

**May 2020**

## **Big brown trout caught on Chartiers Creek**

**Joe Baker** of Canonsburg was fishing far below the trout-stocked waters of Chartiers Creek when he hooked a 25-inch, 5-pound brown trout.

Also in April, Mr. Baker landed a 22-inch golden rainbow in the Youghiogheny River at Ohiopyle.



Source: <https://www.post-gazette.com/life/outdoors/2020/05/07/Trout-fishing-Pittsburgh-Pennsylvania-Chartiers-Creek/stories/202005070035>

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**July 2021... 14 months later:**

## **Thousands Of Dead Fish Spotted in Chartiers Creek**

By Meghan Schiller / KDKA / July 16, 2021 at 9:59 pm

“I see one dead fish, two dead fish. ... Then all of a sudden, there were dead fish everywhere. Just every fish in that creek was dead,” said Jake Conroy.

Big fish, small fish, he estimates in the thousands.

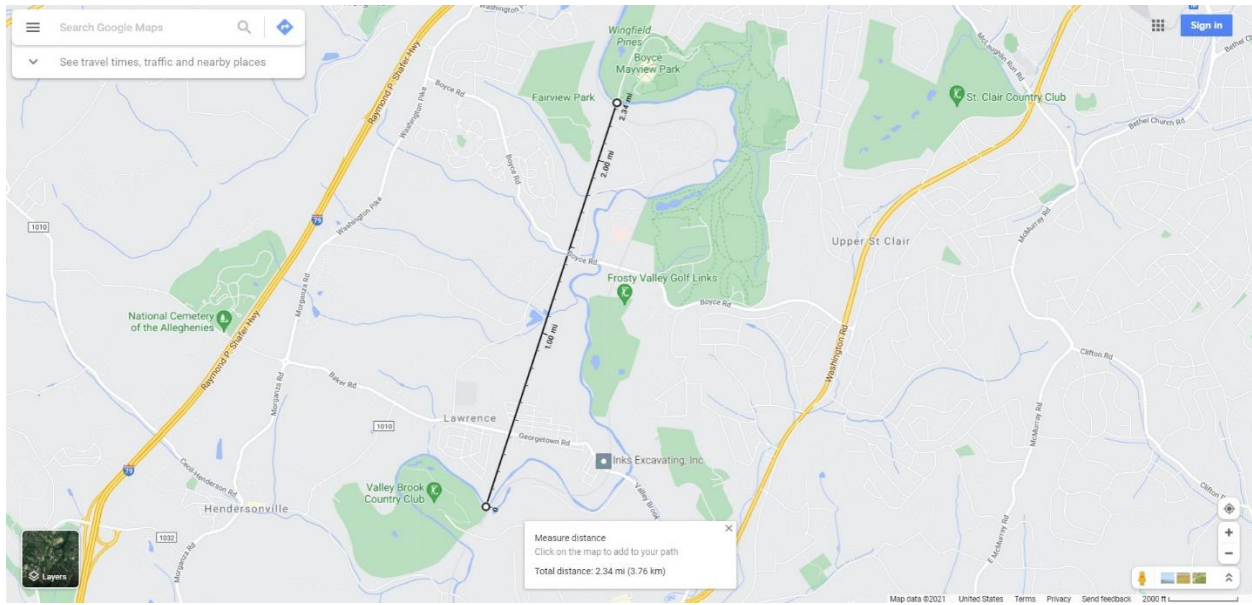


“I was fuming,” Conroy said “Somebody has to be held responsible for this because Mother Nature didn’t do that.”

So who or what did this? The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission cannot say.

“Sometimes, there is a pollutant in the water. Sometimes, there is a rapid change in temperature,” said spokesperson Mike Parker.

Officials believe the start of the “fish kill” is Chartiers Creek near Valley Brook Road. An investigation began Friday.



**One report had the fish kill starting near Valleybrook Country Club, the other report said further downstream near Valleybrook Road. This map covers the areas where I photographed “brown foam” early Sunday morning.**

“Water quality will be monitored, specimens will be taken from the stream to see if we can come up with any clues,” Parker said. “But at this point, we don’t exactly know what’s going on.”

In McKees Rocks, Andre Holmes saw dead fish dumping out of Chartiers Creek into the Ohio River.

“I have never seen anything like that outside of a horror movie. I was like OK, Steven King-type of stuff here,” Holmes said.

But it is not fiction. And the reality is, the damage is done.

“I’m not an expert so I’m not pretending to be one. But I’ve been around the water long enough to know this is not a natural occurrence,” said Holmes.

KDKA’s Meghan Schiller as the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission if it is a pollutant, could criminal charges be brought? Parker said if that happens, the person or company would face fines and likely try to settle out of court.

If it’s something environmental causing the dead fish, we should hear when the investigation wraps up. [Video and story](#)





**Near the creek bank along Buckeye Street in Peters Township. Sunday July 18, 2021**



**Foam trapped by a fallen tree near the Mayview Road bridge between the Upper St Clair Rec Center and the Bicycle Café in South Fayette Township. Sunday July 18, 2021**

# Fish and Boat officials investigate 'significant fish kill' in Chartiers Creek

By Jonathan D. Silver / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette / July 17, 2021 2:24 p.m.

Pennsylvania officials are investigating a “significant fish kill” along a 7-mile stretch of Chartiers Creek that has left hundreds if not thousands of suckers, carp, minnows and crayfish dead.

The cause of the kill is unknown, Mike Parker, spokesman for the state’s Fish and Boat Commission, which is investigating along with the Department of Environmental Protection, said Saturday afternoon.



Pollutants or contamination could be a factor, he said — as could “Mother Nature.”

Fish kills are not uncommon in the summer, Mr. Parker said, when natural fluctuations in water temperature can wreak havoc on sensitive fish populations. The sun heats the water, rainstorms cool it down and then the sun heats it again.

“It can be very shocking to see large numbers of dead fish,” Mr. Parker said. “It happens quite often.”



The commission learned of problems Thursday when it received a report of dead fish in Chartiers Creek.

Waterways conservation officers were dispatched and were on scene that evening and Friday. They found dead fish on banks and floating in the creek.

The officers pinpointed the fish kill to a roughly 7-mile long area from around the Valley Brook Country Club in Peters to 7 miles downstream.

“There wasn’t any obvious source of pollution,” such as a chemical odor or a sheen on the water, Mr. Parker said.

Investigators will try to determine the cause of the kill. If evidence points to an individual or entity being responsible, the incident could lead to charges or a settlement in which the state would seek restitution for the environmental damage.

The population of fish affected in Chartiers Creek tends to be resilient species that can bounce back quickly from kills, Mr. Parker said.

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*Foam photos I've taken over the years near fracking... any relationship?*





**Near "problematic" Atlas Resources wells**





*3 photos of Brush Run foam, Washington County, Pa. on May 15, 2011...*



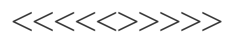


4 submitted pics of suspected **MBAS** in Clearville, Somerset County, Pa. stream...





*What does MBAS stand for?*  
***Methylene blue active substances***  
*“Anionic surfactants”*





*What's further upstream, near the headwaters of Chartiers Creek?*



**Washington East Washington Joint Authority Sewage Plant, which accepts effluent from the Arden Landfill, which accepts drilling and fracking waste, some in this type of roll-off.**







**Reel Fish'n**

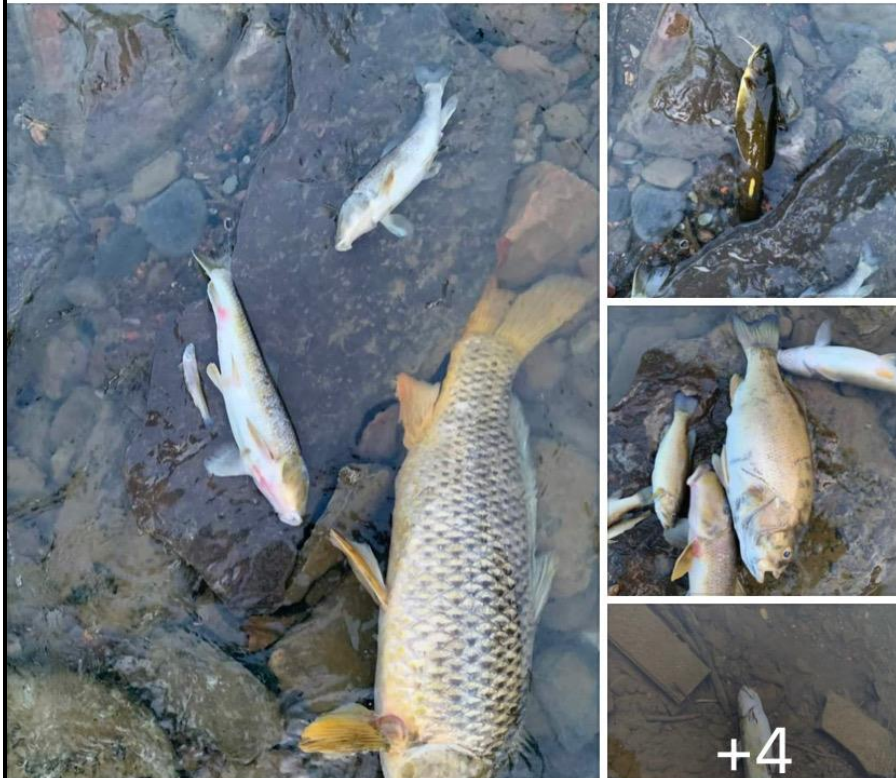
July 16 at 2:31 PM · 🌐



### Chartiers Creek Update

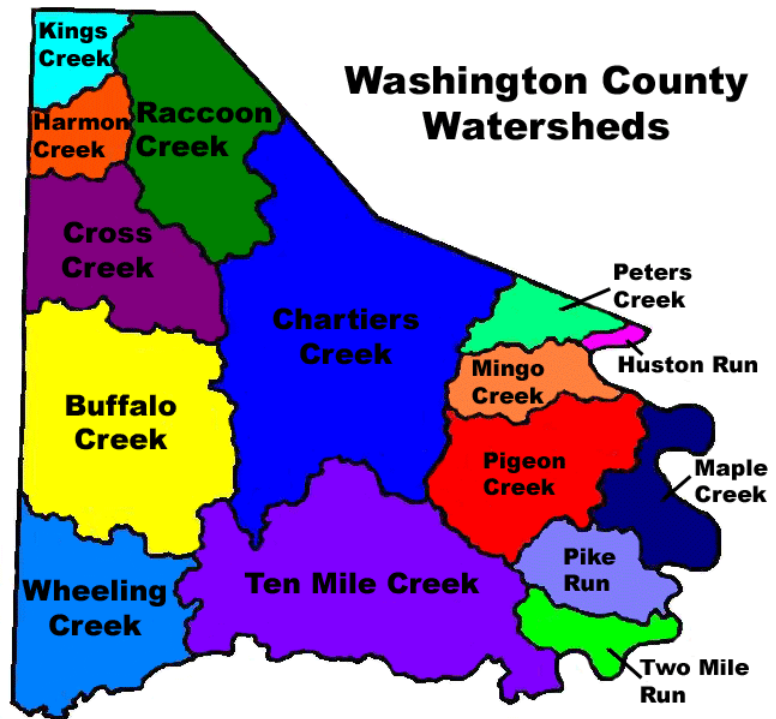
Appears a chemical (unofficial) of some sort has reached Chartiers Watershed causing a fish kill including crayfish & macroinvertebrates. It appears to stretch from the Mayview area the whole way through Crafton. The DEP and Fish Commission have been contacted and are investigating. Still waiting for the official update.

Please share for awareness and we recommend staying out of the water for the time being. We suggest giving the fish that survived a break until more is known about the quality of the water and of course keep pets and yourself out of the water. Thanks to those who have shared photos and driving awareness. #fishPA





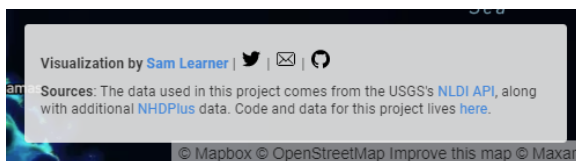
**Chartiers Creek** is a tributary of the Ohio River in Western Pennsylvania in the United States. The creek was named after Peter Chartier, a trapper of French and Native American parentage who established a trading post at the mouth of the creek in 1743. Chartiers Creek winds from its headwaters in Washington County through Allegheny County, where it meets the Ohio River at McKees Rocks and Pittsburgh's West End, three miles west of the Point at Pittsburgh. Acid mine drainage, agricultural and industrial runoff, and sewer overflow made **Chartiers Creek one of the most polluted watersheds in Pennsylvania**. Although improvements have been made, the watershed remains significantly impaired. [Wikipedia](#)



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*Timely! Just in from Dick Martin...*

**“Pick your favorite brook and see where the water goes.  
A nice reminder to never pollute on the nice folks who live downstream.”**



## River Runner

This uses USGS [NHDPlus data](#) and their [NLDI API](#) to visualize the path of a rain droplet from any point in the contiguous United States to its end point (usually the ocean, sometimes the Great Lakes, Canada/Mexico, or another inland water feature). It'll find the closest river/stream flowline coordinate to a click/search and then animate along that flowline's downstream path. I've used mapbox to animate the downstream path, but needed to make all sorts of adjustments for elevation and bearing changes to prevent jerkiness/nausea (just moving from point to point feels a little like flying through turbulence while shaking your head side-to-side). I've hosted a dataset with NHDPlus [Value Added Attributes](#) on Firebase, which allows me to group flowlines into their parent features and determine distances quickly. [Source](#)

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