

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: JULY MEETING CANCELLED (Join us for Harrisville Community Days July 4!!!)
6/14/07 Meeting Attendance: J. Belgredan, B. Busler, I. Busler, M. Busler, S. Busler, C. Cooper, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, K. Durrett, V. Kefeli, D. Opalewski, S. Smith, W. Taylor, S. VanDerWal

Public Input at Roundtables Shapes the Future of PA's Abandoned Mine Reclamation

It was Butler County's turn playing host for the **SMCRA Title IV** Public Roundtables on June 5, as **Jennings Environmental Education Center** welcomed the **PA DEP (Department of Environmental Protection)** and **Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (BAMR)** to PA's Bituminous Region. The meeting at JEEC was well-attended and the opinions expressed provided BAMR with plenty of feedback on how the state should use the \$1.4 billion in Title IV funds.

Shaun Busler and **Cliff Denholm**, SRWC participants, attended the meeting and found the discussions enlightening and interesting. **Andy McAllister** from **WPCAMR** provided an overview of the SMRCA legislation and Title IV Reauthorization, and facilitated an educational component to the meeting. He introduced a video produced specifically to show how the amended federal legislation will provide new flexibility and allow Pennsylvania to greatly increase the amount of abandoned mine reclamation (available online at www.wpcamr.org). Also included in the educational section was a demonstration of the Reclaimed Abandoned Mine Land Inventory System (RAMLIS) GIS/database presented by **Mike Hewitt** of the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (**EPCAMR**). This presentation of the AML inventory and maps has been of particular interest to watershed groups and local landowners throughout both of PA's coal regions. The system allows the generation of on-the-fly maps depicting abandoned mine problems along with information about those problems. A helpful CD containing the information is available free of charge that can run on most PCs. Mike showed roundtable participants how the database works and zoomed in on areas of interest in western Pennsylvania.



The DEP's target issues, which were thoroughly discussed during the public-input roundtable portion of the meeting, included:

1. How should the funds be used? (land reclamation, water supplies, AMD remediation...)
2. Should we take advantage of the "set aside" (up to 30%) provision? If so, what percentage should be set aside and how should those set aside funds be used?
3. How can we maximize our efforts?
4. Are there other related issues (future land use, economic benefit...) that need to be considered?

With several valuable May and June roundtables held throughout the state, many concerns and opinions have surfaced which reflect some of the common ground shared among the communities in both coal regions. It is also interesting to note how opinions on some topics differ. An example of this, cited by Andy McAllister, can be seen in the comments about taking the 30% AMD set aside. While most participants in the Bituminous roundtables appear to be in favor of taking the full 30% set aside, the opinions in the Anthracite region appear to be a little more mixed.

Visit the DEP's website www.depweb.state.pa.us/abandonedminerec for official announcements on the roundtables and to view some of the unofficial meeting notes from previous roundtables. Please also consider sending a written comment regarding the Title IV funds to BAMR at:

*Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation,
 Attn.: AML Comments, P.O. Box 8476, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8476.*



Eric Best planting some willows at the De Sale II Restoration Area during an SRWC work day on 5/5/07. See next months issue for an article about this event and additional opportunities to volunteer with the SRWC.

A Visit to Berlin

SRWC's soil scientist, **Valentin Kefeli**, was a guest lecturer in March at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany! He had a welcoming and captive audience as he spoke to students in **Professor R. Ehwald's** class. His seminar was on the subject of the Problem of Plants for Landscape Rehabilitation, during which time he presented data and material from experimental research conducted by the **SRWC** and students of **Carnegie Mellon University**.

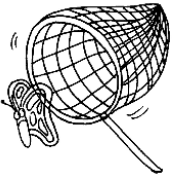


Professor H. Goring, Galina Kefeli, and Valentin Kefeli (L to R) pose in front of the A. Thaer monument in the lobby of Humboldt University.

Valentin discussed how fabricated soil is a cheap substrate utilizing waste components to create a long-lasting soil rich in carbon and nitrogen. Dry leaves, saw dust, old mushroom compost, pond sediments, top soil, and humus are a few of the secret ingredients in Valentin's soil recipe. This composition was tested in urban agriculture and container gardening in 2005-2006 through a grant of the Steinbrenner Institute of Carnegie Mellon University. It has also been used for the rehabilitation of mined lands at Jennings Environmental Education Center in Butler, PA. During the last 5 years the fabricated soil designed by Valentin was used for the growth of willow and poplar plants. The results of the experiments on these woody plants showed microbial changes resulting in a reduced mold development. Valentin also discussed the propagation by cutting of the willow and poplar trees, which are good sources of wood chips and mulch. In addition, Valentin shared with the students how fabricated soil was applied during the winter for phyto-design in the Living Laboratory of CMU, and for the Solar House Decathlon, a campus event showcasing new ideas and technologies in solar energy.

Thanks to his German hosts, **Professor Ehwald** and **Professor Goring**, Valentin found Berlin to be a beautiful city with many different styles of architecture. He learned that Berlin as it functions and looks today has only been in existence for a little more than 10 years. Berlin underwent transformations and remodeling on several fronts, including changing the style of the famous Berliner Café and streets where many private art galleries are located. Valentin noted the great importance of monuments to Berlin's streets and found it interesting that while many of the monuments have nicknames used by the Berlin residents, the scientists were always referred to by their proper names (no nicknames). Always a soil scientist,

Valentin also took notice of some examples of phyto-design in action in plant landscaping at several of Berlin's eateries and shoppes.



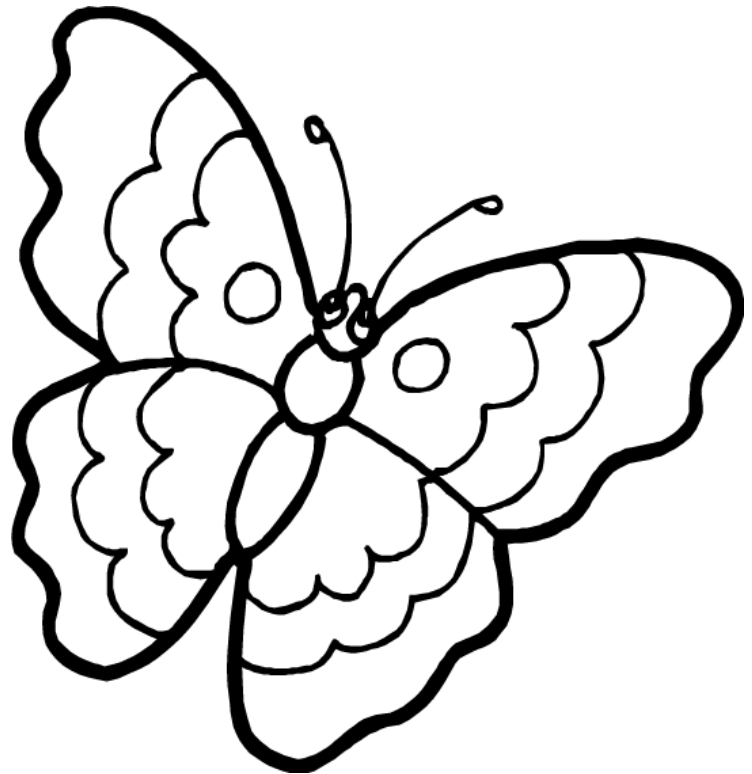
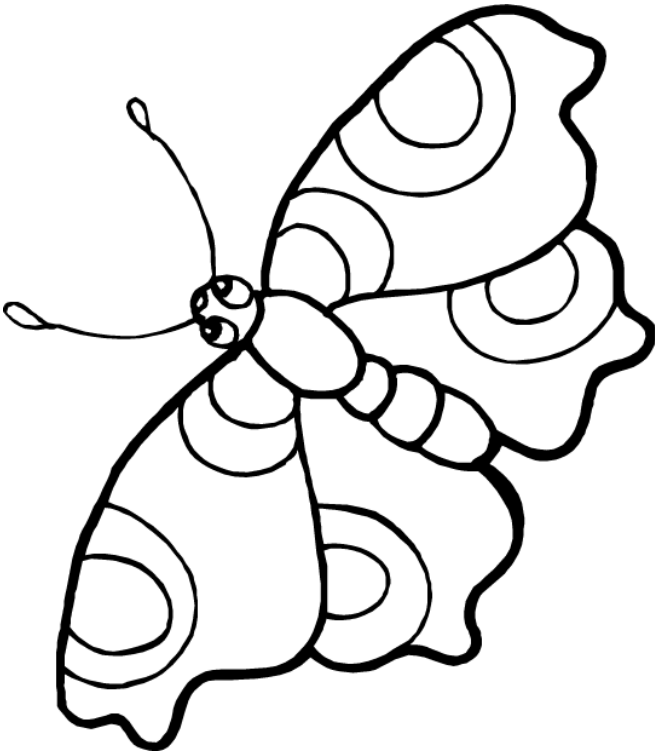
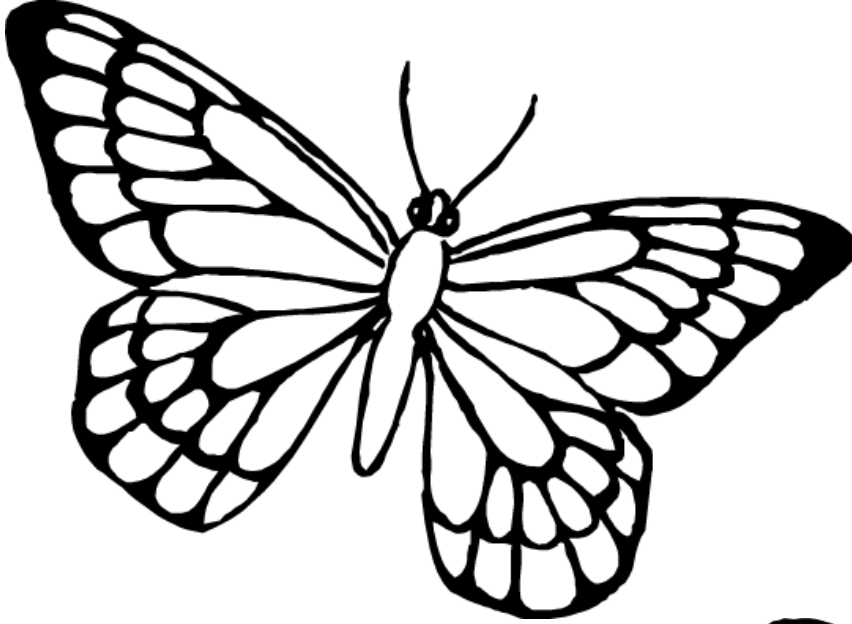
The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Beautiful Butterflies

Did you know there are over 700 species of butterflies in the United States? If you are quiet enough you may be able to sneak up to see a butterfly on a flower, where you can watch it thrusting its long, slender, coiled proboscis into the flower to suck up sweet nectar. Most adult butterflies only live 10 to 20 days, though some monarchs live 6 months. If you want to attract lots of colorful butterflies to your own backyard, they like red, yellow, orange, pink, or purple blossoms, flat-topped or clustered flowers, and short flower tubes. Enjoy coloring the butterfly pictures below, and if you mail us your paper we will send you a free gift certificate!



Name _____ Age _____ Address _____



Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
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2007 Pennsylvania Statewide Conference on Abandoned Mine Reclamation

The **registration deadline of July 6, 2007** is fast approaching for the [2007 Pennsylvania Statewide Conference on Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#), the longest running annual statewide conference dealing with abandoned mine-related issues in Pennsylvania.

This **9th Annual Conference will be held July 20-21, 2007** at the [Ramada Inn & Conference Center](#), State College, PA.

This conference is a great chance to learn more about how you can become involved in restoring streams impacted by abandoned mine drainage (AMD). There are also plenty of opportunities to network with others experienced in this type of work.

This year's conference focuses on the following topics:

- Highlights of the SMCRA Reauthorization, Draft Regulations and Roundtable Discussions
- Operation, Maintenance and Replacement for AMD Treatment Systems Specifics
- Permitting Considerations for AML/AMD Projects
- Presentations from the Makers of New and Proven Treatment Technologies

For agenda details and to register, please visit <http://2007.treatminewater.com/index.html>



2007 Conference Photos

