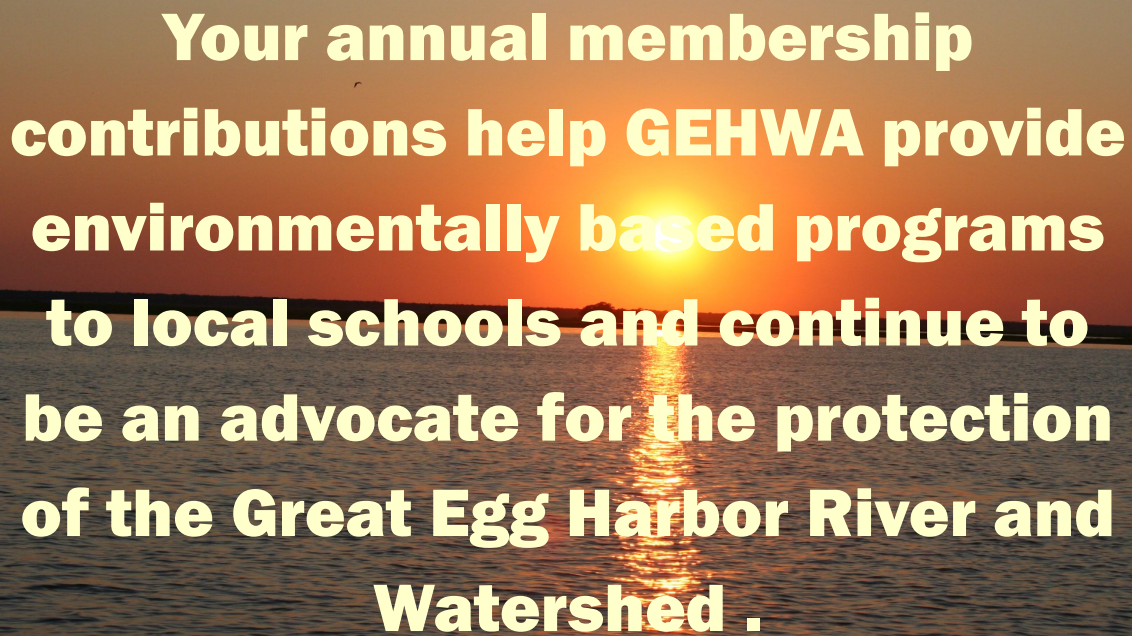
Wednesday, October 18, 2023 - *Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Meeting*

Tuesday, November 28, 2023 - *GEHWA Member Meeting— Program to be announced.*

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 - *Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Annual Holiday Meeting*

Please plan on attending these events.

(If you are interested in attending a meeting via Zoom, and need the link, please contact Lynn Maun @ lynnkmaun@comcast.net)



Your annual membership contributions help GEHWA provide environmentally based programs to local schools and continue to be an advocate for the protection of the Great Egg Harbor River and Watershed .

GEHWA Membership Information

Your membership supports our mission and ensures our survival as a non-profit advocate, as we work to protect and preserve the Great Egg Harbor River and Watershed throughout the year. Your support is needed now more than ever. Without you, we could not exist. Thank you for your support!

Name/Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Yes, I would like to receive notices by Email.

Annual Membership: Individual: \$10; Family: \$15; Supporting: \$35; Patron: \$50; Corporate: \$100

Please mail this form along with your check to: Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association,
Membership P.O. Box 109, Newtonville, NJ 08346

**The Great Egg Harbor Watershed
Association's Environmental Programs are FREE**

We offer our environmentally focused programs **free** of charge to augment existing school curriculum. A school's environmental programs are often threatened when faced with annual budget cuts. If you are a parent, and/or an educator, and feel our programs would enhance the environmental education that your child/student is receiving, please contact the appropriate individual in your school and request that they take advantage of the Great Egg



Outdoor Classroom at Corson's Inlet



Student holding a Dragonfly Nymph

Harbor Watershed Association's **free** programs. If you would like additional information please contact Lynn Maun, Education Outreach Coordinator at 856-649-2792 or lynnkmaun@comcast.net

REMEMBER our environmentally focused programs are FREE!



Students from Alder Avenue School searching for macroinvertebrates

Contact Information

Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association	NJ DEP Watershed Management Office
Julie Akers, President (856) 697-6114	(609) 777-0580
Fred Akers, Operations Manager (856) 697-6114	
P.O. Box 109, Newtonville, NJ 08346	Atlantic County Department of Planning
Email: fred_akers@gehwa.org	(609) 645-5898
Web Site: www.gehwa.org	
Brooke Handley, Administrator (609) 602-0334	US Army Corps of Engineers (215) 656-6725
Email: bhandley99@gmail.com	
Lynn Maun, Edu. Outreach Coord. (856) 649-2792	NJ DEP Regulatory Office for Atlantic County
Email: lynnkmaun@comcast.net	(609) 292-8292
National Park Service	NJ DEP Enforcement Officer (732) 255-0787
Paul Kenney (610) 203-4248; Paul_Kenney@nps.gov	
	Pinelands Commission
NJ DEP Hotline 1-877 WARN DEP	(609) 894-7300

To report an environmental incident impacting NJ, call the Toll-Free 24—Hour Hotline
1-877WARNDEP, 1-877-927-6337

If you should see debris or shoaling while traversing on New Jersey waters please call:
1-877- WARNDEP (1-877-927-6337)



New Osprey Platform Installed at Beesleys Point January 2023

The Platform was Installed to Replace a Nest Found on One of the Structures at the BL England Power Plant that is Scheduled to be Dismantled

Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
PO Box 109
Newtonville, NJ 08346-0109