



Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project Make Use of Our Rivers

Volume XVIII
Number 4
Fall 2011

Save the Date:

Dec. 16– SCRIP Board Meeting at Big Dogz, 1750 Bedford Street, Johnstown, 11am

Dec. 16-Western PA Conservancy & Dominion Resources Watershed Mini Grant Proposals due

Jan. 13– SCRIP Board Meeting at Gander Mountain in Richland, 9 am

Feb. 24 & 25– Keystone Coldwater Conference– Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in State College.

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Local Groups are Winners at Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration



Photo by Austin Russell

The Upper Conemaugh River Watershed was well represented at the 10th Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration held September 22 in Pittsburgh. This networking opportunity allowed many watershed, conservation, and otherwise "green" groups to meet, mingle, strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones.

Winners at the Ohio River Watershed Celebration are : (pictured left to right:) Jim Eckenrode, Melissa Reckner and Larry Hutchinson..

At this event, SCRIP was awarded second place in the Best Partnership Effort! This award included a \$250 cash prize. Special thanks to SCRIP board members Jim Eckenrode for staffing the display and Melissa Reckner for creating it.

The Shade Creek Watershed Association went home with first place in the Best Display category and the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team won first place in the Community Education and Outreach category. First place awards included a \$500 cash prize!

Congratulations to these groups! Keep up the great work!

Vote For the Stony as River of the Year! by Mike Quinn

Many of you may recall that the Stonycreek River was within just a few votes of winning Pennsylvania's 2011 River of the Year competition, which was won by the mighty Delaware River.

Fortunately, the Stony has again been nominated for 2012. So, we are again asking for your assistance in going online to vote for the Stony. There are two possible voting links... <http://pawatersheds.org/vote/> and http://www.facebook.com/PAwatersheds?sk=app_127709503932081 (note: you must be logged into Facebook to view the second page).

Tremendous advances have been made by SCRIP and other groups in cleaning up this once-dead river. Today, it supports 22 species of fish and plans are underway to remediate even more sections of the river from the legacy of abandoned mine drainage. And of course you know how the remediated river now supports recreation...Stonycreek Whitewater Park and the Quemahoning White-water Release Project that will experience its inaugural year starting in April 2012.

The prize for winning the honor as River of the Year is \$10,000, which will be spent to celebrate the accomplishments of the Stony's revitalization and to increase opportunities for river stewardship. Thanks very much!

Mike Quinn is Facilitator of the Stonycreek Quemahoning Initiative

Would You Prefer Electronic Delivery of Your SCRIP Newsletter ?



The SCRIP board is considering giving members the option of receiving their newsletter by email, either as a link or in PDF form. If you would prefer this method over regular mail delivery, then send an email to SCRIP's secretary at mreckner@kcstreamteam.org. Please include your name and mailing address. Thank you.

Dam Removal Suggestions Needed



At the last SCRIP meeting in November, Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy, the Associate Director for River Restoration in the Western Pennsylvania Field Office of *American Rivers*, gave a powerpoint presentation to the board about the group's work in protecting critical watersheds and the benefits that removal of obsolete or unsafe dams can have.

Because it is highly impacted, they have a special interest in the Conemaugh River Watershed. Ms. Hollingsworth-Segedy did share a list of potential dam removal projects in the watershed but would welcome any additional suggestions.

Some funding is already available and additional fundraising can be done for worthwhile projects.

If you have any suggestions, *American Rivers* would appreciate your input. You can contact Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy at: 412-727-6130 or lh-segedy@americanrivers.org

Adopt a Monitoring Point *by Melissa Reckner*



Did you know that over \$10 million of largely public dollars have been invested in Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) treatment systems just within this region? These treatment systems are restoring dozens of stream miles, allowing a diverse aquatic community to survive in waters that once ran orange from years of pollution, enhancing the quality of life in the Pennsylvania Alleghenies, and supporting an economy focused on natural resources and eco-tourism. The Stonycreek River is a prime example!

To protect the work done to date and assist with further restoration efforts, the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy is asking you to "adopt" one or more water quality monitoring points. Its Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team, which consists of a dedicated corps of volunteers, works with local watershed groups and others to collect valuable data that are used to design and evaluate AMD treatment systems and assess waterways throughout the region.

Your "adoption," or sponsorship, of strategically placed monitoring points will allow the Stream Team's work to continue in 2012. For \$100.00 a site, water samples will be collected monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually, depending on the needs of the groups who are utilizing these data. Adoptions are valid for one calendar year.

Your name or that of a loved one will be listed beside the monitoring point on our website, and you will be recognized in the Stream Team's annual report and at its appreciation picnic in May.

To view a list of adoptable water monitoring sites, please visit the Conservancy's website -

conemaughvalleyconservancy.org/conservation/KCST.html or contact Melissa Reckner, Stream Team Director, at 814-444-2669 or mreckner@kcstreamteam.org.

Then mail your tax-deductible contribution, contact info and the name of the site(s) you wish to sponsor to:

Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Inc.
% Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team
903 Gilda Drive
Windber, PA 15963

The Conservancy will promptly send you a receipt for your records.

Thank you for your anticipated donation and support of clean water!

2011 Somerset Conservation District Watershed Summit Tour

The Stonycreek River was a backdrop for the beginning talk of the 2011 Somerset Conservation District Watershed Summit that was both an informational and celebratory tour of present and future potential SCRIP project locations. The tour was held on Tuesday, October 25, and was sponsored by the Somerset Conservation District with Len Lichvar and Greg Shustrick in charge of planning. It was funded through a Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts Educational Mini Grant and was organized in honor of SCRIP's 20th Anniversary.

At the first stop, Mike Quinn described the Whitewater Park project, the scene of constructed rapids for paddlers as well as a place for tubing or "just hanging out", and stated it was possible because of the remediation of the Stonycreek, led by SCRIP.



Steven Buncich (left), a local supervisor, and Mike Quinn show photos of Whitewater Park project.



Eric Robertson (left), engineer on the project, is introduced by Len Lichvar at the Oven Run site.

Jackie Ritko and Brad Clemenson detailed the plans for a mine pool study to determine the feasibility of using geothermal energy to treat the mine discharge beneath the Inclined Plane, as observed from the Point Stadium, and to use it as an energy source.

Jackie Ritko also gave information on Topper Run in St. Michael, the next stop on the tour, that has long been a major polluter of the Little Conemaugh River. A big source of the problem is a huge refuse pile that sits above the site. A local mining company is awaiting approval of a plan to build a facility to treat the discharge in conjunction with other work in the area.

Oven Run sites D (Oak Trail) and F (Hawk View) located along

Route 403 were the next stops. The Oak Trail site is a series of ponds constructed to treat AMD impacting the Stonycreek River. Though this site has been highly successful in treating the water to date, both Len Lichvar and Eric Robertson, stressed the need for continued vigilance so that the improvements remain.

At the Boswell Passive Treatment Site, Len Lichvar detailed the enlargement and recontouring of an existing wetland to treat AMD water before it entered nearby Quemahoning Creek and the reestablishment of five miles of fishery.

Malcolm Crittenden pointed out the Lion Mining Treatment System Project and recounted its construction and educational use.

A "Green Drinks" event at the Crow's Nest, sponsored by SCRIP followed the tour.



Cambria County Conservation District -South Fork AMD Remediation Project *by Jocelyn Sauter*

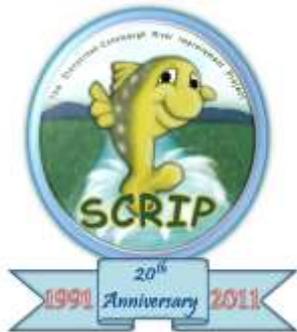
Cambria Township - The South Fork Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) Remediation Project is a collaborative effort of several partners, property owners, state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations. The project focuses on a 4-mile stretch of the Little Conemaugh River from the Lloydale Dam to Beaverdale. The goal of the project is to raise water quality, improve native brook trout fishery, and increase the recreational opportunities of the region.

The Remediation Project was started in 2006 when Joel Kosmac, a local volunteer with the Little Conemaugh Watershed Association (LCWA), started monitoring AMD discharges in the headwaters of the river. In 2007 the DEP Watershed Manager became interested and started working with the LCWA, the Cambria County Conservation District (CCCD), and the Dunlo Rod and Gun Club (DR&GC). CCCD and LCWA received a Growing Greener Grant (\$105,000) to construct several limestone beds and trenches to reduce aluminum in the stream and raise pH levels. The DR&GC received funding for limestone sand dosing.

Aside from the Growing Greener Grant, sources of funding and resources came from the Eastern Brook Trout Venture through the US Fish and Wildlife Service (\$46,000), US Office of Surface Mining through the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy (\$30,000), PA Fish and Boat Commission's installation of fish habitat structures, PACD Somerset Engineering Assistance Program's provision of engineering and design, Hedin Environmental's development of treatment priorities and conceptual recommendations, and Nick Deitle's (a local Forest Hills High School student) design and construction of the watershed signs.

The Conservation District hosted a site dedication on October 19, 2011. We were joined by members of the LCWA, DR&GC, and Beaverdale Conservation Group. Jim Penna, a representative for Congressman Critz, was also in attendance. Jackie Ritko, CCCD Resource Conservation Supervisor, and Malcolm Crittenden, DEP, spoke about the project and its history and led the group in a tour of the treated areas.

Article originally appeared in Cambria County Conservation District Dec./Jan /Feb 2011-2012 newsletter, A View from "The Edge"



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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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People of SCRIP

New and Renewing Members

George & Eve Cook - though George recently passed away.

Gregory Dick Family

David Fink

William Glosser

Bob & Sue Hook

Albert & Carol Meehleib - NEW

Ron Morris - NEW

Jim & Meg Moses

Join or renew* SCRIP today!

Name _____
 Street Address _____
 City _____
 State/Zip _____
 Email _____
 Phone _____

Do you wish to volunteer? _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$6
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/> Club/Small Business	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	\$1000

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:
 SCRIP
 P.O. Box 164
 Windber, PA 15963