

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday August 12 at 7pm Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop will be provided. 7/8/04 Meeting Attendance: S. Busler, C. Cooper, T. Danehy, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, D. Johnson, V. Kefeli

BC19/19B: A New Beginning for Blacks Creek

For nearly a century Blacks Creek has flowed red-orange with iron from the many sites where coal was extracted. According to a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Report for the Blacks Creek Watershed by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (Knox), all impairments related to high levels of metals were caused by abandoned mine drainage. A total of 7 discharges were documented to contribute to these elevated levels of metals.

In June 2004, the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition began construction of its newest passive treatment system and is the first to be built in the 7-square mile Blacks Creek Watershed. This system will consist of an aerobic wetland that will treat two discharges. The alkaline, iron discharges, known as BC19 and BC19B, flow from abandoned oil wells creating large iron plumes in Blacks Creek. The wetland will help oxidize and settle the iron solids before entering Blacks Creek.

Thanks to **John Stoops, Mike Colossimo, and Wayne Fuchs of Quality Aggregates, Inc.** for all their hard work in constructing the wetland in less than ideal site conditions! To date, the site has been lowered to the approximate bottom elevation of the wetland basin and the outside berm next to Blacks Creek is nearly complete. This project would not be possible without the support of **PA DEP's Growing Greener Program, Butler County Commissioners, Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program,** and in-kind contributions from project partners.



Join Us on the 3rd Annual Riverboat Cruise!!!

Next month is the **3rd Annual Ohio Watershed Riverboat Cruise**, and we want **you** to be a part of the fun! Please join us for a **free** voyage on the Ohio River **September 16** aboard the Gateway Clipper Fleet's magnificent Majestic. Over 425 participated in this great event last fall and we know this year's cruise will be just as fun! Join watershed groups, professionals, local and state government officials, private business, industry, educators, and all those interested in learning more about the Ohio River Watershed. Pre-cruise festivities will begin at 11:00 AM, and boarding starts at 12:30 PM at Station Square in Pittsburgh. We will sail the Ohio from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM. A guided narration including points of interest that we pass along the Ohio, a trip through a lock and dam, interesting presentations, networking opportunities, poster displays, free snacks, and great door prizes await you! Topics to be presented and discussed include the history of Neville Island, river ecology, the workings of a lock and dam, water wells, sediment control, the new water resources law, and more! Hopefully we can duplicate the perfect weather we enjoyed last year! **UPDATE!!! A producer of PBS documentaries has just asked if he could film some of the festivities for his latest project!!!**

If your group would like to bring a poster display, limited space is available at no cost on a first-come first-serve basis. For additional information or to register for the cruise, visit www.streamrestorationinc.org/rsvp or call Margaret Dunn at 724-776-0161 or Maggie Hall at 412-442-4000. We hope to see you there!!



Have you ever wondered how The Catalyst gets done? Here is the mastermind behind your monthly update newsletter on the happenings of the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition! Look for next month's special feature: an article on Gerber rice cereal vs. sweet potatoes! (Pictured here is Isaac Busler, 7 months old, son of the SRWC's Melissa Busler, who helps Isaac just a little with The Catalyst).

It Was a 'Diverse' Workshop at Jennings

The diversity of life on this planet is astounding and vitally important to the health of the environment. Yet, biodiversity at all levels—genetic, species, and ecosystem—is a current issue that few understand. On June 23 at **Jennings Environmental Education Center**, twenty-three local educators had the opportunity to explore Pennsylvania's biodiversity by participating in hands-on activities that investigated the concepts of biodiversity and examined local and global issues related to biodiversity. **Theresa Alberici, Pennsylvania Game Commission**, and **Terri Kromel, Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks**, unveiled a brand new teacher resource entitled Window on the Wild: Biodiversity Basics, A Pennsylvania Supplement. This informative activity guide is designed to be a local supplement to the World Wildlife Fund's national curriculum. Teachers received both publications. Excited teachers were amazed at the wealth of information found in this valuable new resource and everyone had fun participating in the creative, educational, and entertaining activities. "It's in the Genes", "Creature Connection", "Pennsylvania Biodiversity I.Q." and "The Case of the Endangered Species" are the titles of just a few activities the teachers got to experience. A tour of the unique Jennings prairie and an introduction to the resident endangered species, the Massasauga rattlesnake, were also provided. This workshop will be offered throughout the state this summer. For more information about how to attend, please contact Theresa Alberici at talberici@state.pa.us.

Diverse Experiences for an Intern



This week a new intern from **Quality Aggregates Inc.** has graced us with her presence. Her name is **Maggie Tilson** and she travels all the way from sunny and beautiful Neville Island to learn more about stream restoration. She will be helping out in the office and observing some field work. While not interning, Maggie attends the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where she is currently in her Sophomore year studying biology. Although her passion is mainly medicine, Maggie attended a Duke summer camp at which she learned to love ecology and geology as well. For the remainder of the summer, Maggie will continue to intern for Quality Aggregates and Aquascape. So far this summer, she has helped plant a wetland and maintain the nursery for Aquascape. These past few months have been a tremendous learning experience for Maggie; participating in everything from the business aspect of a company to the manual labor involved in making a company a success, she now has skills and memories that will come in handy in the future.



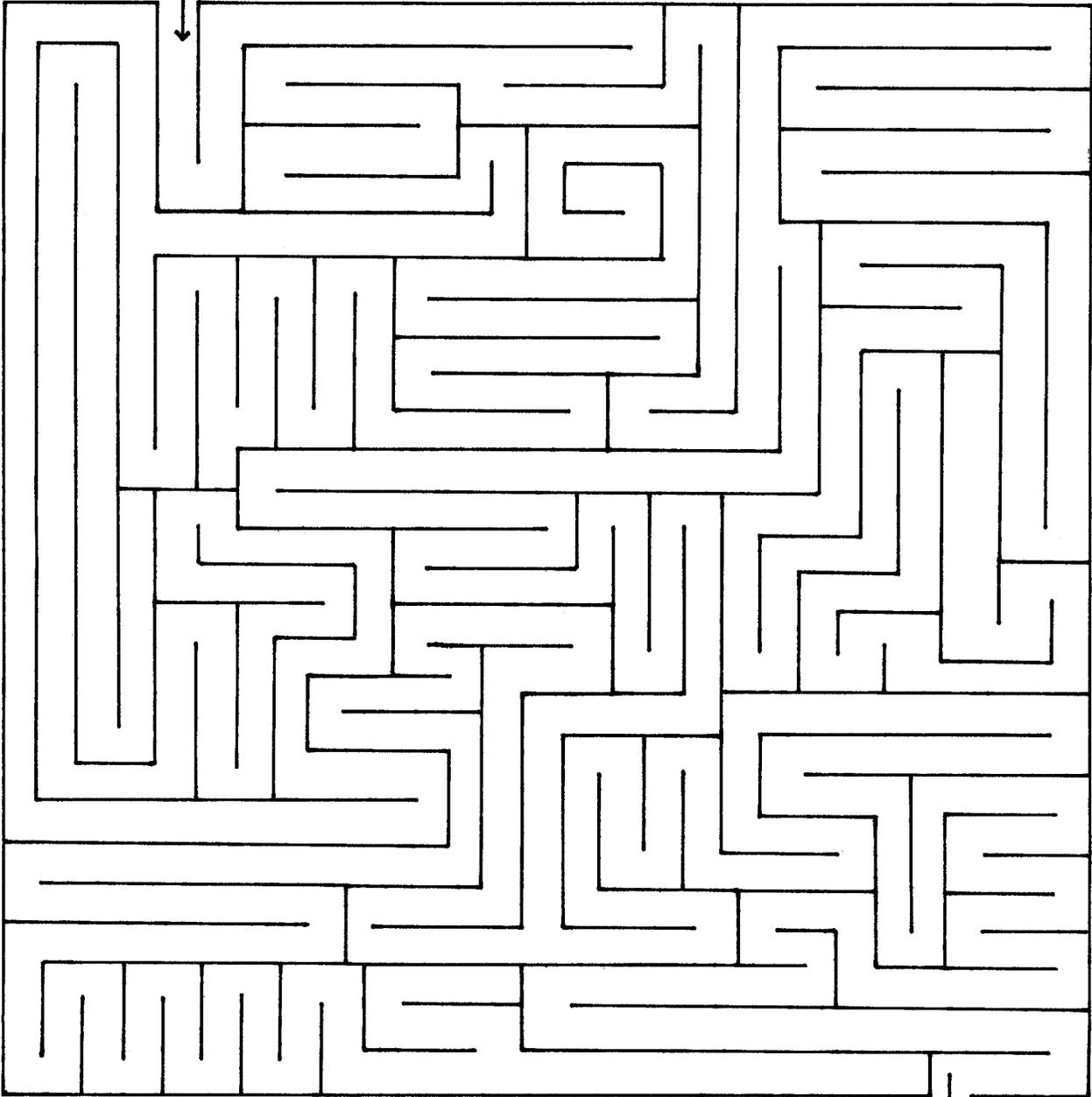
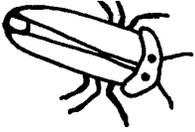
The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY

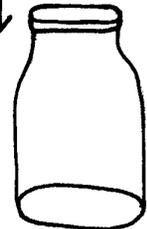


Mighty Maze

Have you noticed lots of fireflies at night this summer? Did you know the firefly is the official state insect of PA? "Bioluminescence" is the scientific word that describes how these insects produce light to glow—a chemical reaction is taking place. Fireflies give off light to warn predators to stay away and also to attract other fireflies of the opposite sex by flashing certain patterns of light like a signal. It's fun to try to catch fireflies and watch them glow. In the maze below, see if you can get the firefly into the jar! Send us your paper and we'll mail you a free gift certificate! Good luck!



Name: _____ Age: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____





Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
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Highlighting Other Partnership Efforts (HOPE!) Wetland Planting in the Aultmans Run Watershed



On the cool, overcast Saturday of July 17, **Bob Beran** and **Maggie Allio** of **Beran Environmental Services** and **Shaun Busler** of **Stream Restoration Incorporated** met with about a half dozen volunteers at the SR286 Passive Treatment System in Center Township, Indiana County, to plant an aerobic wetland. The volunteers, from the **Aultman Watershed Association for Restoring the Environment (AWARE)**, diligently worked for four hours planting hundreds of plants and reconfiguring a portion of the wetland. **Thanks to Brian Okey, Michael Poage, Carol Cummins, Carl Trout, and Harry Charles of AWARE** for making a difference in their watershed! Only native species were planted including: smart weed, three-way sedge, spatterdock, and burreed. The work on the 17th helped to quickly es-

tablish plant growth, which helps to treat the water that has been severely degraded due to an abandoned mine. In addition, the volunteers added new species of plants to those that had naturally established themselves within the wetland to create diversity.

The area was mined extensively for coal by R & P in the early 1900s. The discharge, a gravity drain from an abandoned underground mine, is conveyed by a clay pipe from the mine under S.R. 286. The discharge was then conveyed by a ditch to Aultman Run. With numerous partners, the ditch was expanded into a large aerobic wetland from mid-December 2003 through January 2004. Data gathered from the last sampling event, June 10, indicated the wetland is indeed performing as hoped. The raw mine water contained 13.8 mg/L dissolved iron, while the treated water contained only 1.6 mg/L dissolved iron.

It is encouraging to see the beautiful wetland emerging at this very fertile site! Thank you AWARE volunteers for your help in creating a habitat sure to be utilized by many types of wildlife! **Matt Beran**, age 9, also attended the event and verified that wildlife was indeed using the wetland already. He caught one of the numerous toads hopping around the vegetation. If you are interested in joining AWARE or volunteering with future projects such as this one, please contact Brian Okey of AWARE at (724) 357-3766 or Shaun Busler of Stream Restoration Inc. at (724) 776-0161.