

Watershed News

A publication of the Greater Culver Lake Watershed Conservation Foundation | Spring 2026

The Power of Trees

By ONE TREE PLANTED, reprinted with permission, onetreeplanted.org.

Our future depends on nature, it provides the essential building blocks for life—clean air, pure water, and fertile soil. Trees are at the heart of this natural system, acting as powerful tools for carbon capture, helping to stabilize our climate and mitigate the impacts of global warming. They hold the land together, preventing erosion and enriching the biodiversity that supports all life on Earth. Forests are nature’s water purifiers, safeguarding our fresh water supply while offering sustainable resources like food, timber, and medicine. Every tree we plant is an investment in the future—nurturing the planet, protecting life, and inspiring hope for generations to come.



The Critical Role Trees Play in Water Quality and the Health of Watersheds

Trees and forests play a critical role in capturing rainwater and reducing the risk of natural disasters such as floods and landslides. Their intricate root systems act like filters, removing pollutants and slowing down the absorption of water into the soil. This process helps reduce erosion and lessen the likelihood of soil getting oversaturated. Together, these actions make trees a vital element of “green infrastructure” across urban and rural areas.

How Trees Improve Water Quality

When trees absorb water, it does more than help them grow and survive. The benefits extend to the surrounding environment. Stormwater runoff can increase people’s exposure to pollution, but trees intercept and filter it, improving the water quality of runoff.

Over time, the storm water is released back into the earth and atmosphere via transpiration. With less contact with pavement, stormwater that has been absorbed and released by trees is cooler and has fewer pollutants when it enters local waterways.

How Trees Protect Watershed Health

A watershed is an area of land that drains rain water or snow into one location such as a stream, lake or wetland. These ecosystems supply drinking water to surrounding communities — and water for agriculture and manufacturing processes. They also offer opportunities for recreation, and provide habitat to a range of plant and animal species.

Trees are intertwined with watershed health, and provide a range of water-related ecosystem services, including filtering excess sediment, nutrients, and toxins before they enter waterways, reducing erosion and flooding, and shading streams so they are at optimal temperatures for aquatic wildlife.

The seemingly small act of planting trees can have a powerful impact on watershed health, water quality, and more. Support reforestation today!

Photos by the Wallkill River Watershed Management Group

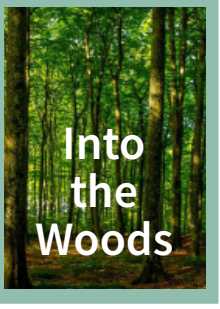


Assessing Our Watershed

Board Member John (Jay) Higgins attended the NJ COLA meeting in September 2025. COLA (Coalition of Lake Associations) works to address shared visions and issues on participating lakes in NJ. The speaker of the evening was John Tucci, President of EverBlue Lakes, a local lake restoration company. He advised Jay that Culver Lake is on the right track on how we are addressing phosphorus issues caused by Internal Loading, Septic Systems, and Stormwater.

Areas to look to improve include gathering additional data on dissolved oxygen content, muck levels and percent of organic content in the sediment, and the appropriateness of past weed management treatments.

Save the Date for Our Fall Gala Thursday, September 3



Into the Woods

Percentage of phosphorus loading/infiltration at Culver Lake

Stormwater	40%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed 50 stainless steel street basin inserts to trap and prevent dirt, leaves and phosphorus laden particles from entering the lake • Set up a basin cleaning schedule with the Township • Installed 3 Alum stations on the North Shore to bind soluble phosphorus rendering it inactive and unable to stimulate an algae bloom • Installed Eutrosorb bags in select culverts to absorb phosphorus before it enters the lake 	
Septic Systems	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed home wastewater conditioning systems in 10 test homes (like the one installed at the Normanoch clubhouse) • Educate homeowners to the importance of septic tank pumping and maintenance 	
Internal Loading	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizing an aeration system (clubhouse) to pump oxygen into the bottom of the lake. This process neutralizes the bottom phosphorus and keeps it from causing a bloom 	

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER EVENTS



Greater Culver Lake Watershed Conservation Foundation
Earth Day 2026
Saturday, April 25 • Rain or Shine

Clean Up at the Lakes

The Greater Culver Lake Watershed Conservation Foundation
in conjunction with
Frankford Township Clean Communities
is sponsoring the annual cleanup of
Culver Lake & Lake Owassa Streets



Clean-up starts at the Normanoch Clubhouse on East Shore Culver Road between 8:30–9:30 am.

Supplies/Equipment will be given out:
bags for trash and recyclables, orange safety vests, grabbers, and gloves (although you may prefer to bring your own gloves).
You may select an area to lean or one will be assigned to you.

Return supplies and trash by 12 noon. **Do a good deed and have some FUN!**

For more information visit our website: GCLWCF.org or contact: Danae Dotz at: Machebon@aol.com, or Terry McQuillin at: terrymcquillin@me.com

Help Us Plant Trees at Culver Brook Preserve!



When: Saturday, May 16 (Rain Date: Sunday, May 17)
Time: Shift #1: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **or**
Shift #2: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Where: Culver Brook Preserve (East Shore Culver Road, Branchville, NJ)
Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/culver-brook-preserve-tree-planting-tickets-1985072687846?aff=oddtcreator>



Questions? Contact Kristine Rogers **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 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. Go to the website to see tax advantage giving strategies. **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

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