

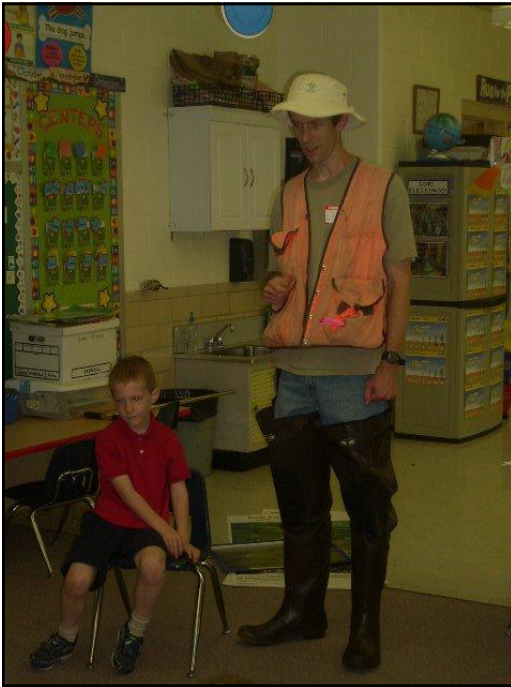
THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: *Meeting for 6/14/12 has been cancelled!* Next meeting at 7 pm on 7/12/12 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 5/10/12 meeting attendance: H. Becker, T. Bonitz, H. Boylan, S. Braden, T. Cho, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, K. Farley, N. Ferrebee, S. Gasser, K. Gelesky, R. Greenwald, E. Hartmann, V. Kefeli, B. Kuban, R. Mahony, R. McBride, B. Page, J. Puskas, W. Taylor, F. Vanatta.

A Visit to Kindergarten for "Community Helpers" Week

On May 3rd, SRWC participant **Shaun Busler** paid a visit to **Mrs. Janie Rock's** kindergarten class at **Penn Christian Academy in Butler**. The children were taking part in a special "Community Helpers" program, where they were learning about several different jobs from people in the community through classroom visits. Shaun provided some insight for the children about the job of a biologist. He came to class decked out in his field gear, including hip boots, field vest, and tick-repellant sun hat. Included in the attentive audience of 14 was Shaun's son, **Ben** (pictured below). Shaun told the class about acid mine drainage, the #1 source of stream pollution in the state, and how part of his job is to help clean the water so fish can live there and people can enjoy recreation in impacted waterways. He also taught them a few things about mining, and each student got to take home a piece of real coal! Shaun also taught them about macroinvertebrates—that big fancy word for insects that live in the water! When the students got their own macro identification key poster, they were thrilled with the weird-looking pictures of the aquatic creatures. Bats, snakes, chestnut trees, and more rounded out the talk to the kindergarten.



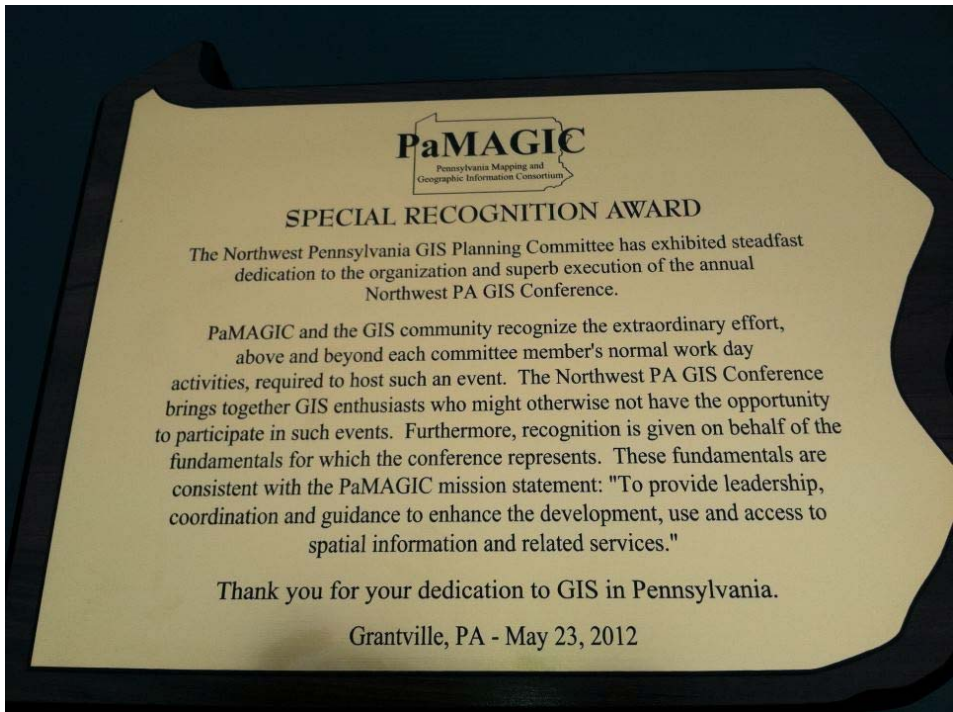
Science is a big deal at Penn Christian, where even the kindergarten students have the opportunity for hands-on, experimental learning in a science lab twice each week which is then reinforced by regular classroom learning. Later this month the school will break ground on a new state-of-the-art, fully-equipped, indoor/outdoor science lab. The school also had their first annual Science Olympiad this year! Grades 3 through 5 participated in two days of fun-filled science activities and games.

Thanks to Penn Christian Academy and Mrs. Rock for giving Shaun this fun opportunity to share his profession in his son's classroom!

June SRWC meeting cancelled!

Due to several SRWC participants' plans to attend the ASMR Conference in Tupelo, Mississippi, June 8th through 15th, there will be no regular June meeting of the SRWC. The next meeting will be held Thursday, July 12 at 7 PM at the Jennings Environmental Education Center. As usual, free pizza and pop will be provided and all are welcome to attend. Summer is a great time to get involved in the activities of the SRWC and we'd love to see you at our next meeting! Come learn what is new in our watershed's restoration and how you can help!

CANCELLED!!



The Northwest PA GIS Planning Committee was presented with this unique award at the 20th Annual PA GIS Conference. Given by PaMAGIC (see article below), the award expresses appreciation for dedication to the organization and superb execution of the annual Northwest PA GIS Conference and to GIS in Pennsylvania.

Another Great PA GIS Conference!!!

Shaun Busler of Stream Restoration Incorporated and a participant of the SRWC enjoyed attending another excellent PA GIS Conference. This year's theme was "GIS: Impacting Everyday Life." The 20th Annual PA GIS Conference, an outreach service of the **County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania**, proved



PAMAGIC board member Dave Gilbert presents best Map award to Chris Shaffer - professor, on behalf of Courtney Papinchak, student at Allegheny College.

to be a great opportunity for attendees to explore ways to maximize the use of GIS in both their professional lives and personal lives. With the ongoing advancements, we are all benefitting from geospatial technology in numerous ways, like that GPS device we all rely on to get us somewhere!

Held at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey in Grantville on May 22nd and 23rd, the conference gave participants the chance to receive key GIS updates at the local, state, and national level. Attendees shared their particular GIS expertise and learned about the latest in GIS efforts while networking with colleagues. A good turn-out of over 250 individuals gave Shaun plenty of people to talk to! Time for visiting posters and exhibits was balanced with large-group presentations and smaller break-out sessions. Shaun noticed the attention given to the growing popularity of 3D GIS and its applications for 3D visualizations becoming a more cost-efficient and feasible technology.

Several awards were presented at this year's conference, including one given by the Pennsylvania Mapping and Geographic Information Consortium (PaMAGIC). **PaMAGIC** is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership and guidance in the establishment of GIS throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Each year PaMAGIC recognizes one individual or organization that has contributed greatly to the promotion or advancement of GIS in Pennsylvania with their Excellence Award. Established in 2009, the presentation of this award is a highlight of the annual conference. This year's PaMAGIC GIS

Excellence Award was presented to the **Planning Committee for the NW PA GIS Conference**. Congratulations to all Planning Committee members! Thanks also to this year's conference sponsors: **Baker**, and **Harrisburg University of Science and Technology!**



The KIDS Catalyst

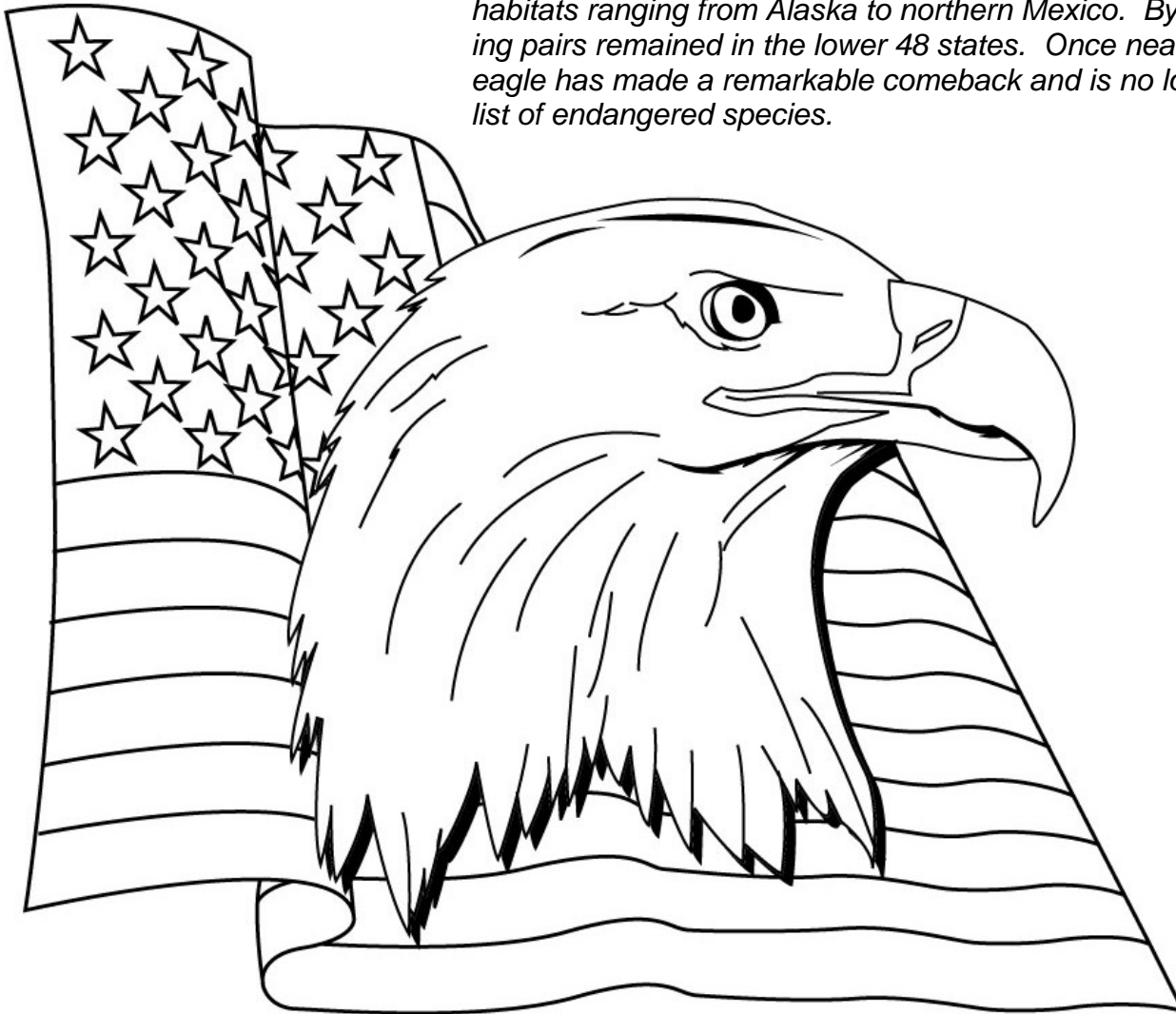
SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY

The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave



As it gets closer to Independence Day, we wanted to share a cool story about the national symbol of our country: the bald eagle. The bald eagle. You can join tens of thousands of viewers who have been watching a special pair of celebrity bald eagles named "Independence" and "Franklin" over the internet at www.eagles.org or www.ustream.tv/americaneaglefoundation. This pair of eagles is in their 11th year of captive breeding at Dollywood, a theme park in Tennessee in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains. The birds suffered permanent injuries and disabilities to their left wings due to gunshot wounds when they lived in Alaska. Since being relocated to Tennessee, the birds have lived inside a large naturally landscaped and netted bald eagle aviary at Dollywood. The eagles are classified as non-releasable by federal and state wildlife agencies because of their injuries. The pair is in their 11th year of captive breeding at Dollywood. They pair-bonded in 2002, and have already produced 27 eggs and 24 eaglets, most of which have been released into the wilds of East Tennessee. The web links listed above offers world-wide viewers simultaneous "live streaming" video images from four different camera angles to watch and enjoy the daily life of these amazing birds. Be sure to check it out! You may even see the 3 owlets that hatched in early May! We've included a bald eagle picture to color for this month's activity. If you mail us your completed picture, we'll send you a free gift certificate!

In 1782, when the bald eagle ascended to its position as the national symbol, around 100,000 nesting pairs lived throughout the United States in habitats ranging from Alaska to northern Mexico. By 1963, only 417 nesting pairs remained in the lower 48 states. Once nearly extinct, the bald eagle has made a remarkable comeback and is no longer on the federal list of endangered species.



*bald eagles live 15 to 25 years in the wild

*bald eagle nests weigh up to 1000 pounds

*bald eagles have a wingspan of between 5.5 and 8 feet

*bald eagles weigh an average of 14 pounds

*bald eagles lay 1 to 3 eggs a year

Name _____ Age _____ Address _____



Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
434 Spring Street Ext.
Mars, PA 16046

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Westminster College Students **Make A Remarkable Contribution to SRWC Efforts**

Nine **Westminster College** students majoring in chemistry/biochemistry from **Dr. Helen Boylan's "Advanced Laboratory" class** presented findings from their lab analysis of water sampled from the McIntire passive treatment system at the **May 10th meeting of the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition**. Ten students worked on the task, which was part of a service-learning project done in conjunction with the SRWC. Dr. Boylan, Associate Professor of Chemistry, has involved her students in passive treatment system water analysis for several years. Her students gain practical, hands-on experience in the field and in the lab, doing something to actively help the watershed and the people who work full-time to oversee its restoration and health.



Westminster College students at JEEC on May 10 (from Left to Right): Nate Ferrebee, Stephanie Gasser, Scott Braden, Katie Farley, Tom Cho, Heather Becker, Kyle Gelesky, Toby Bonitz, Rob McBride.

Students conducted field testing and sampling of the water at the newly-constructed McIntire site for the passive treatment of abandoned mine drainage. The Butler County site treats the most contaminated water in the Slippery Rock Creek watershed.

Although improvements are still needed at the site, the students' results suggest the passive treatment system is working: **iron levels, for example, dropped from more than 200 to 0.4 parts per million!!!!**

The students' work has been an **invaluable (!!!)** asset to the SRWC, as volunteers are always needed for water testing. Such testing is an important resource for determining how well a passive system is doing in effectively treating the water. "The collaboration allows the watershed group to get laboratory-quality data regarding the water at their passive treatment sites," Dr. Boylan said. "Through the service-learning project, the students get to apply their knowledge of environmental and analytical chemistry to serve our non-profit partner."