

# Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project Make Use of Our Rivers

## Award Winning SCRIP Board Members!

Volume XVI I  
Number 4  
Fall 2010

### Important Dates:

Dec. 9- 20th Anniversary  
Planning Meeting- Windber  
Hotel 6:30 pm.

December SCRIP Meeting is  
canceled.

Jan. 14, 2011- SCRIP Meeting  
-Russell House in Moxham-  
9AM

June 25, 2011- Quemahoning  
Classic Fishing Tournament

*20th Anniversary  
of SCRIP is at hand!*

2011 is the 20 year mark  
for the formation of  
SCRIP.

Look for details on the  
celebration in the next  
newsletter.

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Photo by Len Lichvar

Bob Bastian, left, Wells Creek Watershed Association member along with Rich Berkley, right, President of the Somerset County Sportsmen's League, present Wells Creek Watershed Association President Thurman Korn with the Somerset County Conservationist of the Year Award. Korn was recognized for his leadership in restoring the water quality and fishery in Wells Creek. Korn also serves as SCRIP Treasurer and is a board member of the Somerset County Conservancy, Water Resources Chairman for the Southern Alleghenies RC&D and a board member of the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy. The award was presented at the Sportsmen's League annual banquet in Berlin.



Photo by Len Lichvar

Dave Rothrock, left, President of the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited presents Missy Reckner with the Dr. Jack Beck Award for Outstanding Youth Outreach. Missy was recognized for her efforts in coordinating the Trout In The Classroom Program in Cambria and Somerset Counties for the Mountain Laurel Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Missy is the Director of the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team and serves as Secretary for SCRIP. The award was presented at the state council meeting in State College.



Photo by Gwen Johnson

On behalf of the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Melissa Reckner accepts an ORWC's Environmental Award from Tom Grote, a former SCRIP Board Member. Ohio River Watershed Celebration (ORWC) story on page 2.



Photo by Laurie Popeck

DEP Deputy Secretary Scott Roberts (far left) presented Watershed Awards to several organizations, including the Shade Creek Watershed Association, SCRIP, and Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team. Larry Hutchinson (third from left) and Melissa Reckner (fourth from left) accepted the awards on behalf of these groups.



Kristin Sewak, Executive Director of Natural Biodiversity and a SCRIP board member, and Lauren Lazzari, Vice-President of Investar Redevelopment and wife of former SCRIP board member, Mark Lazzari, were recognized by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council in the Fall of this year. The 40 Under 40 Awards are presented to 40 young Pennsylvanians who will be the environmental leaders of the future.



## Ohio River Watershed Celebration *by Melissa Reckner*

The 9th Annual Port of Pittsburgh-Ohio River Watershed Celebration was held on September 15 with over 700 people participating in this unique event which consisted of two cruises: the “Imagination Cruise” on the Gateway Clipper’s *Empress* for students, parents and educators, and the “Networker Cruise” on the *Majestic* for adults. This event gives conservation organizations a chance to network and educate the public about their work.

Several groups from the Upper Conemaugh River Watershed participated in this event, and SCRIP is proud to announce that a few of our partners were recipients of Watershed Awards, which recognize the positive efforts and impacts of small local groups who address watershed issues.

Winners from this area include:

Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team – 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Most Innovative Project;

SCRIP – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Most Innovative Project; and

Shade Creek Watershed Association – 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Best Display

First place winners received a \$500 cash award, while second place winners went home with \$250!

Additionally, the Ohio River Watershed Celebration committee recognizes individuals, organizations, and local government agencies that demonstrate a commitment to watershed or energy conservation with Environmental Awards. The Conemaugh Valley Conservancy won the Environmental Award in the Organization category for its work enhancing the quality of life along the Conemaugh River corridor through development of trails and White Water Park.

SCRIP and its partners’ reclamation work directly benefit the City of Pittsburgh, which is downstream of us, so it’s nice to have our work recognized by city representatives.

## Revamped Website is Launched

The new, revamped website is online! The old website while useful in its time was in need of a major facelift. So under the direction of Kristin Sewak, and with help from many board members, the task was begun. The result is a website with a modern, professional look. New pictures, maps and updated information make it an inviting and useful resource on the Stonycreek and Little Conemaugh Rivers and their tributaries. In addition to information on restoration and recreation projects, it details SCRIP’s position on timely topics such as, the Shaffer Mountain Wind Power Facility in Somerset County and Marcellus Shale gas drilling. Be sure to check out the links to all of our partner organizations, and then don’t forget to donate! Visit: [www.scrippa.org](http://www.scrippa.org).

## SCRIP Welcomes New Board Member

SCRIP is happy to announce the addition of Dr. William (Bill) Strosnider to its board of directors. Bill is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Engineering at Saint Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania. He received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Dayton, a M.S. in Environmental Studies from the College of Charleston and a Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering from the University of Oklahoma.

He brings to Saint Francis substantial and formative service, research and engineering experience in the developing nations of Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Haiti. Bill recently developed resources for a mining-impacted river restoration project in Bolivia which he leads at the head of a multinational public-private coalition.

Bill was the lead or co-author on a dozen water quality degradation and/or water treatment technology studies presented at the American Society of Mining and Reclamation National Conference. He published passive AMD treatment studies this year in the *Journal of Geochemical Exploration*, *Journal of Environmental Quality*, *Ecological Engineering*, *Water Research*, and *Mine Water and the Environment*.

A native of North Braddock, PA, Bill is excited to move back to the region after a decade away. He is also looking forward to helping shape the new environmental engineering program at Saint Francis, and plans to quickly develop a research/service-learning program and introduce students to ecological engineering, the design of sustainable ecosystems that integrate human society with its natural environment for the benefit of both. Bill, as a member of the board of directors and an expert on the passive treatment of AMD, is ready to help improve local watersheds along with his students at Saint Francis University.

**NATURAL BIODIVERSITY**  
Empowering Local Stewardship

**Become a Founding Member and help us branch out this holiday season!**

[naturalbiodiversity.org](http://naturalbiodiversity.org)

Natural Biodiversity is a nonprofit organization based in Johnstown, PA.

Vote for the Stonycreek as 2011 River of the Year!

The Stonycreek River is one of six rivers nominated to be the 2011 River of the Year through the efforts of members and friends of the Stonycreek Quemahoning Initiative (SQI) and SCRIP. This annual recognition by DCNR, with the assistance of POWR (PA Organization of Watersheds and Rivers), helps raise awareness about the importance of rivers, their conservation needs and their recreational and economic impact on watershed communities. It also brings with it a \$10,000 grant to support events that celebrate the river; events that must include a 1-2 day Sojourn. If you have not voted yet, please do so at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9YM8TSK>. (It only takes a minute!) The winner is chosen by popular vote, so urge your family and friends to do the same. Voting ends January 3. **Let's give the Stony the recognition it deserves by making it the Number One Pick!**

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) More Fish Partnership Grant *by Gary Smith*

In 2008, the Cambria and Somerset Counties Conservancy(CSCC) / Cambria Somerset Authority (CSA) was awarded a \$24,400 grant from NFWF's *More Fish Partnership Fund* to enhance fish habitat at three of its water supply reservoirs: Quemahoning, Hinckston Run, and Wilmore. Project partners included PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC), Somerset Conservation District, Cambria County Conservation District, conservation and sportsmen groups such as Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project, Mountain Laurel Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Jenners Rod & Gun Club, Wilmore Sportsmen Club, Greater Johnstown Sportsmen Club, Laurel Run Rod & Gun Club, Dunlo Rod & Gun Club and interested citizens. The \$109,100 project consisted of the \$24,400 NFWF grant, \$18,500 cash match and \$66,200 in-kind match from project partners. The NFWF funds were used to design, construct, and install artificial habitat structures that will benefit black bass (largemouth and smallmouth bass) and other fish species in the three reservoirs.

Installation of Habitat Structures

In 2008 and 2009, 13 work days were used to construct and place 517 habitat structures in Quemahoning, Hinckston, and Wilmore Reservoirs. A total of 27 acres were enhanced with the 517 habitat structures in the three reservoirs. Results of the project are as follows:

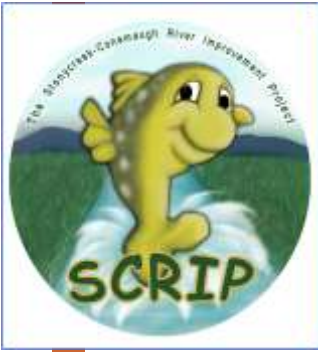
Quemahoning Reservoir		60 Tons Rock Rubble Humps
		22 Porcupine Cribs
		<u>100 Short Vertical Plank Structures</u>
	Total =	182 Habitat Structures
Hinckston Run Reservoir		40 Tons Rock Rubble Humps
		20 Porcupine Cribs
		100 Short Vertical Plank Structures
		<u>8 Felled Shoreline Trees</u>
	Total =	168 Habitat Structures
Wilmore Dam		40 Tons Rock Rubble Humps
		20 Porcupine Cribs
		100 Short Vertical Plank Structures
		<u>7 Felled Shoreline Trees</u>
	Total =	167 Habitat Structures
Total in all three reservoirs		517 Habitat Structures

Fish Monitoring

PFBC Division of Habitat Management staff conducted fish surveys prior to and after the implementation of the habitat project using nighttime boat electrofishing. Shallow water areas enhanced with short vertical plank structures (“shorties”) and control areas (no habitat enhancement) were surveyed in June 2009 and June 2010. The areas sampled in 2009 and 2010 were at the same locations. Deep water areas enhanced by habitat structures were not surveyed due to boat electrofishing gear limitations. Quemahoning Reservoir was the only reservoir to receive both shallow water and deep water habitat structures. Hinckston Run and Wilmore Reservoirs only received deep water habitat structures. Therefore, the PFBC conducted their fish survey only at the Quemahoning Reservoir.

The black bass catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE), which is the number of fish collected per hour of electrofishing, increased dramatically in the treatment areas (“shorties”) after the shorties were placed in the treatment area but decreased in the control areas (Figure 1). Black bass total CPUE in the treatment areas almost doubled from 63 bass/hr to 116/hr. Black bass total CPUE in the control areas declined from 90/hr to 68/hr. The CPUE of bass ≥ 12 inches and ≥ 15 inches also improved after the shorties were placed in the treatment area, while quality size black bass CPUEs decreased in the control areas. Based upon the initial findings, the short vertical plank structures improved the black bass relative abundance in the treatment area. Panfish also used the short vertical plank structures. Monitoring of the habitat enhancement project will continue in the future.

*Gary Smith is the Regional Habitat Biologist for the PA Fish and Boat Commission.*



The Southern Alleghenies Conservancy  
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**www.scrippa.org**

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.

People of SCRIP

Board of Directors:

**Len Lichvar,**  
*Chairman*  
**Joe Gorden,**  
*Vice-Chairman*  
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*Secretary*  
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**Kristin Sewak**  
**Dave Steele**  
**Bill Strosnider**  
**John Varner**

New and Renewing Members

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 Ken Fetterman  
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 David Fink  
 William Glosser  
 Brad Goldblatt  
 Ken and Rita Halverson  
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 Melissa Reckner Family  
 E. Gary and Susan Scott  
 Slovenian Savings and Loan Assoc.  
 Somerset Trust Company  
 David and Maria Steele  
 David Sutor  
 John and Janet Vatavuk

Join or renew SCRIP today!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

___ Student	\$6
___ Individual	\$15
___ Family	\$20
___ Club/Small Business	\$50
___ Patron	\$50
___ Sustaining	\$100
___ Sponsor	\$500
___ Advocate	\$1000

Make your check payable to SCRIP, or for a tax-deductible contribution, make the check to Southern Alleghenies Conservancy/ SCRIP. Send donations to:  
 SCRIP  
 P.O. Box 164  
 Windber, PA 15963