

Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project

North Fork of Bens Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan *by Len Lichvar*

Volume XXI
Number 2
Spring 2014

Save the Date:
June 13– SCRIP
board meeting,
Greenhouse Park,
Tire Hill, 9am

June 14– Somerset
Lake Action Com-
mittee Lake Fest

June 16-Habitat im-
provement work day,
Hinckston Dam, 9am

June 17-Habitat im-
provement work day,
Wilmore Dam, 9am
(cont. page 2)

In this Issue:

North Fork Plan
(cont.) 2

Save the Date
(cont.) 2

SCRIP Scholarship 3

New board member
bios 3

People of
SCRIP 4

The North Fork of Bens Creek in Somerset County is a small 12.8 square mile watershed tucked away on the east face of Laurel Mountain. Despite its remoteness is really only a few miles removed for urban centers and possesses some of the finest water quality in the entire region.

The Somerset Conservation District realized that there was never an in depth study of this watershed undertaken. In order to remedy that, the District requested and received a Cold Water Heritage Partnership (CHP) grant to create a Coldwater Conservation Plan for the watershed. The CHP is a partnership of

the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources that focuses on the unimpaired waters in the state in order to create methods to maintain their water quality.

The North Fork encompasses 26 stream miles that ultimately meet the South Fork of Bens Creek to form the mainstem of Bens Creek, an important tributary to the Stonycreek River. Major tributaries to the North Fork are Alwines Creek, Riffle Run and Heckman Hollow. *(cont. page 2)*



Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Area 8 Fisheries Manager Rick Lorson and Somerset Conservation District Watershed Specialist Greg Shustrick electro fish the North Fork of Bens Creek.

Photo by Len Lichvar

AMR Deadline June 23

“**Collaboration is Essential**” is theme of this year’s Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference to be held at the Ramada Inn and Conference Center in State College, PA. The cost is \$40 for members of non-profit conservation organizations and scholarships are available to offset lodging. Registration deadline is June 23. For more information and to register online, go to: <http://www.treatminewater.com>

The watershed also included the North Fork Reservoir owned and operated by the Greater Johnstown Water Authority (GLWA).

The stream above the reservoir has been designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as Exceptional Value (EV) which means they meet the highest water quality standard in the state. Not surprisingly populations of wild trout also inhabit their headwaters.

The lower reaches of the North Fork are designated High Quality Cold-water Fishery and also contain wild trout even as they flow through a golf course and residential areas.

District Watershed Specialist Greg Shustrick, who authored the plan, along with the assistance of the GJWA, PFBC and the Mountain Laurel Chapter of Trout Unlimited gathered extensive data on the watershed.

Sampling of aquatic life indicated a tremendous diverse community of aquatic insects confirming the extremely high quality of water present.

Electro fish surveys, conducted by the PFBC and the District, indicated that the wild trout population has increased over the years providing further evidence of the consistently outstanding water quality.

The Plan also indicated potential threats to the water quality such as sedimentation from unimproved roads, nutrient loading from agriculture lands, manicured lawns, failing septic systems and removal of forest canopy.

To minimize these and other impacts in order to maintain rather than degrade the watershed, the Plan also describes a full allotment of conservation recommendations

that if implemented will secure the water quality of the watershed for the future.

Many of our regions downstream waterways have suffered degradation by man made intrusions. Although much work, money and effort has gone into improving those waterways, those efforts would be compromised if our best upstream water quality is negatively impacted.

The Plan is designed to provide decision makers with the scientific data and information to balance resource conservation against further development pressures in order that economic benefits can be derived from both.

The full Plan is available on the District's web site at www.somersetcd.com.



Save the Date (cont.)

June 26 & 27– AMR conference, Ramada Inn and Conference Center, State College, PA

July 11– Growing Greener grant application deadline

July 18– SCRIP board meeting, Greenhouse Park, Tire Hill, 9am

August 1– Scholarship application deadline

August 13– Quemahoning fish habitat restoration work day, 5pm

August 16– KC Stream Team /Loyalhanna Watershed Association party/fundraiser, Lionier Beach

August 20-PFBC Paddle the Que, evening

SCRIP Welcomes Two New Board Members



Joel Pontorero



Herb Wilson

At the May 12 SCRIP board meeting, two new board members were elected, Joel Pontorero and Herb Wilson. (cont on page 3)

SCRIP \$500 Scholarship

The Stonycreek Conemaugh River Improvement Project will be awarding a \$500 Scholarship to a worthy student for the 2014-2015 academic year. Deadline to submit is August 1, 2014.

Eligibility—Applicant must:

Either be a dues-paying SCRIP member or the child of a SCRIP member

Reside in Cambria or Somerset County

Be at least a college sophomore and in an environmental field of study at a Pennsylvania college or university.

How to Apply:

The application should contain these three parts:

Part I- A cover sheet with the following information: name, mailing address, email address, phone number, college or university attending, year and course of study

Part II- A typed statement, double-spaced, 12 pt font size, no longer than two pages explaining their professional goals, how their course of study will meet those goals and any involvement to date in the field.

Part III- A copy of their latest transcript

Applications must be received by August 1, 2014. Please send to: SCRIP, Scholarship 2014, P.O. Box 164, Windber, PA 15963. Award notification will be no later than August 30, 2014. Award check will be sent directly to the Financial Aid Office at the college or university.

Award recipient will be required to inform SCRIP of his or her personal academic achievements, graduation and future career plans in article form for publication in the SCRIP newsletter. This information will be used to assist with promotion of any future SCRIP scholarship awards.

Any questions about eligibility or other parts of the application should be addressed to SCRIP at: info@ScripPA.org.

SCRIP's New Board Members *(cont. from page 2)*

Joel Pontorero, retired after 30 years with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as District Mining Manager of the Greensburg District Mining Office. He previously served with the Ebensburg District Mining Office for 24 years where he served in various positions as Surface Mine Inspector, Supervisor, and Compliance Manager. He is a member of the Casselman River Watershed Association, Wells Creek Watershed Association, the Somerset County Conservancy and SCRIP. He enjoys fishing and boating in his spare time.

Herb Wilson, a Jackson Township resident and University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown graduate with a BS in Civil Engineering Technology, was a registered professional engineer for nearly 30 years and has been a licensed Pennsylvania well driller in the water and gas well drilling industry all his life.

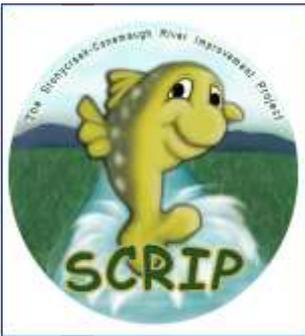
He has worked in private industry as vice-president of Wilson Electric Pumps from 1985 to 1998 and with L. Robert

Kimball and Associates in water and wastewater design and construction for more than four years.

He was Water Treatment Plant Operator and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator for two years at Prince Gallitzin State Park and a Sanitarian and Sewage Planning Specialist with the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for 18 years. He retired from DEP in June 2010. Wilson has designed, constructed and operated water and wastewater facilities all over Pennsylvania and still does storm water and wastewater projects for CPS Surveys, Inc.

He is a member of many civic and professional organizations and holds many professional certifications. He has been a Master Ground Water Contractor with the National Ground Water Association since 1997— one of only 72 people in the world to have this degree.

We welcome the experience and expertise of both of these men!



Southern Alleghenies Conservancy
 SCRIP
 10605 Raystown Road Suite A
 Huntington PA 16652-9603

Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Johnstown, PA
 Permit No. 5

Return Service Requested

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.

Board of Directors:

Len Lichvar,
Chairman
 Joe Gorden,
Vice-Chairman
 Melissa Reckner,
Secretary
 Jim Eckenrode
Treasurer

Larry Hutchinson
 Thurman Kornis
 Karllice Makuchan
 Rob McCombie
 Robb Piper
 Joel Pontorero
 Bob Ritchey
 Bill Strosnider
 John Vatauvuk
 Herb Wilson

People of SCRIP

New and Renewing Members

Richard Burkert
 Fieg Brothers Coal Co.
 William Fink
 William Glosser
 Brad Goldblatt
 Joe Gorden
 John & Rose Gustkey
 Rita & Ken Halverson
 Larry Hutchinson
 Jenner Township Supervisors
 Karllice & Ed Makuchan
 Richard & Connie Mayer
 Rob & Cindy McCombie
 Joel & Linda Pontorero
 E. Lincoln & Barbara
 Van Sichel
 Herb Wilson

Join or renew* SCRIP today!

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

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