

Watershed News

A publication of the Greater Culver Lake Watershed Conservation Foundation | Fall 2025

Happy Fall Neighbors and Friends!

The GCLWCF's trustees have been continuing to work diligently on protecting and restoring the Culver Lake and Lake Owassa watershed to help ensure improved water quality for our streams and lakes.



At this time, our study of wastewater conditioning systems, coordinated by Paul Sutphen and assisted by Steve Souza and Claire Allen, has concluded with excellent results. This process, using liquid alum injections, treats and removes over 90% of the soluble phosphorus found in septic system wastewater (phosphorus is a major contributor in fueling algae blooms). This treated wastewater eventually finds its way into the groundwater, a primary source of clean water for our lakes. I want to personally thank the eight Culver Lake and two Lake Owassa homeowners who have participated in this important study. GCLWCF will be strongly advocating for the installation of these systems to reduce phosphorus from entering the groundwater in homes around both lakes within our watershed.



The negative effects of stormwater runoff continues to be mitigated through the efforts of GCLWCF with trustee John Fabian leading the charge. He has established an outstanding working relationship with Frankford Township in helping to control silt and sediment, loaded with nutrients, from entering the lake. John also oversees three alum stations, installed by the Foundation, around Culver Lake which remove soluble phosphorus from stormwater. *Photo left.*

The Foundation finally acquired the former Culver Lake Golf Course in December 2024, the approximately 95 acre tract will now be known as Culver Brook Preserve. Grant monies sourced from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, by the Upper Wall Kill Watershed Association, led by Nathaniel Sajdak, will be used to purchase native shrubs and trees as part of the restoration process of the property. Cutting back invasive plants has already begun and we have been mowing and maintaining a nearly 2-mile loop trail around the property. A parking area for the entire Preserve will be constructed on Ridge Road in Branchville in the spring of 2026.



Initial plantings on old green.

A community planting event is scheduled for the morning of October 25th. Please see the flyer below or visit our website for additional details. The GCLWCF is also nearing the acquisition of an important environmentally sensitive property to the west of the old Millers' Marine on Route 206 in Frankford Township. Within this 65+ acre property flows a primary feeder stream of Culver Lake which emanates from Lake Owassa and Bear Swamp, and flows into Culver at the Carriage House Restaurant. Preventing any development on this property will help ensure continued high quality water entering Culver Lake. There will be a nature trail created for the public's enjoyment.



I would like to acknowledge the work of Judy Nylen, longtime trustee, who recently retired from her position on the board in which she served as treasurer. She coordinated many of our fundraising events, including the annual gala. Fortunately for us, she will continue her service to the Foundation as a consultant. *Judy Nylen left.*

Please consider donating at this time in order to help the Foundation maintain adequate funds for continuing its work in preserving, protecting, and restoring the headwaters of the Upper Paulins Kill River including the Lake Owassa and Culver Lake watershed areas.

Thank you again, I look forward to your continued support in helping us achieve our goals.

Best,
Rick Ferruggia, GCL WCF, President

An Update from Nathaniel Sajdak, Director Wallkill River Management Group

Hello Culver Brook Preserve Friends,

The SCMUA - WRMWG Team has recently completed an initial planting on all 8 former greens that fall within the property boundaries of the Culver Brook Preserve (green #9 is not part of the official boundary). As part of the initial planting efforts 200 native trees have been added including silver and red maple, swamp white oak, sweet bay magnolia, red cedar, white pine, and red chokeberry (native shrub). All except the white pines and red cedars have been protected with tree tubes and a wooden stake.

We are thrilled with the visual impact these initial plantings are making. Any visitors to the site will clearly be able to see the restoration work is underway!

Regards, Nathaniel



UPCOMING EVENTS

1st Volunteer Tree Planting at Culver Brook Preserve

The restoration of the former Culver Lake Golf Course is finally underway! Join the SCMUA-Wallkill River Watershed Management Group and the Greater Culver Lake Watershed Conservation Foundation for the first volunteer tree planting event of the season. All are welcome, but please register to let us know you will be attending:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/culver-brook-preserve-tree-planting-opportunity-tickets-1731470327359?aff=oddtcreator>.

Shovels and gloves will be provided.
Wear clothes and shoes that can get dirty, and bring sunscreen and water to drink.

Tree Planting Volunteer Opportunity



When: Saturday, October 25, 2025

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Where: Culver Brook Preserve
East Shore Culver Road

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/culver-brook-preserve-tree-planting-opportunity-tickets-1731470327359?aff=oddtcreator>



SCAN ME



Questions? Contact Kristine

Email: krogers@scmua.org

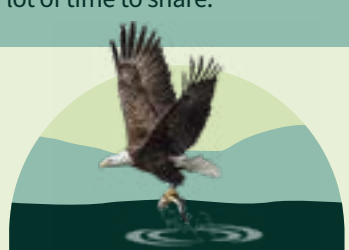
Phone: 973-579-6998 ext. 110

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!... Besides planting trees we especially need folks willing to work on fundraising goals as well as keeping the website fresh and updated. Contact any Board member to volunteer, whether you have only a little bit or a lot of time to share.

How can you help the Watershed?

- Plant a Rain Garden. or Riparian Buffer.
- Reduce Impermeable Surfaces in your yard.
- Maintain your Septic Tank.
- Add an Alum Injection System to your home.

Send a Generous Gift to the Foundation NOW to help us preserve and protect the precious waterways and lakes in the Upper Northern Paulinskill River Watershed that we love so much. GCL WCF is a 501(c)(3) environmental charity. **All donations are tax deductible.**



Greater Culver Lake Watershed Conservation Foundation

Email: info@gclwcf.org

Web: www.gclwcf.org

Mail: PO Box 967 • Branchville, NJ 07826

DONATE NOW

Visit the Website

Protecting the Lakes and Tributaries of the Upper Northern Paulinskill Watershed

BOARD MEMBERS: Rick Ferruggia, *President*, Claire Allen, Emily Allen, Danae Dotz, John Fabian, Jay Higgins, Henry McNamara, Chris Venezia, and Dorothea Wefing

CONSULTANTS: Bob Canace, Terry McQuillin, Scott Myer, Judy Nylen, and Paul Sutphen