

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday September 11th at 7pm Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop will be provided. 8/14/03 Attendance: J. Belgredan, F. Brenner, C. Cooper, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, V. Kefeli, B. MacDonald, W. Taylor, J. Uytenbogaart

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Fun in the Mud!

A special thank you to this sizable group of teenagers and chaperones who volunteered at the Erico Bridge treatment wetlands on July 26 as part of a Youth Conference for the North State of the Pittsburgh Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (SEE ARTICLE BELOW)

What's New at Erico Bridge

Things are looking a lot greener at the **Erico Bridge Restoration Project**, due to the planting efforts of two special groups. One of these groups, **Butler County Juvenile Court Services (BCJCS)**, has been teaming with the SRWC for three years now, while the other, **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**, is new to the planting game. Each Tuesday throughout the summer, **BCJCS officers Sue McConnell, Bridgette Gigliotti, Mike Deal, Brenda Alter, Jody Mersher**, and as many as ten youth fulfilling their required community service hours have been at the project to help **Maggie Allio, Holly Martinchek, and Greg Holloway from Aquascape Wetland and Environmental Services** vegetate the treatment wet-



lands. It is a great community service project because it teaches the youth about the environment, and it is bettering watershed. Many of the students live near or along the Slippery Rock Creek and thus appreciate the connection to bettering the water quality near their homes. BCJCS recognized Aquascape's commitment to community service and presented them with the **William DiLuccio Award**.

Despite all of the excellent work of the BCJCS, the Erico Bridge treatment wetlands were still looking more brown than green until Saturday, July 26. On this day, as part of a Youth Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, approximately 125 enthusiastic teenagers and their chaperones descended on the project and transformed

the wetland in a flurry of planting activity. In addition to losing shoes and getting stuck in the mud, they planted about 200 buckets of Pickerel weed and Softstem bulrush, 15 buckets of rice-cut grass, live cuttings from 10 willow wattles, and over 50 buckets of local transplants from the adjacent wetland. Some avoided the water and mud by helping install bluebird boxes in the area. Most ended up very muddy, and all seemed to have fun planting in the wetlands! To volunteer for wetland plantings or bluebird box monitoring (important for the success of nesting birds), contact Aquascape at (724) 458-6610.

Teacher Workshops at Jennings Environmental Education Center

What was it like to be a coal miner in the early 1900's? How is coal extracted today? How does abandoned mine drainage form and why is it such a problem? On March 29, May 3, and May 24, 2003, twenty-two teachers from area school districts discovered the answers to these questions and much more by participating in an educational workshop designed by the **Jennings Environmental Education Center**.

Through innovative hands-on activities, interpretive presentations, and field trips, teachers were not only introduced to a wealth of information, they also discovered how to incorporate this information into their classrooms and address the PA Dept. of Education's academic standards for Environment and Ecology. Some of the activities enjoyed by the teachers included "Cookie Mining" where the financial complications of operating a coal mine are introduced by way of Chips Ahoy; "Mystery Minerals" where mystery samples of minerals were identified during an introduction to geology; and "Construct Your Own Passive Treatment System", an activity developed by **Stream Restoration, Inc.** that provides participants the opportunity to design and construct a simulated passive treatment system.

There were field trips to the **Quality Aggregates Limestone Quarry, Tour-Ed Mine & Museum, and Erico Bridge Restoration Project**. Partial funding of this program was through the **DEP Environmental Education Grants Program**. Special thanks to **Tim Danehy** and **Chris and Deanna Treter** from **Stream Restoration** for helping instructors **Will Taylor, Mary Jo Shreffler, Miranda Crotsley, and Eric Best**.



Hooray for herps! On August 6 and 7, Jennings hosted a very popular teacher workshop focusing on reptiles and amphibians. There were twenty-five participants in all: 19 teachers, 4 state park employees, and 2 volunteers from the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Thanks to instructors **Will Taylor** of **Jennings** and **Keith Edwards** and **Laurel Garlicki** of the **Fish and Boat Commission** for leading this interesting and fun workshop!

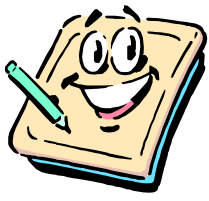
Through enjoyable hands-on indoor and outdoor activities, participants learned about herp habitats and range, how to identify area reptiles and amphibians, snake locomotion, and much more. No doubt the highlight of the two-day workshop was going on an outdoor "Herp Hunt" to search for reptiles and amphibians! Species which were found include the ring neck snake, garter snake, American toad, wood frog, spring peeper, red back salamander, and Jefferson's salamander! And thanks to Jennings' very own "crocodile hunter", **Dave Johnson**, participants were able to see up-close a venomous snake that is also an endangered species: the



the Massasauga rattlesnake! The snake was a four-year old pregnant female. Dave gave a very enlightening talk on the three venomous snakes native to PA (E. massasauga, N. copperhead, and timber rattler). It was interesting to learn the female massasauga caught by Dave doesn't eat while pregnant (varying slightly from the normal behavior of the typical pregnant human!)

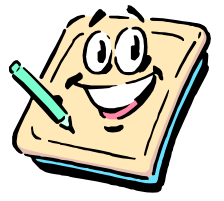
He's the "Trash Man"

Cliff Denholm of the **SRWC** was a one-man trash-picking machine on Friday August 15th! We applaud his solo effort in 90-degree heat and high humidity as he dutifully picked up trash along our stretch of I-79 (between mile marker 100 and 101) At least he had all of the sandwiches to himself! Our next trash pick-up day is scheduled for October 17 and we hope you can come out and join us in our effort to make our little stretch of highway as clean as it can be. We will meet at the "park 'n ride" off exit 99 (west on US 422) at noon for a free quick lunch. Safety vests and gloves will be provided. If you would like more information please call Melissa Busler at 724-776-0161.



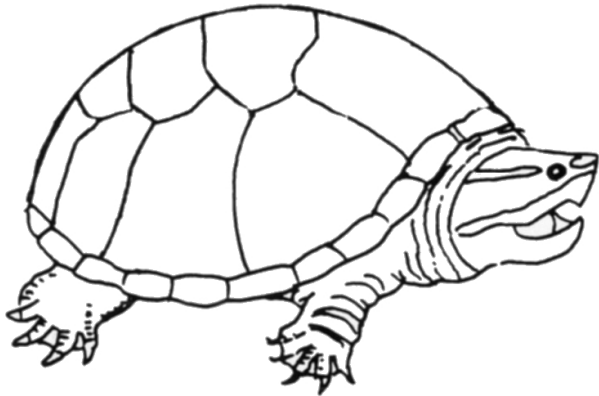
The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY

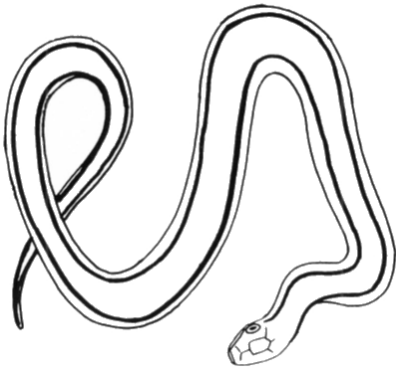


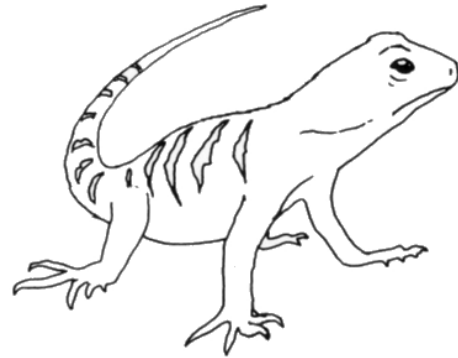
Herp Coloring Activity

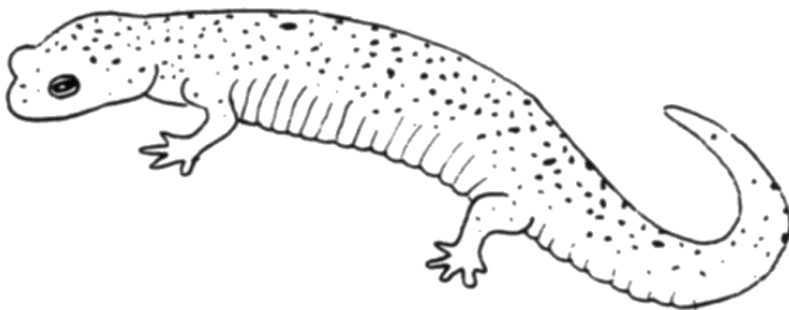
The word "herp" refers to reptiles and amphibians, and includes creatures like snakes, lizards, turtles, salamanders, frogs, and toads. Below is a picture of each of these types of herps. Write the name of the herp kind in each box, color in the picture, and return your coloring to us for a free gift certificate!

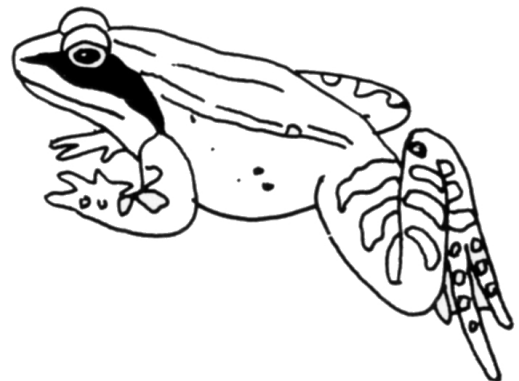












Name _____ Age _____

Address _____



Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
3016 Unionville Road
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

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Highlighting Other Partnership Efforts (HOPE!)

Mercer County Conservation District



This month we pay tribute to our neighbors, the good folks of the **Mercer County Conservation District (MCCD)**. In 1999, the **MCCD** was awarded grant money which was used to sponsor the **Fox Run Watershed AMD Survey** in Mercer County. This project, which has been successfully completed, involved a survey of the Fox Run Watershed to identify the impact of historic mining activities on the water quality. Discharges existing on previously mined land were located and inventoried, with their physical and chemical attributes and effects quantified. Based on this initial assessment, **Stream Restoration, Inc.** is partnering with the **MCCD** to address one of the major discharges on Fox Run. Located along Route 62, the site is clearly visible from the road. Participants in this part-

nership are hoping for community support and involvement with the project. **Dr. Fred Brenner**, board member of the district and professor at **Grove City College**, and several students from **Grove City College** are already involved in the work, and educational outreach events are being planned. We are enjoying working with the **MCCD** on this project, and would like to acknowledge the good work of **Jim Mondock, District Manager, Shawn Hedgelin, Nutrient Manager Specialist, Jill Shankel, Watershed Specialist, and Bob McDonald, Technician**. If you would like to get involved with us in this project, please contact Shaun Busler at (724) 776-0161.

The 2nd Annual Ohio River Watershed Cruise

We hope you have registered and will be joining us in our celebration of the Ohio River Watershed for the 2nd Annual Riverboat Cruise! Remember to come early on Sept. 17 to enjoy the pre-cruise activities which begin at 10:00 a.m. Thank you to all of the cruise partners and sponsors to date; we will be acknowledging all partners and sponsors in a comprehensive list in next month's issue of The Catalyst.