

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday 5/14/09 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 4/9/09 attendance: J. Brundege, S. Carney, D. Carney, M. Dunn, D. Johnson, V. Kefeli, F. Mastalski, S. Mastalski, J. McGinnis

Growing...Growing...Growing...Greener...FOR 10 YEARS!

It's hard to believe, but this December will mark **TEN(!!!) YEARS** since the inception of the original "Growing Greener" legislation! To mark the occasion, the **PA Environment Digest** is seeking articles from watershed groups about "What Growing Greener Means to Me." And those who contribute have a **chance to receive \$250!!!!** **Two, \$250 grants will be awarded each month** through December 15, 2009 to the watershed group with the best article and photo or video. In other words, **16 (!!!!) watershed groups** have a chance to receive much needed financial support for sharing something they love to do.

It began on December 15, 1999. Governor Tom Ridge and the General Assembly created what continues to be the largest single investment in cleaning up and restoring the environment in Pennsylvania's history-- the Growing Greener Program. It invested in watershed restoration, preserving open space, investing in parks and recreation, reclaiming abandoned mines and wells, and upgrading sewer and drinking water systems, among other things. More recently, in 2005 Governor Ed Rendell and the General Assembly passed Growing Greener II, allocating a \$625 million bond issue adding to the basic Growing Greener initiatives encouraging alternative energy, historic preservation and economic development and a local element to let counties fund similar projects.

Studies found 96 percent of the streams in Pennsylvania did not meet water quality standards because of stormwater runoff and drainage from abandoned mine lands and farmlands. These were not pipes discharging wastewater into our rivers but were non-point sources of pollution that needed a new approach... grassroots partnerships... and Growing Greener provided the tools to do it. At its core, Growing Greener fundamentally changed the state's approach to cleaning up our rivers and streams by empowering community-based watershed groups to take the initiative to clean up their own watersheds using local partners.



What better way to celebrate these efforts than through a partnership!!!! "Ten for ten"... Ten organizations are partnering to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Growing Greener. The **PA Environment Digest** has teamed up with **Pennsylvania Foundation for Watersheds**, the **Western Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation**, the **Pennsylvania Environmental Council**, the **Eastern Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation**, the **Chesapeake Bay Foundation**, the **Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts**, the **Western Pennsylvania Conservancy**, **LandStudies, Inc.**, and **Stream Restoration, Inc.** to invite watershed groups all across Pennsylvania to tell everyone their stories of how the Growing Greener Watershed Restoration Program has made a real difference.

In an article/photos or video, watershed groups can describe their projects, water quality assessments, education programs and show how fundamental Growing Greener was in accomplishing local cleanup goals. The PA Environment Digest will then share these stories to encourage and inform others interested in making a difference not only here in our state but world-wide through its family of websites. Visit the www.GrowingGreener.com website to learn more and possibly earn some "green" (cash!) for your watershed group!



The display taken to the West Virginia Mine Drainage Taskforce Symposium featured Clean Creek Pottery, including the new, hand-blown glass ornaments (see article on last page).

SRWC in the Windy City

SRWC participant **Cliff Denholm** of Stream Restoration Incorporated was recently invited to speak at the **2009 PittCon (Pittsburgh Conference on Analytical Chemistry and Applied Spectroscopy)** event held in March 2009 in Chicago. Yes, that is right. The *Pittsburgh* Conference was held in *Chicago*. Pittcon is the world's annual premier Conference and Exposition on laboratory science. It is organized by a not-for-profit educational corporation which is comprised of the **Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh (SSP)** and the **Society for Analytical Chemists of Pittsburgh (SACP)**. You might recognize these names, especially if you have ever attended one of the Ohio River Watershed Celebration Riverboat Cruises. Both the SSP and SACP have been long time partners/sponsors of the event and provide numerous small grants to support science education throughout the region.

Cliff was invited by **Dr. Helen Boylan** of **Westminster College** to participate as a speaker/panelist in a workshop entitled "Service Learning: Engaging Analytical Students in the Community". Cliff's presentation entitled "Assisting Watershed Restoration Efforts Through Analytical Science Based Service Learning Projects" discussed the on-going Service Learning partnership effort between Westminster College and the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition that provides students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to a real world experience that provides the SRWC with data on the performance of our passive systems. In addition to organizing and moderating the workshop, Dr. Boylan also gave a presentation "What Works: Assessment of a Watershed Service Learning Project" which gave a different perspective of the partnership effort.

Margaret Hall, co-founder of the annual ORWC, who was volunteering her time and expertise to help run the conference, provided much appreciated assistance to Cliff who was amazed by the number of exhibitors, "cool" analytical chemistry instruments and the **20,000 (!!!!) attendees** at the completely volunteer-run conference. Needless to say, Cliff was honored to be part of such an incredible event!!!!

Something "Fishy" is Going on at Fox Run

A recent electro-fishing trip downstream of a new passive treatment system in Fox Run revealed several species of fish!!!! The second PTS in Fox Run, located in Mercer County just north of Slippery Rock's Wolf Creek sub-watershed, was built in 2008 and it is a great sign to see the beginnings of a healthy fish population so soon! Prior to the electro-fishing trip, led by **Grove City College Biology Professor and SRWC participant Dr. Fred Brenner**, no fish had been recently documented. Dr. Brenner took a group of **Grove City College Biology students** to Fox Run, where they found 4 fish species: mottled sculpin, brown trout, northern hog-sucker, and black nose dace. All fish were feeding on insects: caddis flies, stone flies, and snails.

There will be a wetland planting at the site in late spring or early summer, and volunteers are needed to help! If you are interested, please contact **Shaun Busler** at **724-776-0161**.

The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY

Polluted Pathway Puzzle

Abandoned mine drainage, called “AMD” for short, is the most common form of water pollution in Pennsylvania and other states where a lot of mining has been done in the past. You can spot a stream that is polluted with AMD by its orange rusty color and lack of healthy aquatic life. The Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition is one of many organizations working to clean up this pollution and bring streams back to life so green plants, fish, and insects can once again have a healthy environment in which to live. Below are 3 interesting facts about AMD. To fill in the blanks and learn a little more about AMD, use the special block paths below. Begin at the “Start” and count and circle the square every 9 spaces. Write those letters (or numbers) in order and you will have the answers to complete the 3 sentences about AMD. If you send us your completed paper, we will mail you a free gift certificate!

- Streams polluted with AMD look orange or “rusty” because there is _____ in the water from old coal mining.
- Over _____ miles of streams in Pennsylvania have been polluted by AMD.
- Mining has been done in Pennsylvania for more than _____ years.

START →

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R	B	V	W	A	C	O	L	Y	B
E	S	R	G	N	Z	Q	J	N	P
N	K	I	4	5	7	8	1	2	K
M	P	F	3	9	6	5	U	Q	B
1	4	0	5	U	F	J	R	M	C
4	A	G	H	R	1	5	7	0	8
2	5	8	A	Y	H	M	8	3	0
6	0	1	2	R	F	B	V	N	7

← FINISH

Name _____ Age _____ Address _____



Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
434 Spring Street Ext.
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WV Mine Drainage Task Force Symposium: Learning and generosity that make a difference!

Morgantown, WV played host to the 2009 West Virginia Mine Drainage Task Force Symposium held 3/31 and 4/1. Over **250** individuals were in attendance that included representatives from the mining industry, academia, government, consulting firms, and watershed groups. Everyone benefitted from the opportunity to network, share ideas, and learn from knowledgeable speakers and displays related to efforts to restore water and land impacted by AMD. Count the SRWC's **Margaret Dunn** and **Shaun Busler** as present at the symposium with Shaun (introduced by Margaret) was one of the speakers! His power-point presentation on **Datashed** included information on its purpose, features, future upgrades, and a virtual demonstration using screen-shot pictures captured from the web site. To learn more about this multi-faceted online tool for passive treatment monitoring and maintenance, visit **www.datashed.org**.

Needless to say, Margaret and Shaun had an uplifting and rewarding experience showcasing Clean Creek Pottery in the display hall. Because of the generosity of the Task Force and the wonderful participants, **every piece of pottery taken to the Symposium was sold!!!!** Due to the overwhelming response, about **\$400 (!!!!!)** is being donated back to watershed restoration efforts. Words are inadequate to express our appreciation to the sponsors of the symposium, the West Virginia Mine Drainage Task Force, and the West Virginia Coal Association. Thanks also to those who served as symposium moderators: **Charlie Miller**, Chairman of the Task Force, **Ben Faulkner** (Bratton Farms), **Mike Isabell** (Consol Energy), and **Tiff Hilton** (WOPEC).

