



Kettle Creek Watershed Association



January 2019 Newsletter

KCWA Membership

Doug Roberts

It's January. Christmas is over, the new year has begun, and the reality of winter has finally set in. It's a good time of year to catch up on paperwork, tie some flies, watch a few Netflix series, and hunker down inside the warmth of your home. While you are regrouping and resetting your calendar for 2019, the Kettle Creek Watershed is also preparing for the upcoming year.

If you are a member of the KCWA be sure to renew your membership, if you haven't already. If you are not a member; why not? It is inexpensive, starting at only \$10 per

The KCWA does not just benefit fishermen – It is an organization of conservationists that benefits all who love the Kettle Creek Valley

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@KCWatershed

The KCWA is now on Facebook! In order to maintain a closer relationship with members and keep all of those that support us up to date with the latest information, we have decided to create a Facebook Page. This page contains regular posts regarding upcoming projects and improvement activities as well as updates on recreational activities in the valley (i.e. hiking, fishing, snowmobiling, etc).

year. With multiple projects due to begin this year, every donation counts! The KCWA could use your voice, your hands and your eyes and ears in protecting the unequalled Kettle Creek Valley.

The KCWA does not just benefit fishermen – It is an organization of conservationists that benefits all who love the Kettle Creek Valley, no matter what recreational activities you prefer to take part in. Clean water is vital to the life that is supported in this area. The benefits of protecting our headwaters have huge downstream effects as well. By joining our organization you are not only helping the Kettle Creek Watershed but also contributing to the health of the entire Susquehanna drainage!

It is easy to join! To become a member or renew your membership online, simply click [HERE](#) or visit www.kettlecreek.org and click on Join, Renew, or Donate at the top of the page.

OR

If you prefer to mail in your membership, please find the membership card located on the last page of this newsletter.

Little Black Stoneflies



Little Black Stoneflies

Doug Roberts

One of the great things about here in the northern tier of PA, is that there are opportunities to fish almost any time of year. While nymphing usually produces the best results dry fly fishing is not out of the question. The little black stonefly can be a hit or miss hatch when it comes to fishing but if you are spending any time around a cold, clean stream, just look closely and you may just catch a glimpse of these insects crawling across the ice and snow. The little black stonefly is part of the Capniidae family, which is a family of stonefly that hatches throughout the winter. Warmer days produce the best results. When the sun hits the water, these tiny insects will begin to swim towards the banks, crawl up on shore, and shed their nymphal schucks. Next time you are around the water, look closely, and you may just catch a glimpse of these fascinating little bugs.

Winter Fly Fishing

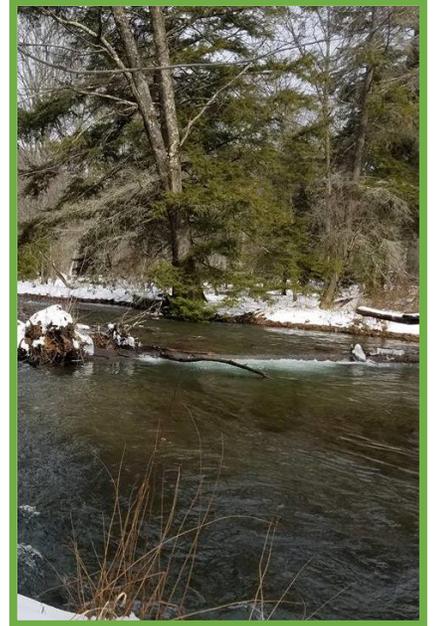
Todd Roberts

It's cold. The sky is overcast and has that peculiar blue gray color that says December better than any calendar ever could. The stream is cold. The water has that distinctive deep blue green, especially in the main runs, which tapers to rich brown as you look closer to shore. The beautiful leaves that color the bottom and eddies of October are all gone. Tree bark is darker in the damp; a quick glance will tell you what direction the weather comes from. The trees are all naked. You can easily see over 100 yards through the woods. But there is nothing but quiet. The sound of the water is all you hear. No warblers, Chickadees, Titmice, Juncos or even Nuthatches. The air is cold and damp, and your breath hangs like the steam from a cup of coffee. It's cold.

Fishing is simplified. Your waders are stiff. So are your wading shoes. Fingerless gloves help, but if you're my age, it really doesn't take all that long for the cold to render your fingers partly useless. The Thing-a-ma bobber you put on so fast in May takes longer. Rigging up your fly is a slow process. The good news is that if you do run the hook into your finger, you probably won't feel it. Headwater streams in winter are easy in some regards. You sure don't need dry flies. 14 and 16 are the go to sizes, and your selection is simplified. You can bet on the classics. Hares Ear. Pheasant tail. Prince nymph. Sucker spawn. Frenchie. The streams aren't deep. If the fly has a bead head, you can get it down as you fish the pockets and runs. A 3-weight rod, a dozen flies, a spool of tippet or vanish. Fishing is simplified.

Christmas improves the experience. We fish with a group all the time. And with headwater fishing you must take turns. As you work your way up the stream, each person takes the next hole first, and you rotate through. There's no rhyme or reason to how you choose. Seth is the youngest and sometimes goes first. Tom is the oldest and sometimes goes first. Dan is the fastest to the next spot, so he goes first. But we all get our chance. Look at the run. Identify the fishiest looking spot. Take your turn. It's a relief to be out. We all love Christmas, but the parties and obligations can wear down the jolliest elf. This is your chance to slow down. Talk. Move slow. Appreciate the season and each other. Christmas improves the experience.

Quality beats quantity. These are not put and take streams. These are native brook and wild brown trout streams. Size is not the point. Numbers are not the point. And fishing this way keeps your numbers



Beautiful male brook trout
caught out of a deep pool on a
dead drifted streamer



Winter Fly Fishing Tips

Wear warm clothes



Nymphs are your best bet



Get your fly low and fish it slow



Target the pools and slow glides



Downsize your fly



low. A six-inch fish is a trophy. The fins are a deep orange red and the leading edge on the underside is a white that you can't mimic with any paint from Sherwin Williams. The spots are the deepest red I've ever seen. And like all brookies, the fish has that green on green mottle that always makes me think of a fresh water tiger. Even when a brook trout is very small, they punch way above their weight class. Always. Native brookies don't go for a subtle hit. They try to tear the fly to pieces. And when you do set the hook they come totally unglued. I'm convinced my trout is a steelhead. Not quite. My first trout is a hair over 5 inches. But fight and spirit can't be measured by size. It's measured by heart. And this trout has a 10-pound heart. Quality beats quantity.

Quality beats quantity. These are not put and take streams. These are native brook and wild brown trout streams. Size is not the point. Numbers are not the point.

You appreciate mountain streams more. There isn't any undergrowth. Occasionally, in a small sheltered swampy cove, you find some skunk cabbage shoots. Nature's optimism is always a shock. We are months away from April, but these few shoots are trying to get a jump on the season. Coon or fox scat are sometimes found. The big log across the stream is a regular highway. You can see where mink crossed. And the observant hunter will notice and mark where deer have a trail beat down over a hillside and cross the stream. Warbler nests are easy to find now. How did you miss that nest in the summer? It's right in front of your face at eye level! Coyote scat seems to be nothing but hair. I'm convinced they even digest the bones. In the periods where we all go quiet and watch each other fish, you can hear the wind in the hemlocks. Alex is convinced brook trout love hemlocks. It seems you can't find one without the other. Looking up and down the creek, it's hard to argue. Because the woods are so quiet and stark, you can pick up the details and see the common themes easier. You appreciate mountain streams more.

A trip to Kettle Creek is never wasted. When the day winds down, we start back towards camp. We comment on the one lone white tail we see run up the hill and vanish in the laurel and admire the deer that made it through another hunting



season. No one helped it. That deer made it through on brains and caution. As we break down at the car a single raven calls from the ridge. I don't think there is a sound that can better epitomize Pennsylvania's mountains in winter. It makes you feel better knowing that as stark and quiet as the mountains are, they aren't barren and lifeless. Brook trout still hunt like sharks in the streams. There are still deer. The furbearers are still running the streams. The raven still guards the ridges like New Year's sentries. Calling out to the new year and promising a spring to come. A trip to Kettle Creek is never wasted.

Happy 2019!

AOP - Aquatic Organism Passage

Trout Unlimited has secured the entire funding for another Aquatic Organism Passage device to be installed at Gravel Lick Run on Cross Fork Creek Road in Stewardson Township this summer. No Stewardson Township money will be used.

Another AOP structure was installed on Cross Fork Creek Road at Little Lyman Run in Abbott Township during the summer of 2008. These bottomless sluice pipe devices allow easier, unobstructed passage of fish and other aquatic organisms both upstream & downstream.

The road will be completely closed to all traffic including ATVs at Gravel Lick from Tuesday, July 9, 2019, for at least 4 weeks, weather dependent. There will be no 'turnaround' area at the worksite. Most work will be done on private property with the permission of landowners on both sides of the township road. Please respect their privacy and avoid turning around in their yards.

Gravel Lick Run is about 2.6 miles north of the intersection with PA S.R. 144. During the road closure, access to Cross Fork Creek Road north of Gravel Lick will require persons to go on PA S.R. 144 to Hungry Hollow Road or from PA S.R. 44 via Short Run Road or Junction Road.

KCWA Calendar of Events

KCWA Board Meeting

March 3, 2019 @ 9:00 am

Location TBD

Project Healing Waters Outing and
Banquet

May 3-5, 2019

Cross Fork, PA

KCWA Board Meeting

June 2, 2019 @ 9:00 am

Cross Fork Fire Hall

KCWA Board Meeting

Sept. 8, 2019 @ 9:00 am

Friend of Kettle Creek and Cross Fork Area Facebook Group

For news on local events as well as up to date notifications on road closures and delays, check out the Friend of Kettle Creek & Cross Fork Area Facebook group. This is a closed group to protect your privacy and is a community made up of over 2,000 people that love the Kettle Creek area. Join the group and enjoy the many pictures of the wildlife, history, and good times in the valley.



Historical View of the Kettle Creek Area

Mike Klimkos

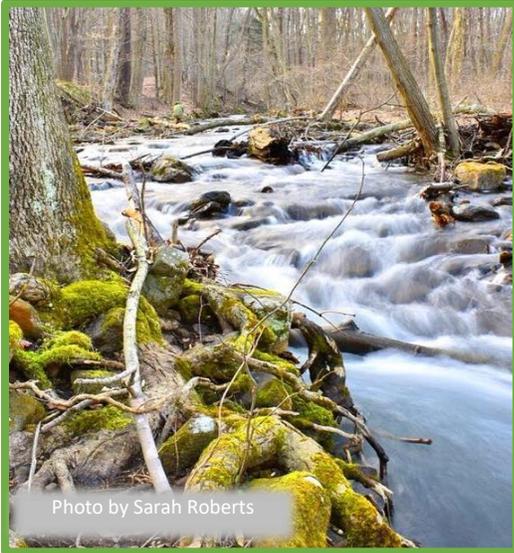


Photo by Sarah Roberts

On November 6, 1874, the publication of the "[Historical View of Clinton County](#)" was commenced in The Birthplace, one of the weekly newspapers of Lock Haven, and continued through nearly every issue, until a complete sketch of the county had been given. In order to insure accuracy and thoroughness the following note was appended to each chapter:

Clinton county, as well as Lock Haven, the county seat, owes its origin to the indefatigable exertions of an exceedingly eccentric individual; the irrepressible and indomitable Jerry Church, a New York State Yankee," whose name (if not face) was once familiar to nearly every citizen of the county. The efforts made by Mr. Church to organize the county were strenuously opposed by leading citizens of both Centre and Lycoming counties.

We are only about 150 years removed from a time when the Kettle Creek valley was a remote wilderness, untracked and untraveled by Pennsylvanians seeking new land and new opportunity. It would take a long time for the area to become the tourist mecca that it is today. This is the first of a series of historical sketches that follow Kettle Creek upstream from its confluence with the West Branch Susquehanna River.

Clinton County

Clinton County was formed on June 21, 1839 taking area from both Lycoming and Centre counties. It was named in honor of the seventh Governor of New York State, DeWitt Clinton. Clinton served as Governor of New York from 1817 to 1822 and again from 1825 to 1828. He was governor during the construction of the Erie Canal. Clinton believed that infrastructure improvements could transform American life, drive economic growth. The economic boom of the Erie Canal had repercussions that were felt up and down the eastern seaboard of the United



Check out this [VIDEO](#) showcasing some of the amazing habitat in the Kettle Creek tributaries.





States, even reaching into the remote part of Pennsylvania where Kettle Creek flows.

The West Branch Canal never reached Kettle Creek and instead turned up Bald Eagle Creek near Lock Haven and had its terminus at Bellefonte. The West Branch Susquehanna River was an important travel route though and following the Civil War it was the main means of getting lumber out of the mountains to sawmills to feed the country's insatiable demand for lumber.

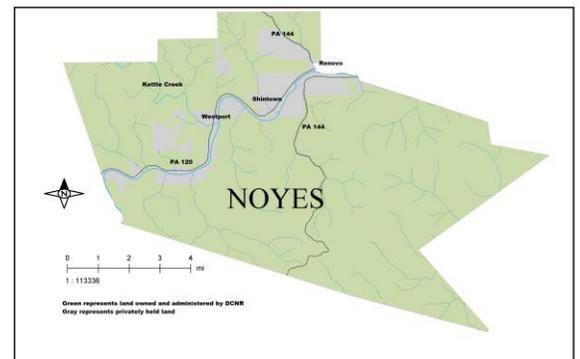
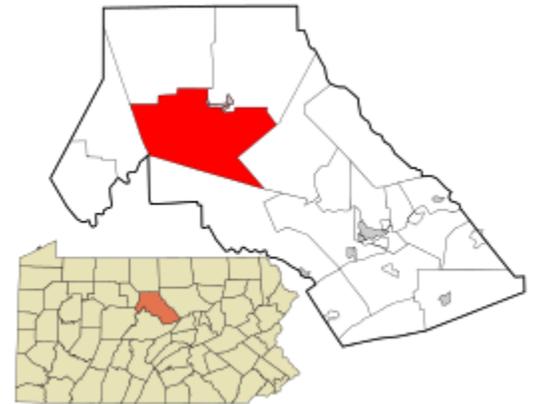
Noyes Township

Noyes Township is the municipality where Kettle Creek enters the West Branch Susquehanna River. The township covers 90 square miles and is divided by the river which runs southwest to northeast bisecting the township in a meandering 14-mile route. Kettle Creek enters the West Branch from the north. Most of the township is public land administered by the DCNR. The township is bisected by two state highways: Route 120 running west to east on the north side of the river and PA 144 running south to north is the other major highway. A state legislative route parallels Kettle Creek from Westport north to 144.

The Indians who inhabited the area used it mostly as a hunting and fishing venue. Iroquois tribes travelled frequently through the area but there are no records of any large settlements, though they certainly did spend some time in township.

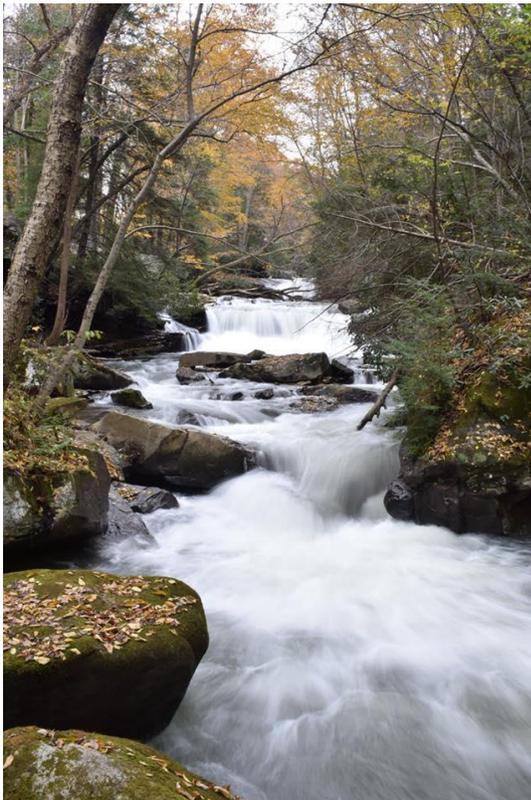
The first Europeans to come through the area appear to be French-Canadian trappers and traders. The first Americans to arrive came about 1775. It would be 100 years later that Noyes Township was incorporated, being carved out of Chapman Township.

D.S. Maynard's Historical View of Clinton County published in 1875 notes that the first settlement was by Richard Gilmore at or near present day Westport. Other settlers who followed included William McCombe, William Andrews and James Caldwell. A mill was erected



Snowmobile Conditions

It's that time of year again! Winter is here to stay for a little longer and what better way to enjoy the conditions than heading to northern PA to hit the trail on your snowmobile, cross country skis, or snowshoes. For the latest conditions in the Kettle Creek/Cross Fork area, visit the "*Friends of Kettle Creek and Cross Fork Area*" Facebook group. This group is great at providing updates for anything in the area! In addition, when you return from your excursion, you can share pictures of your visit to the group!



near Westport by W.T. McCloskey. John S. Bailey Esq. wrote in Maynard's book:

Mother and I planted the orchard in 1807, many of the trees of which are now standing. We kept a nursery of small trees from which we supplied many of our neighbors in after years. Deer and fish were very plenty, and I presume, John, you would hardly believe me if I would tell you, that in our fish basket at the foot of the tail race under the mill in the fall of the year, we caught barrels and canoe loads of fish and eels....

One traveler to area once remarked, "No Yes township; apparently they couldn't make up their minds when deciding what to name the place." It is in fact pronounced Noyes - rhymes with toys. The township is named for Colonel Amos Clark Noyes (often referred to as Col. A.C. Noyes). Noyes was a businessman who arrived in the area from New Hampshire where he was born. He first located in Emporium and seeing a business opportunity to the east he relocated to the present town of Westport. He was prominent in lumber and other businesses that the area provided and was so well liked by the citizens that he was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and served from 1863 – 1865 and again from 1871 to 1873. He was a candidate for governor in 1875 but his candidacy failed to gain traction. He died in September of 1880.

In the 1860s the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad came through the West Branch Susquehanna valley. The railroad eventually became an important part of the Pennsylvania Railroad and today is operated by the Chessie System.

The railroad was the first system of transportation into the area that moved faster than a horse. The advent of the automobile and the building of roads further opened the area. Following World War II thousands upon thousand of visitors began to travel to the area for fishing, hunting and outdoor recreation. Thousands of acres of some of the wildest lands in Pennsylvania still await visitors.



2019 Projects

Doug Roberts

2019 is anticipated to be a big year for the Kettle Creek Watershed! Not only do we have multiple projects scheduled for this year but due to last years high water conditions we also will be completing the work that was supposed to occur in 2018. We will be working closely with Trout Unlimited (TU) again on habitat improvement projects in our feeder streams which will help strengthen the wonderful native brook trout populations found throughout the watershed's headwaters. Improvements to the main stream will be a large priority too – preventing erosion and the widening of the stream is and will continue to be a priority for the KCWA. The projects that are anticipated to occur this year are:

- Repair the rock veins at “Old Deb’s” (McDermott’s) due to high water conditions in 2018 postponing the project.
- Headgate repair project will rebuild one of the rock veins that was damaged by winter ice jams.
- Monitoring of erosion is ongoing at the bend up stream from Lucky 7 – this area is being closely monitored and may include some bank retention work in the future.
- Build deflectors and mud sills on Kettle around Clukey Camp.
- Gravel Lick Run – deflectors, cross vanes, and root wads will be installed.
- Repair mud sills and construct deflectors on Kettle near the Oden property.

Your continued support is very much appreciated as we work to enhance, preserve, monitor, and protect the Kettle Creek watershed. Thank you!

How to Join / Renew your Membership

To pay online via *credit card*, please visit www.kettlecreek.org and click on Join, Renew, or Donate. From this page, scroll to the bottom and choose your donation amount then follow the prompts to complete your transaction.

To pay via *check*, please download the membership form [HERE](#), fill out the form with your information, and send with your check to KCWA, P.O. B317, Cross Fork, Pa. 17729

For as little as **\$10 a year**, you can help enhance, preserve, monitor, and protect the Kettle Creek Watershed.

Thank you for your support!

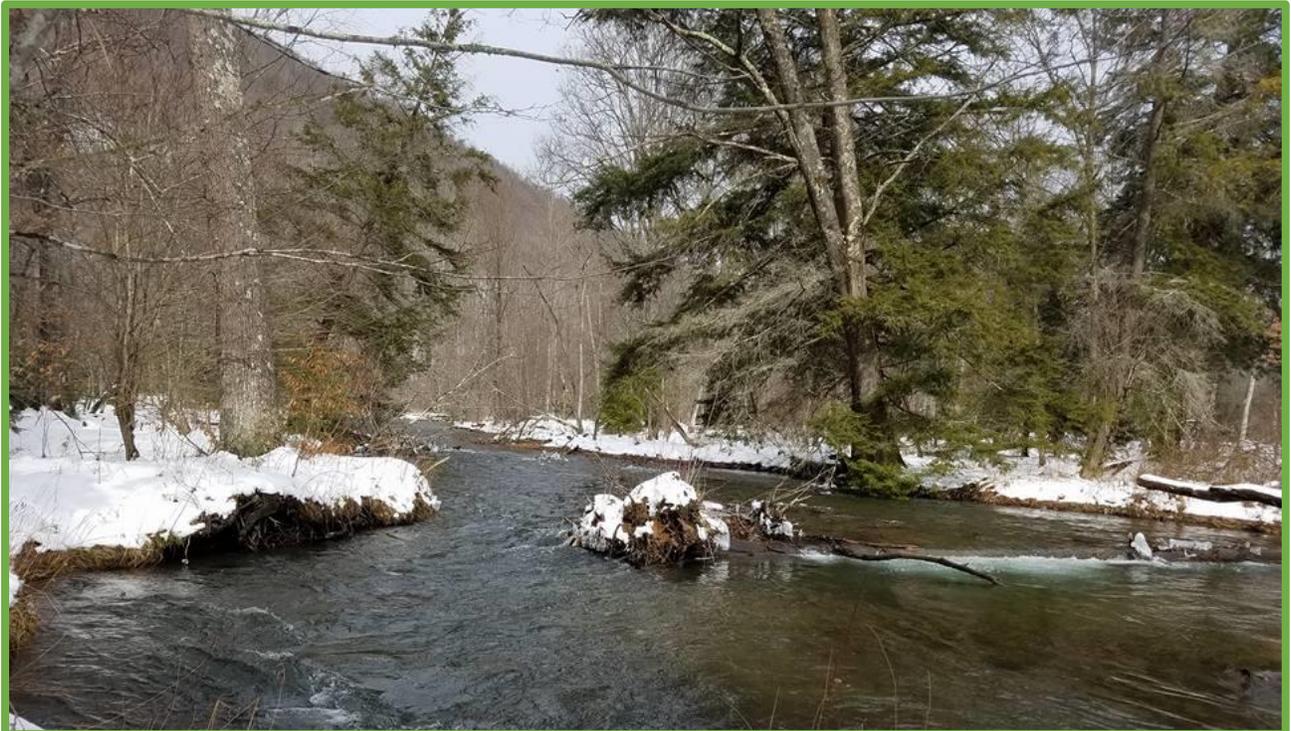
KCWA Newsletter

Are you a writer, historian, or naturalist? Want to be a contributor to the KCWA newsletter and have your articles shared with our subscriber base? I am looking for volunteers to submit articles for future newsletter on various topics within the watershed, ranging from wildlife, recreation, history of the area, and more. If this is something that might interest you, please contact me (Doug Roberts) at douglas.roberts2011@gmail.com or kcwatershed@gmail.com and cc my personal email.



Help Spread the Word!

As an all-volunteer organization, we are entirely dependent on the involvement of our members and supporters. In order to increase involvement we ask that you share this newsletter with others – whether you share via Facebook, forward this email on to one of your contacts, or provide a hard copy to someone. Our members are the lifeblood of this organization so your help is vital to our growth.



Wishing you a wonderful 2019!
- Doug Roberts, KCWA Outreach Chair



KCWA Outreach Committee

Doug Roberts

Doug was born in December of 1992 and has been coming up to his camp on Kettle Creek since the spring of 1993. Being a lifelong visitor to Kettle Creek, he has developed a deep love for the watershed. Doug's background in conservation began while pursuing his bachelors in biology from the University of Pittsburgh, where he conducted research on acid-mine drainage reclamation and its effect on freshwater macroinvertebrates. He currently possesses a Masters degree in Bioengineering and works as an Engineer for a medical device company. In his free time, Doug is an avid fly fisherman, archery hunter, hiker, and runs a [YouTube channel](#) with his brother featuring their fly fishing pursuits.



Contributing Authors

Mike Klimkos

Todd Roberts



Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone No. _____

Email _____

Camp Name _____

New

Renewal

Date _____ 20__

\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 _____

DUE DATE: MARCH 1ST OF EACH YEAR

KETTLE CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 317 - CROSS FORK, PA 17729-0317
(Return this portion of card with your remittance)
To pay online, visit www.kettlecreek.org

KETTLE CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 317 - CROSS FORK, PA 17729-0317
501c3 Organization

Date _____ 20__ **(Keep Stub for Records)**

Name _____

Amount _____