

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

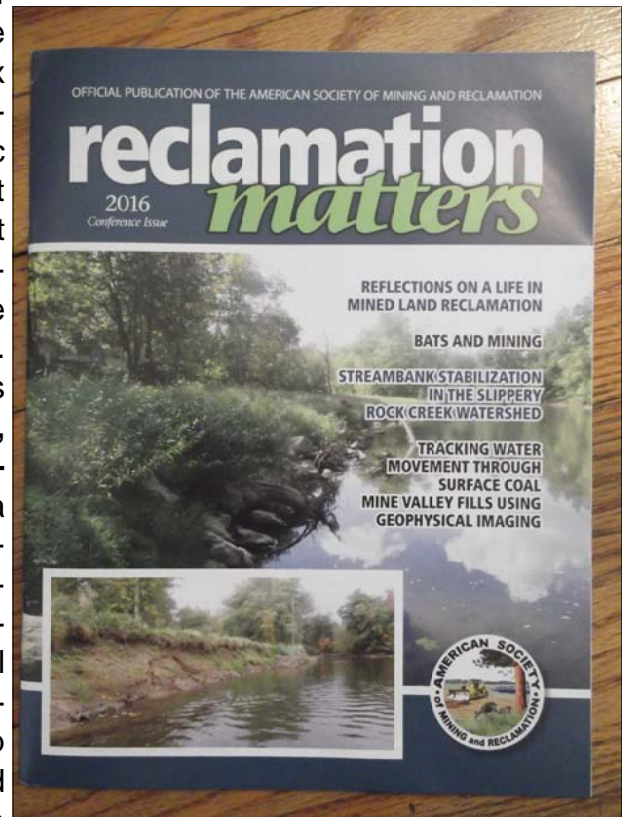
NEXT MEETING: 7 pm on 4/14/16 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 3/10/16 meeting attendance: C. Denholm, V. Kefeli, B. Kuban, W. Taylor, F. VanAtta, J. Wilkinson

Professor-for-a-Day

SRWC participant **Cliff Denholm** once again had the opportunity to participate as a guest lecturer for **Don Hopey's** issues class at the **University of Pittsburgh** on February 22, 2016. The presentation focused on the importance of water, the formation of mine drainage, and active and passive methods of treating the polluted water. Cliff also discussed the past and present techniques of surface and underground mining and how the changing of these techniques has helped decrease the occurrence and severity of mine drainage. The importance of monitoring, operation, and maintenance of these treatment systems was discussed and the need for dedicated volunteers for programs such as our **Adopt-A-Passive System**. Cliff encouraged the students to seek out watershed organizations that likely are in need of volunteers. He also talked about the large quantity of metals that are being removed by passive treatment systems and how organizations like Stream Restoration Incorporated's **Clean Creek Products** are working on methods to recover and develop markets for these materials as an alternative to landfill disposal.

SRWC's Stream Bank Stabilization Featured in 'Reclamation Matters'

The 2016 **American Society for Mining and Reclamation** conference issue of *Reclamation Matters* features a project near and dear to our hearts - the streambank restoration at the **Slippery Rock Campground** in the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed! The official publication of the American Society of Mining and Reclamation showcases the work performed by the SRWC along Slippery Rock Creek to fix some out-of-control streambank erosion that had caused increased sediment in the stream and negative impacts to aquatic habitat. In 2015, the creek was cutting back (eroding) the bank at a rate of almost five (!!) horizontal feet per year along a 500-foot section. The SRWC and Stream Restoration Incorporated received a **PA DEP Growing Greener Grant** to help stabilize the streambank and improve the water quality and aquatic habitat. Additional donations and in-kind contributions came from partners **Allegheny Mineral, Slippery Rock Campground Association, Slippery Rock University Geography, Geology, & the Environment Club, and BioMost, Inc.** The streambank was restored to a more natural state using traditional and bioengineering techniques. This involved re-grading the cut-bank to prevent undercutting, adding root wads and brush layers to provide erosion control and fish habitat, and planting a portion of the riparian area. All goals of the project were met and, with continued site maintenance by campground staff, is a great example of a partnership effort with long-term positive results relating to both recreation and the environment. Contributing authors included **Dan Guy, Ryan Mahoney, Shaun Busler, Tim Danehy, Cliff Denholm, Buck Neely, and Margaret Dunn.** A special thank-you to Ryan Mahony and Dan Guy for living onsite in a camper in order to construct the project in a timely manner. Also, thank you, thank you to the **over 30 (!!) student volunteers who participated in planting about 3,000 tree seedlings and live stakes.**



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The busy ***beavers*** are at it again ...

This time at the McIntyre Passive Treatment System.

Stay tuned ... more to come!

SAVE-THE-DATE

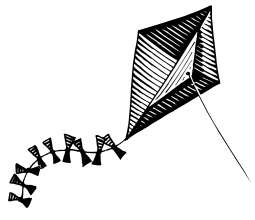
Annual PA AMR/AMD Conference to be held June 22-23

New Location: Indiana University of Pennsylvania

In order to expand the opportunities for tours to learn, “first-hand”, about approaches to abandoned mine land reclamation and applied technology for abandoned mine drainage treatment at various sites, the 2016 PA AMR/AMD Conference is being held at the **Indiana University of Pennsylvania Kovalchick Conference Center** in Indiana, PA. The surrounding watersheds provide lots of success stories that are sure to be of interest to all involved in restoring our streams, so organizers have dedicated an entire day on Wednesday, June 22nd to touring sites followed by an evening for networking and a community dinner later that night.

With a theme of “**Economics and the Environment**”, conference participants will focus on the “bigger picture” of the effects of their work, which ultimately involves community revitalization, redevelopment opportunities, job creation, and recreational opportunities gained through fishing, hiking, kayaking, and “on-the-water” events, just to name a few. Ideas like design and construction of mixed-use industrial/business parks on former mine lands brings back those areas into productive use and generates taxes again for the local governments. Local governments invest that tax money back into the community via improved roads and infrastructure. The proper creation of trails and off-road recreational vehicle parks reduce fishery impacts and curtail pollution input by employing best management practices. Even bolder plans include harnessing mine water to generate hydroelectric power or recovery and sales of metal oxides to fund continual operation, maintenance and eventual rehabilitation/replacement (OM&R) of treatment systems. With funding dwindling due to rough economic times, environmental groups have to be creative and promote projects that tie to economic growth and other benefits that are difficult to measure, and that’s just what the conference will focus on.

On Thursday, June 23rd, over 20 presenters will share expertise in their particular field, with many tying into the idea that the environment and the economy go hand-in-hand. We hope you will join us June 22-23 for this very worthwhile topic and fantastic conference! All the details can be found on the web site



The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Spring into a Word Search!

March 20 marked the first day of spring. To celebrate the warmer temperatures and sunshine, we have a special Spring word search this month! Try to find the 18 “signs of spring” hidden in the word search below. Circle the words, and return the page to us for a \$1 credit to spend on Amazon! You can save the credits month after month to buy something really fun!

- | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Sunshine | Umbrella | Raindrops | Birdhouse | Bunny | Windy |
| Garden | Tulips | Puddles | Daffodils | Jacket | Kite |
| Robins | Green | Cardinals | Crocuses | Easter | Chicks |

R	A	V	W	D	A	B	J	R	F	F	M	I	O	L	P	C	Q	T	C
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Name _____ Age _____ Address _____

Parent's email _____



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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H.O.P.E.—Highlighting Other Partnership Efforts John Linkes - 2016 River Heroes Award

The SRWC congratulates Leechburg's **John Linkes** for receiving the River Network's "River Heroes Award"! This very prestigious national award honors only 5 winners each year, and John is only the third person from Pennsylvania to win the award since the program's inception in 2001. Previous winners from PA are **John Klunk** and **David Hess**.



John Linkes is one of those super volunteers who is an inspiration to all. John helps with water sampling, trail work, litter clean up, and more. Linkes said he feels good volunteering, which is obvious given all the organizations he's associated with: He is a director on the boards of the **Roaring Run Watershed Association** and **Kiskiminetas Watershed Association**; a member of **Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center** steering committee and **Leechburg Recycling Center**; and coordinates the annual **Ohio River Sweep** for the Kiski River. He's been involved in other organizations over the years.

"What's so special about John is this isn't his regular job," says **Melissa Reckner**, a program director with the **Conemaugh Valley Conservancy**, who nominated Linkes. "He contributes strictly on a volunteer basis." Reckner describes John as "tireless" and says, "It seems everyday he's out on the trail doing something. He has a childlike enthusiasm, and it's contagious." The childlike enthusiasm is evidenced by his role as the **PA Resources Litterbug**, for which he will don an insect costume to get the kids' interest. "I try to get kids to tell their parents not to litter," he said. "I try to get that 'green gene' in them."

Linkes often does the jobs others don't want to do, Reckner added, such as being the guy in darkness at the end of the trail for night hikes. Linkes said he's just happy to be outdoors. And we're happy to see a wonderful volunteer rewarded for his outstanding efforts! Congratulations John for the well deserved award!

