



Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project Make Use of Our Rivers

Volume XIX
Number 3
Summer 2012

Save the Date:
Sept. 21– SCRIP board meeting, Mc Clemen’s Pavilion in Lambertsville, 9am

Sept. 22– Paint Creek Watershed Assoc. clean up, 8:30am

Sept. 24– Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative Mini-Grant deadline

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Paddle the Que Event Makes a Big Splash!

By Len Lichvar, SCRIP Chairman



With the growing interest in the paddling sports in the region, due in large part to the improved water quality in the Cambria-Somerset region, SCRIP in cooperation with the PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) sponsored the Paddle the Que program at Summers Best Two Weeks at the Quemahoning Reservoir on August 18. The program is part of SCRIP’s ongoing Stonycreek River of the Year commemoration events.

The educational event drew 81 men, women and children to learn paddling skills. The program is structured and taught by PFBC education professionals and provides instruction, education and hands on experience in paddling kayaks and canoes on flat water. Each of the participants were able to try out their new skills on the water.

SCRIP board members as well as members of the Benscreek Canoe Club were on hand to provide land and on the water coordination and assistance. Representatives from REI also attended and discussed products and other essentials for the paddling sports and SCRIP provided handouts and related material to the participants related to the water quality improvement efforts in the upper Conemaugh River Basin. *More on p.3*

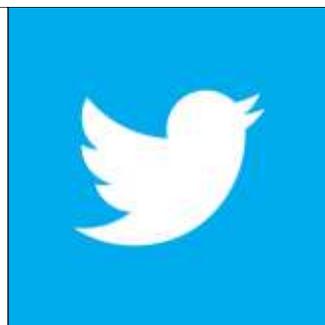


Photo by PFBC

SCRIP board member, Jim Eckenrode (center), and Donna Fisher (left) of the Blair County Conservation District (BCCD) receive a

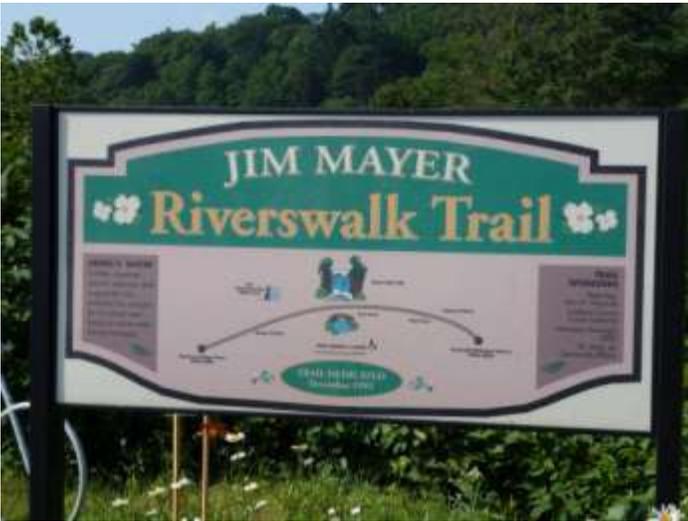
Special Recognition Award from John Arway, PA Fish and Boat Commission Executive Director .

The BCCD was one of four partners who received the award for their role in the purchase of Sandy Run, an exceptional value wetlands located in Antis Township, Blair County. Congratulations to Jim and the other partners!



SCRIP is now on Twitter. Follow us @SCRIP5

Natural Biodiversity Broadens Project on Jim Mayer Trail



The Jim Mayer Trail Riparian Restoration Project , a special program of Natural Biodiversity made possible with money from the Foundation for PA Watersheds GenOn funds and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy’s Dominion Watershed Mini-Grant Program, centered on improving and restoring a riparian buffer along a two mile section of the trail that runs along the Stonycreek River. The plan included control of knotweed and restoring the area by planting local, native trees and seeds most likely to prevent the re-establishment of the Japanese knotweed. To help determine the native plants in the area, Natural Biodiversity partnered with the Environment/ Conservation Committee of the Garden Club of Johnstown (GCJ),

who conducted a plant inventory of the buffer area.

Knotweed controlled cutting took place over four work days throughout the summer. On these same days, the GCJ surveyed the plants along the trail. The results of the inventory included: forty native and thirty non-native plants. There were five other plants that could not be clearly identified; the exact species could not be determined or it was unclear if the plants were native or introduced. The completed inventory will help Natural Biodiversity, under its Executive Director, Kristina Strosnider, determine the best plants and seed mix to use in restoring the riparian area after the knotweed removal project is completed. This will help further the goals of the project to restore the area, control erosion and improve the water quality along the Stonycreek River.



Save the Date
(continued)

Sept. 27-Ohio River Cruise, Gateway Clipper in Pittsburgh, 10-4.

Sept. 29– Limestone dosing on Panther Creek

Oct. 19– SCRIP board meeting, Greg Shustrick’s cabin near Pickin’ Chicken, 9am

The annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration is slated for Thursday, September 27 from 10-4 at the Gateway Clipper in Pittsburgh. This year’s theme is “Our Rivers-Get to the Point”. The Networker Cruise, a great way to meet and talk with other watershed representatives, will board at 12:30 pm and travel along all three rivers. For more information and to register for the cruise, visit www.orwc.org.



Paint Creek Watershed Clean-up Day
Scheduled for Sept. 22

The Paint Creek Regional Watershed Association and Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team will host a litter clean-up along Route 160 and Berwick Road on Saturday, September 22. Volunteers are asked to meet at 8:30 AM at the pull off along Route 160 between Windber and Elton, where Little Paint Creek passes under Route 160. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Melissa Reckner at 814-444-2669 or mreckner@kcstreamteam.org.

Paddle the Que Event (cont.)

It was a perfect day to be on the water, warm and sunny, little wind. Summers Best Two Weeks provided a quiet, private area for instruction and paddling on the Que. The instructors were knowledgeable and the participants were eager to learn. It was a great turnout for this first time event in our area; eighty-one participants and a waiting list of more than two dozen people. Here's a sampling of how it went that day.

(All photos by Len Lichvar)

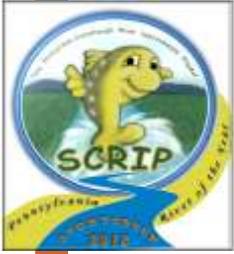


Two of the instructors for the day were Kristi Niekamp, *(standing)* and Jim Delesandro *(sitting next to her)*. Both are Environmental Interpretive Technicians with the PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC). Participants at this station were instructed on life jackets & water safety, hazards to paddlers, and paddling safety.

After some instruction on equipment, safety and paddling skills, participants were given 30 minutes to put their knowledge and skills to work on the Quemahoning Reservoir. Jim Eckenrode *(middle, facing front)*, a SCRIP board member, assists participants entering and exiting the water. Kayaks and canoes were supplied by the PFBC.



This participant is getting some extra help with his paddling skills from Kristi. Mandy Smith is keeping her eye on the other participants as they paddle around the reservoir. Mandy, a PFBC Education Specialist, was the organizer of this very successful event. Great job, Mandy!



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SCRIP is the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project, a coalition of grass-roots groups and local resource agencies working to restore and promote the Upper Conemaugh watershed.

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Do you wish to volunteer? _____

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Make your check payable to SCRIP, or for a tax-deductible contribution, make the check to Southern Alleghenies Conservancy/ SCRIP.

* If you are not sure of your membership status contact SCRIP's secretary at mreckner@kcstreamteam.org or 814-444-2669.

Send donations to:
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