

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday 7/9/09 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 6/11/09 attendance: J. Belgredan, D. Carney, S. Carney, C. Denholm, T. Grote, C. Ferguson, D. Johnson, G. Kefeli, V. Kefeli, A. Rehm, T. Rehm, S. Smith, S. VanDerWal

Daisy Scouts Plant Trees at BC16

On Saturday, May 2nd, **Daisy Scout Troop 60660** and their accompanying families took time out from their busy schedules to volunteer at the recently constructed BC16 passive treatment system in the Blacks Creek Subwatershed (Slippery Rock Creek Watershed). The girls (kindergarten and 1st graders) and their families helped to plant dozens of native trees in the upland area. **Cliff Denholm** and **Shaun Busler** of Stream Restoration Incorporated were on hand to assist with the event. In addition, Cliff provided an overview of the project to the volunteers while Shaun talked about the various trees that were to be planted and provided instructions on proper planting techniques. Cliff's twin daughters, **Sierra** and **Alayna**, were among the scouts and Shaun brought along his two sons, **Isaac** and **Ben**, to help out. We were really impressed by the enthusiasm, dedication, independence and hard work of all the children. Many of the girls insisted on digging their own holes despite the hard rocky soil. Cliff was particularly proud of his daughter Sierra who worked so hard despite a cast on her arm due to a broken elbow. All of the kids seemed to have a great time whether they were planting trees or stomping around in the mud afterwards. We really appreciate all of the kids and parents for their hard work and taking the time to come out and help the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition complete another successful project!



PA GIS Conference– 17 Years and Counting!

The 17th annual PA GIS Conference was held May 19-20 in Grantville, PA, at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center. SRWC participant **Shaun Busler** was on-hand as an exhibitor to share his knowledge and experience of how GIS has been used in the clean-up of streams and watersheds. Shaun enjoyed speaking with many interested individuals. He also enjoyed hearing keynote speaker **Josh Knauer**, President and CEO of Rhiza Labs, an open source geospatial technology developer. Josh has been a social entrepreneur for the past 20 years, creating and leading successful organizations in both the non-profit and for-profit sectors. His ability to spot emerging trends in technology and their use for the betterment of society and the environment have caused him to be considered a leading expert in the field. He's been featured in *Time*, *Fortune*, *Newsweek* and *Wired* magazines, and was even named a New Media Hero by the *Utne Reader*.

This year's Pennsylvania GIS Conference explored the essential connection between geospatial technology and the development and sustainability of our critical infrastructure. Dozens of presenters, from industry, academia, and government, showcased applications that support critical infrastructures in water resources, energy and the environment, public safety and health, and economic development. In addition, the latest hardware, software, and database trends were demonstrated by the geospatial industry.

Shaun was glad to see both old faces and new from all across the state at this year's conference, and wishes to thank the conference committee and the sponsors for this worthwhile event!



About 30 American chestnut and oak seedlings were planted by student volunteers at Jennings Environmental Education Center on Arbor Day in 2008 on a one-of-a-kind scale model using the Office of Surface Mining's Forestry Reclamation Approach of the "Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative". Of the 30 seedlings, 23 have survived the winter and have doubled in size! The photo to the left is an American Chestnut.

Students Learn to Battle Invasives at Ohio Basin Student Summit

"Battle the invasives, bring home the natives!" was the battle cry heard Thursday, May 21st at Jennings Environmental Education Center. Over 50 students took part in the Ohio Basin Student Summit, part of the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks' focus on watershed education. Led by Jennings' own **Wil Taylor**, who served as Basin Coordinator, and **Amy Hill**, the Statewide Coordinator, students participated in a 4-hour long hands-on learning adventure. Students were divided into 3 groups, Japanese Knotweed, Frogs, and Crayfish, as they traveled between learning stations/activities in their quest to learn more about invasive species. Several poster exhibits were on display to aid in the students' learning, including a poster by the SRWC's **Shaun Busler**. In addition, there were five presentations made by students/teachers from the following schools: **Wilmington Area High School, St. Stephen's Academy, A.W. Beattie Career Center, Gateway Middle School, and Keystone Jr./Sr. High School**. The students were enthusiastic learners and enjoyed the opportunity to understand more about the battle of invasive species vs. native species.



Emerald ash borer

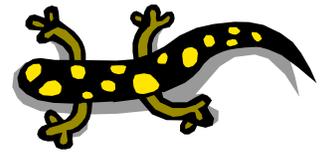
Invasive plants grow quickly and aggressively, spreading and displacing other plants. Invasives are usually introduced by people either accidentally or on purpose, into a region far from their native habitat. Invasives have been in the news lately, as the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is warning residents of Forward Township in Evans City, Butler County, that Giant Hogweed, a noxious and invasive weed that can cause blistering and scarring on the skin of susceptible people, has been confirmed in their area. The emerald ash borer, a beetle, has also been causing problems by infesting and killing North American ash tree species in the eastern US. To minimize the spread of this beetle species, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has implemented a quarantine banning the importation of out-of-state firewood. The Department is also requesting reports of kudzu, an invasive, climbing vine that has become a problem in some regions of the state. In the Ohio Watershed, four of the most common and harmful invasive aquatic species are the zebra mussel, purple loosestrife, Asiatic clam, and Asian carp.

You can help stop the spread of dangerous non-native species, and help to re-introduce native species to your local ecosystem. Resist the urge to buy exotic pets, and make sure to never release non-native animals or seeds into the environment. Take special care when boating that fish eggs, mussels, and algae haven't "hitched a ride" on the bottom of the hull when going from one body of water to the next. On the proactive side, you can begin planting native species of plants in your yard. Native plant species are great because they typically thrive without a lot of attention, and use considerably less water and chemical pesticides.



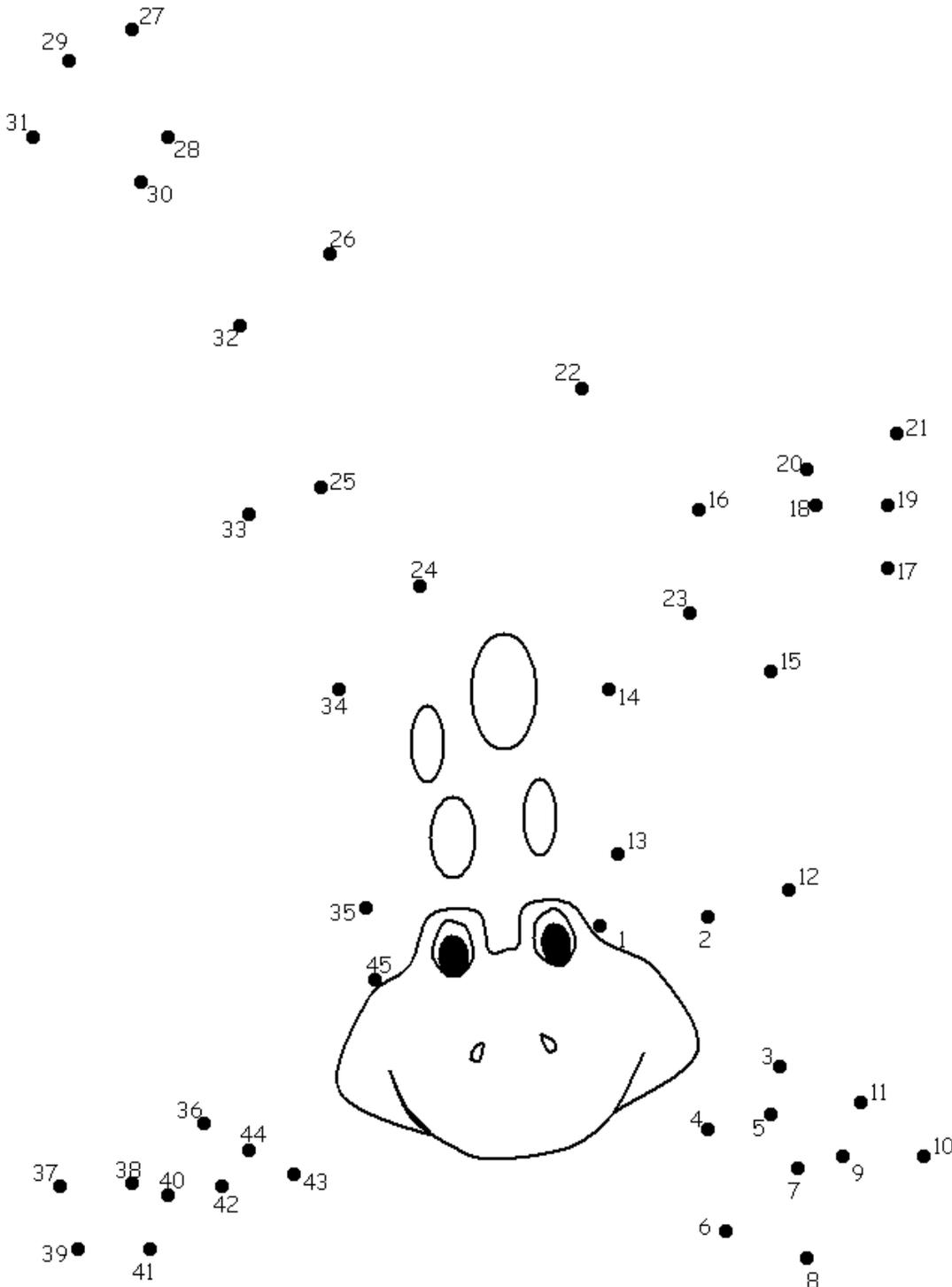
The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Amphibian Fun!

Amphibians are creatures which spend part of their life in water and part of their life on dry land. Amphibians are sensitive to disturbances and thus serve as environmental indicators, meaning if their population goes down that there could be something wrong with the health of the environment in which they live (such as pollution problems). There are several types of amphibians; connect the dots below to create a picture of one of the most well-known kinds of amphibians! If you send us your completed paper, we will mail 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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Pizza, Pizza!!! Thanks, Thanks!!!

At the June SRWC meeting, **The Midway On Main**, www.TheMidwayOnMain.com, located in Harrisville, donated the pizzas for our meeting!!! The owner, **Carrie Ferguson**, has been reading *The Catalyst* newsletter for years and wanted to do something nice for us. Carrie arrived with delicious pizzas in tow, stayed for the meeting, and seemed excited about the work, events, and plans discussed by the SRWC. Thank you so much for your generous donation of the pizzas, Carrie, and we were so glad to have you at our meeting! New faces are always welcome to attend our monthly meetings, held at 7 PM every 2nd Thursday at Jennings Environmental Education Center! We hope to see Carrie again, as well as other new faces, soon!! (you are welcome even if you don't bring us free food!!)



“Green Art” Featured in Allied News

Thank you to **T.C. Conner** of **The Allied News** (www.alliednews.com) for the great in-depth article on potter **Bob Isenberg** and his use of manganese and iron oxide recovered from acid mine drainage as pottery glazes! Entitled “Clean Streams Lead to Green Art”, T.C. Conner chronicles the interesting history of how **Clean Creek Products**, a sub-division of Stream Restoration Inc., came about. In the article, project facilitator **Tom Grote** explains how their col-



lection and cleaning process for the manganese allows it to be re-used. SRI's passive treatment systems help to “clean” streams by removing metals, such as manganese and iron. After years of operation, the systems become filled with the metal oxides. The purchase of a special flip-screen bucket (*see image to the left*) allowed the metals to be removed and marketed for other purposes. As Tom explains in the article, there were just five flip-screen buckets in the world when SRI purchased theirs. With help from a grant from the **DEP's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation**, SRI found a way to recover the metals from the filtration systems and Clean Creek Products (www.cleancreek.org) was born! Bob Isenberg, who creates masterful pieces of artwork from clay at the **Pottery Dome** (www.PotteryDome.com) in Springfield Township has been using four mixes of glazing compounds containing reclaimed iron oxide

and manganese. The particular characteristics of the manganese collected from the passive treatment systems is what makes it of special value, as all known commercially-available manganese oxides used for ceramics are imported. The idea to try using the manganese in pottery glazes originated with professional potter **Pam Esch**, **Mec-Clay Studio**, a close friend of Margaret Dunn of the SRWC and SRI. Clean Creek Products offers pottery and glass art for sale at their web site, with a portion of the proceeds from each sale donated to local watershed groups for the continuing efforts to clean streams throughout the state. Be sure to read T.C. Conner's June 3rd article online at www.alliednews.com/archivesearch/local_story_154121504.html Thanks again, T.C.!!!