

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Next meeting: Wednesday 1/13/1999. Macoskey Center - Harmony House, 247 Harmony Road, SRU, Slippery Rock, PA (see article below). Prior Meeting (12/10/98) attendees: T. Danehy, J. Ankrom, R. Beran, C. Cooper, K. Peart, V. Kefeli

JANUARY MEETING TO BE HELD AT HARMONY HOUSE!!

This month's meeting to be held at the Harmony Homestead on WEDNESDAY January 13 at 7 p.m.!!! Mary Ann King, Assistant to the Dean, College of Health and Human Services at SRU through the effort of Dr. Valentin Kefeli has graciously invited us to have our January meeting at the Homestead (Harmony House). Many of us can't wait to learn about this innovative and unique facility dedicated to the development of sustainable systems!!! The Harmony House is located at the Macoskey Center on Harmony Road on the East side of campus. (Call for directions.) Pop 'n Pizza to be provided.

WORK BEGINS ON HISTORIC CARETAKER'S SHED AT JENNINGS

The day after Thanksgiving saw a group of dedicated Girl Scout volunteers and Charlie Cooper enjoying a work day at the Jennings AMD site. Karen Olexsak and her two children Erica and Phillip along with Karen Duncan and her two girls Danielle and Lisa and fellow Scout Carrie Cabbage enjoyed working on a variety of tasks. They secured the plastic covering to the frame of the Quonset hut preparing it for the winter and hastily constructed a simple fire circle and collected firewood.

Darcy Peart and Davina Butler began the Herculean task of cleaning out the caretaker's shed located on the property. We are planning to replace the roof on the shed so work can continue in inclement weather.

For lunch the group gathered around a campfire and enjoyed a tasty bowl of "stone soup" and a Girl Scout favorite "Polar Bears in an Apple Orchard" for dessert. They also feasted on S'mores and hot chocolate. Everyone brought a can of soup or a vegetable to make the legendary soup.

According to the legend a weary traveler came to a village hoping to find a hot meal. The village however was very poor and had nothing to offer the fellow. So he picked up a small stone and told the villagers he would make them stone soup. He placed the stone in a large pot of water and said the soup would be better if someone had a bid of beef bone to add. An old woman brought a soup bone and added it to the pot. Soon he had the villagers bringing potatoes, celery, carrots, onions, beans, and seasonings to add to the pot. The traveler and the villagers combined their meager supplies and all shared in a delicious feast as did our worthy toilers.

Jarret Peart and Donna Stremmel joined the group after lunch. They consulted with Charlie Cooper on an evaluation of the shed.

December 28, 1998 Jason Hicks, a senior at Slippery Rock High School, Darcy and Kitty Peart and Charlie Cooper were back at the site photographing and sketching the shed and taking down the damaged chimney and removing the remaining rubble. The shed is now ready to move to the design and implementation stage. A really big "THANKS" to all volunteers.

This article was contributed by Kitty Peart whose energy and enthusiasm is helping to "snowball" interest at the Jennings AMD site. The efforts noted above are just a small portion of the work anticipated at Jennings. This work includes restoring the caretaker's shed and the historic one-room school house located at the site.

THANKS TO SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

\$80 of the money donated by the Slippery Rock Watershed Association by William Mathews (mentioned in the Oct. 1998 Catalyst) was used to buy 100 lbs. of grass seed to vegetate portions of the AMD research site at Jennings Environmental Education Center. Some areas have been difficult to revegetate because of the acidic gob underlying much of the site. DCNR donated 750 lbs. each of lime and fertilizer to the effort. On 11/4/98 labor was provided by Kitty and Darcy Peart, Joe Hicks, Charlie Cooper and Girl Scouts and volunteers of Troop 653 led by Debbie Bowser. We doubt that this somewhat less than picturesque seeding effort will be published in Better Homes and Gardens magazine, but some grass is already evident in spite of the late seeding. Thanks to all who helped in trying to get this tough site green!!!!

GIRL SCOUTS, DCMR AND VOLUNTEERS IMPROVE "STEP DOWN" WETLAND AT JENNINGS

Due mostly to the vigorous (and spectacular!) growth in the experimental wetlands (Project 8) installed at Jennings in conjunction with the Vertical Flow System in 8/97, some overtopping of the berm was occurring. To provide additional fill for the wetlands berm (on 11/10/98) Gary Jenkins of the Jennings staff excavated borrow elsewhere at the site, then moved it near to the wetlands with the Jennings dump truck, which promptly became mired in the wet soil. After the electric winch on the truck burnt out, Gary apparently attempted to verbally coax the truck out, but was not successful. As rain threatened, the situation provided a nice psychological stress test for those present. Ray Markle of Jennings joined Charlie Cooper and Gary for 1-2 hours. But after the hand come-a-long also broke, and time was waning, prudence suggested this economical but futile effort be abandoned, and a huge tow truck was called to extract the dump truck. Afterward Joann Clark, Mary Jo Clark, and Kim Christy of Girl Scout Troop 750 with Charlie Cooper began moving the dirt by hand to the wetlands berm, working till dark. The next day (11/11/98), Kitty and Darcy Peart, brought Danielle Duncan of Girl Scout Troop 653 with her younger sister Lisa Duncan who, with Charlie Cooper, finished the fill repair work at the wetlands. Afterward, the girls painted boxes to be used for future experimental work. Whatever these ladies lack in muscle is more than made up with amazing energy and a lot of good cheer!!!

GIRL SCOUTS TO MONITOR ST 64 DISCHARGE

As part of the Erico Bridge and Goff Station Restoration effort, the Girl Scouts are "adopting" the ST 64 discharge. This discharge emanates from deep mine workings near the intersection of Erico Bridge and Goff Station Roads in Venango Township. The discharge flows via a drainage ditch along Erico Road approx. 500 feet and enters Seaton Creek. The Girl Scouts under the direction of Charles Cooper propose to begin a monitoring program in order to assess the feasibility of building a passive treatment system.

STONE EARMARKED FOR THREE RIVERS SPORTSMEN'S CLUB PROJECT

Over 450 tons of limestone aggregate has been committed by Quality Aggregates for a passive treatment system to be installed at the Three Rivers Sportsmen's Club. Thanks to the support of the Knox District Mining Office and Quality Aggregates for helping to facilitate this worthwhile project. The limestone will be used to build a 300-ton Anoxic Limestone Drain which will treat an approximate 15 gpm iron-laden discharge from an abandoned underground mine entry on the Brookville coalbed. This project will help improve the quality of water which enters the fishing ponds at the Club and will also help to restore the most severely polluted major tributary in the headwaters area, Seaton Creek.

THANKS TO QUALITY AGGREGATES INC. FOR AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Quality Aggregates has again generously contributed to the Coalition's efforts by providing the use of a color aerial photograph. The recent photo documents the area around Goff Station and includes a number of project sites including the Three Rivers Sportsmen Club, the ST 64 discharge, Erico Bridge Gob piles, the Tiche Abandoned Mine Reclamation Site, and the Goff Station Restoration Area. This photo will be extremely helpful in the design and implementation of these many projects being developed by participants in the Coalition.

Thanks to the Slippery Rock Watershed Association for their support.

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For more info. contact: Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition, c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated (PA non-profit), 338 Glen Eden Road, Rochester PA 15074, (724)774-2813, fax (724)774-1219