



Kingwood Township Environmental Commission Newsletter

December 2005

Environmental Commission Receives County Award

The Kingwood Township Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI), which was completed in 2004, received the 2005 Outstanding Planning Award from the Hunterdon County Planning Board.

The report was recognized for its uniquely comprehensive documentation of Kingwood's environmental resources, while remaining understandable by the average person.

The ERI is a reference for the physical environment (such as geology and water), the biotic environment (such as endangered, threatened and special concern species), historic resources, open space, and regional relationships.

Copies of the report on CD may be purchased at the township office for \$10 or \$13 if you prefer it to be mailed. Call 996-4276.



Pictured Left to Right: Lois Voronin (EC chairperson), Edith Rawlyk, Mayor Stephen Rawlyk and Debbie Kratzer (author and EC member).

Photo courtesy Todd W. Kratzer © 2005

The ERI will soon be available on the township web site at <http://twp.kingwood.hunterdon.nj.us/home.html>

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Chairperson: Lois Voronin
Vice-Chair: Joe Zgurzynski
Newsletter: Debbie Kratzer

Environmental Commission Activities: 2005

Open Space

- Supported Township participation in Green Acres program for preserving Open Space.
- Working to develop criteria for ranking properties for potential open space preservation funding.

Ground Water

- Coordinated well testing during community day; also provided various information pamphlets at community day.
- Completed a local ground water study near a Known Contaminated Site. The study, funded by the Delaware River Greenway Partnership, also included purchase of a pH/conductivity meter, which may be used for future studies.
- Supported adoption of a well ordinance.
- Made recommendation to Board of Health to extend well ordinance to require testing of all new wells.

- Continued progress on compiling water well yield information from county records.

Presentations

- Presentation by Buckeye Pipe Line Company (owner of gas pipeline which runs through Kingwood).
- Presentation by Association of NJ Environmental Commissions about becoming an effective Environmental Commission and about NJDEP's new Stormwater regulations.

ERI

- Working with Planning Board to provide environmental information (from the Environmental Resource Inventory) about sites proposed for development.
- Received Hunterdon County Outstanding Planning Award for ERI.

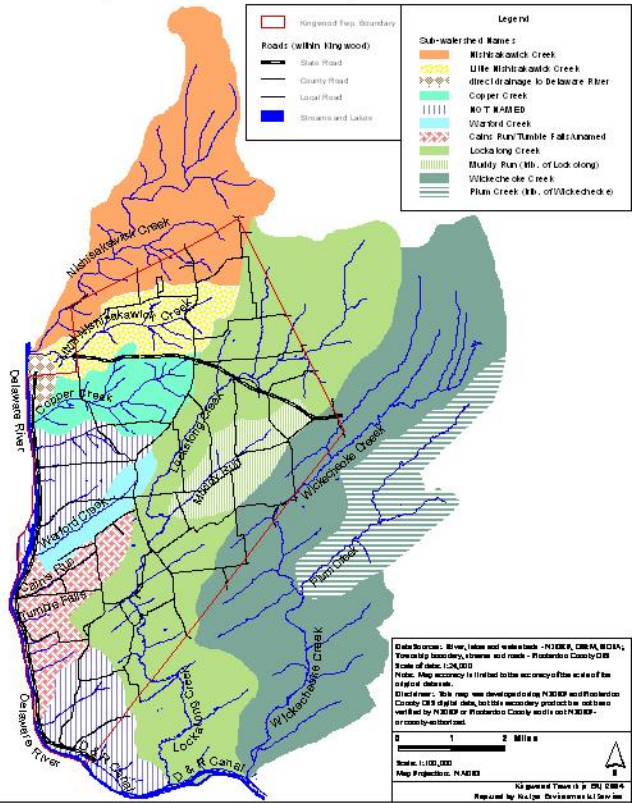
Other

- Discussed various wetlands, stream encroachment, water monitoring and other topics of environmental concern.

Kingwood Township's Watersheds

A *watershed* is the land area within the confines of a drainage divide in which all surface runoff will drain into a river, river system, or body of water. *Sub-watersheds* are those smaller drainage areas that make up a larger watershed. *Watershed management* is the process of managing and protecting all of the water resources within the area of a watershed, rather than on a site-specific basis. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) recognizes that watersheds are "nature's boundaries," and has established a watershed management approach. A watershed management approach is based on three key components: 1) a geographic focus; 2) continuous improvement based on sound science; and 3) partnerships/ stakeholder involvement.

All of Kingwood Township is within the Delaware River watershed. The map above shows the sub-watersheds and streams either within or partially within Kingwood Township (a larger version of this map is available on the township web site). Several sub-watersheds lie entirely within Kingwood Township: Copper Creek, Warford Creek, Cain's Run, Tumble Falls, and a number of unnamed streams. In addition, some land drains directly to the Delaware River without first entering a stream. Lockatong Creek is the largest sub-watershed within Kingwood Township. Lockatong Creek also drains portions of Franklin and Delaware Townships. Wickecheoke creek watershed lies primarily within Delaware Township, and partially



within Kingwood and Raritan Townships and Stockton Boro. A small portion of Little Nishisakawick Creek lies within Frenchtown Boro, with the major portion in Kingwood. Nishisakawick Creek lies within Alexandria and Kingwood Townships and Frenchtown Boro.

Streams within Kingwood which NJDEP has designated as Category 1 (antidegradation) streams are Lockatong, Wickecheoke, Warford, Little Nishisakawick and Nishisakawick Creeks. The Category One designation provides additional protections that help prevent water quality degradation and discourage development where it would impair or destroy natural resources and environmental quality.

The NJ Water Supply Authority is currently working on a Watershed Management Plan for Lockatong and Wickecheoke

Creeks to address phosphorus, fecal coliform and temperature problems in those watersheds. A similar project is being proposed by Hunterdon Soil Conservation District for the Little Nishisakawick and Nishisakawick. *Source: Kingwood ERI*

“Water is vital to life and comprises an invaluable natural resource which is not to be abused by any segment of the State's population or economy.” *NJDEP Surface Water Quality Standards NJAC 7:9B 2003*

Species Highlight: Wood Turtle

The wood turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*) is a threatened species in New Jersey, which can be found in Kingwood Township.

Wood turtles can be identified by the red or orange color on the neck and legs; the carapace (top shell) is brown with rough pyramid shapes that look as if sculpted from wood; and they range from 5 to 9 inches in size. They are easily distinguished from the eastern box turtle (a special concern species) because wood turtles cannot close up their shell and hide inside.

They are active from late March through October.

Wood turtles require clean freshwater streams for mating, feeding and hibernation. In addition, they need undisturbed uplands for egg laying and foraging, including mosaics of forested, scrub-shrub, emergent wetlands, upland forest, old fields and agricultural lands.

Loss and/or degradation of both aquatic and terrestrial habitats has caused a decline in this species' abundance. Due to major decreases in wood



Photo courtesy Deborah J. Kratzer © 2005

turtle abundance and distribution throughout NJ, this species was listed as threatened in 1979.

Sources: *Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of New Jersey*, which can be purchased from the NJDEP on the web at www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/herpordr.htm and the Kingwood ERI