

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday 12/14/06 at 7 pm at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 11/9/06 Meeting Attendance: H. Boylan, M. Bugel, S. Busler, K. Conley, C. Cooper, C. Criss, C. Croushore, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, K. Durrett, J. Elliot, F. Fuanko, M. Gorko, T. Grote, D. Johnson, V. Kefeli, G. Kefeli, B. Myers, A. Olphin, D. Smith, J. Steele, M. Taylor, A. Thomas, S. VanDerWal, D. VanGorder

GIS Day in Harrisburg

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania celebrated International Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Day on Wednesday, November 15 in the East and Main Wing Capitol Rotundas in Harrisburg. The theme for PA GIS Day 2006 was "GIS: More Than Maps". Participants celebrated another successful year of GIS application and increased awareness of important GIS technologies. GIS and electronic mapping have many uses, including public safety and emergency management, homeland security, crime mapping, conservation and land management, improvements in the delivery of health and human services, facilitation of economic development, and much more. Pennsylvania's GIS Day activities promote Geospatial Technologies (GT) literacy in government, schools, communities, and organizations, with a focus on education and awareness. It was exciting to see students at GIS Day learning from the great variety of organizations present with educational displays! Some of the organizations present included: Department of Environmental Protection, Fish and Boat Commission, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Game Commission, Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA), and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Shaun Busler, GISP from Stream Restoration Inc., was on-hand with a poster display featuring information on GIS use in "**Datashed**" and the SRWC. Datashed is a GIS-enabled online database, being developed by **Stream Restoration Inc., Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, and Peter Drake of 241 Computer Systems**, which currently stores water quality data for treatment systems remediating abandoned mine drainage. The project data can be viewed at www.datashed.org, a site which features an online database, interactive GIS map, the ability to easily download important documents and upload field data, printable monitoring reports, statistical evaluations of data, dynamically-created graphs, and more. Watch for more updates on the progress of Datashed in the future.

For more information on PA GIS Day, please visit www.gis.state.pa.us



**GIS
Day
2006**

**"More
Than
Maps!"**



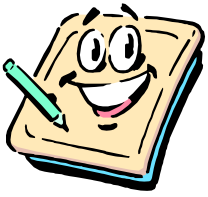


Students from Westminster College presented on the water quality analysis of several passive treatment systems in the watershed at the November SRWC meeting on 11/9/06. More next month...

Green Tourism in Slippery Rock

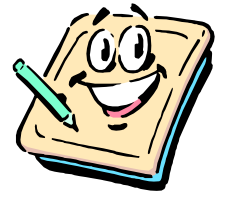
It's all about the idea of bringing visitors to the region while preserving the environment. "Green tourism" was the focus of a meeting, whose attendees included folks from the **Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition** and **Jennings Environmental Education Center**. About 30 individuals took part in a meeting hosted by the **North Country Brewing Company**. **Donielle Andrus** from the **Butler County Planning Commission** told meeting participants about a scenic byway she is trying to establish in the Slippery Rock area. Several members of the **Butler County Chapter of the North Country Trail Association** were in attendance. The North Country National Scenic Trail stretches from Crown Point in eastern New York state to Lake Sakakawea in western North Dakota. Built and maintained primarily by volunteers of the North Country Trail Association, its planned route of 4,625 miles will make it the longest of the country's eight National Scenic Trails. The North Country Trail in PA runs from the Allegheny National Forest southwest to the border with Ohio. In western PA, the North Country Trail begins at Moraine State Park in Butler County and continues through the **Jennings Environmental Education Center AMD Demonstration Area** to the Old Stone House on PA State Route 8 before jumping to Pleasant Valley Road. Hikers in attendance at the "green tourism" meeting expressed concern about the lack of trail between the Old Stone House and Slippery Rock. SRU recently received a \$600,000 grant to build sidewalks for students in an area of campus-town which will soon feature new apartments. A link between those sidewalks and the North Country Trail was discussed at the meeting and met with great excitement! It would enable hikers to visit towns to buy necessities or use services such as hotels or restaurants. From a business/economic standpoint, **Bob McCafferty**, owner of North Country Brewing, realizes the benefits of green tourism. He stressed its importance for opening an avenue for an attractive business district in Slippery Rock and for a more appealing attraction for people considering residing in the area. Federal or state funding to help make this dream a reality may soon be pursued.

For those *Catalyst* readers living in or near western PA, one of the best 10 miles of North Country Trail in western Pennsylvania is located northeast of Butler between Route 308 and Route 38 where Branchton Road splits Pennsylvania Gamelands #95. Hikers can see the Glades Water Fowl area near Moniteau High School and possibly see eagles! This portion of the trail takes hikers through a Propagation Area featuring a beautiful lake, with part of this section of trail built by Moniteau High School students. There is plenty of beautiful scenery along sections of this trail, huge boulders from many years ago, and a mine reclamation area that the **SRWC and Pennsylvania Game Commission** has worked on restoring. The trail here follows a hundred-year-old railroad bed, and hikers can also view an area with over 200 feet of puncheon, because of the beaver activity. Hikers can also enjoy seeing beaver dams and crossing over two beautiful hiking bridges built by the volunteers of the North Country Trail Association. **Kyle Durrett** of the SRWC, an avid hiker, is anxious to see even more improvements and growth to the NCT, and expressed delight at the growing interest.

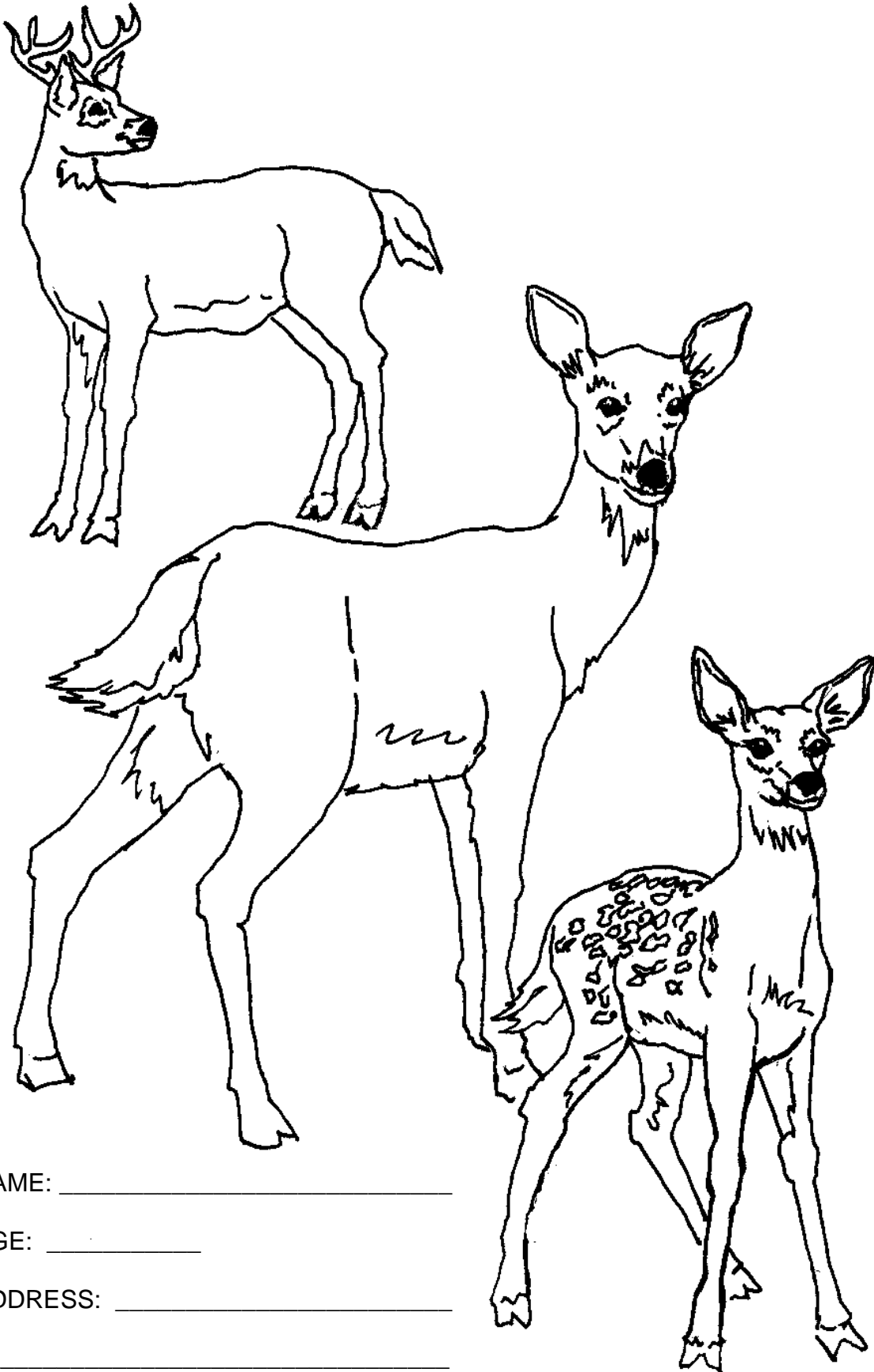


The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



White-Tailed Deer Coloring Page



As winter gets closer, you may have noticed fewer animals around your backyard and in your neighborhood. Some animals migrate for the winter, others hibernate, and others stick around and “tough it out.” In Pennsylvania, there are some animals we are used to seeing outside even when it is cold and snowy, like the white-tailed deer. In spring and summer, deer eat green plants. In fall and winter they switch to acorns and other nuts, twigs, and buds. As you color this month’s picture of a buck, doe, and fawn, you can draw in a winter scene or the food the deer like to eat in the winter months! Well-nourished female deer normally have 2 or 3 fawns (twins or triplets!) every year. It is hard to believe the white-tailed deer had almost disappeared in western PA by the year 1900! They are now a very common sight. Keep an eye out for them this winter—they have been known to help themselves to what’s in the birdfeeder! If you mail us your picture we will send you a free gift certificate—and maybe even publish your picture in a future issue of the *Catalyst*!!!

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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A New Book by the SRWC's Dr. Kefeli!!!

The Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition's soil scientist, **Dr. Valentin Kefeli**, has had another excellent book published! The chief editors of the book "**Sustainability and Regeneration of Ecological Systems in Western Pennsylvania, USA: Research and Efforts**", Dr. Kefeli and **C. Leininger**, are passionate about efforts to achieve sustainability in the ecosphere whenever possible. Also contributing to Dr. Kefeli's new book were those who served on the editorial council: **M. Dunn, D. Johnson, V. Hartkopf, and M. Kalevitch**. Publication of the book came with support from **Carnegie Mellon University's Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research (SEER)**. SEER embodies Carnegie Mellon's commitment to make a difference in the way the world thinks with respect to energy and the environment. At Carnegie Mellon, over 50 researchers in 7 colleges research timely and forward-thinking environmental issues. Important research products range from analysis and technical solutions to powerful decision-making tools. Dr. Kefeli shares CMU's spirit of recognizing and embracing the merits of collaborative research, as is reflected in his new book. It is a result from the cooperation of and research from specialists from the **SRWC, Slippery Rock University, Robert Morris University, CMU, and Jennings Environmental Education Center**.

In his "Sustainability and Regeneration of Ecological Systems" book, Dr. Kefeli examines how humans impact the natural cycles of Earth's ecosystem and proposes strategies for developing sustainable alternative technologies to protect the ecosystem from further degradation. He presents discoveries and proposals from the authors' research focusing on ways to protect biodiversity and the normal succession of biological species from such harmful processes as desertification, pollution of air and water, soil loss, ozone hole expansion, etc. His ideas are founded on the philosophy of sustainable development to be applied to such realms as energy production, education, water purification and recycling, agriculture, fabricated soil production, preserving and propagating wild flora, and more.

Biologists, soil scientists, ecologists, agronomists, architects, and college students and educators will find this book particularly interesting! Dr. Kefeli's exciting and innovative ideas, based on the processes of ecosystem regeneration, provide us with hope for a future filled with eco-technologies to integrate sustainable systems in many aspects of our lives (and could even be adapted to conditions for use on other planets!!)

Dr. Kefeli hopes to have his book available in electronic format online via the SRWC's web site in the near future. Check www.srwc.org periodically to see when it has been uploaded!