

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

NEXT MEETING: TBD per COVID-19 regulations; tentatively planned for 7 PM on 7/14/22 at Jennings Environmental Education Center. Pizza/pop return; social distancing will be followed. 6/9/22 meeting attendance: J. Belgraden, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, D. Johnson, S. Smith, W. Taylor, S. Vanderwal

Butler Outdoor Club Presentation

On May 4th (May the Fourth Be With You), Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition (SRWC) participant **Cliff Denholm** of Stream Restoration Incorporated was invited to give a presentation at the Butler Outdoor Club meeting. Cliff was asked by the group to give a presentation about the passive treatment systems that are along the North Country Trail (NCT) in Pennsylvania Gamelands 95 in the headwaters of Slippery Rock Creek. Many members of the Butler Outdoor Club were interested in learning more about those orange/red ponds that they see when hiking along the NCT and developed a particular interest during organized hikes last year led by SRWC participant **Steve Smith** that were conducted while some of these systems were undergoing maintenance.



Cliff started his presentation with an overview of the formation of acid mine drainage (AMD) and explanations of active and passive treatment systems. He then went on to discuss the work of the SRWC before delving into the specific passive treatment systems of interest. The North Country Trail passes beside or, in some cases,

directly through several passive systems including SR81, Ferris Complex, SR101A, SR109, and SR114. Cliff discussed the designs and water quality of the treatment systems as well as the current ongoing efforts to rehabilitate several of those treatment systems through funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Growing Greener program and the US Office of Surface Mine Watershed Cooperative Agreement Program (WCAP). In addition, the SRWC had received a grant through the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization Program that included funding for trail improvements along the NCT which the Butler County Chapter of the NCT has been working hard to complete.

Last year, the Ferris West system was completely rebuilt while maintenance was performed on the Ferris East system. Recent field water monitoring testing in May indicated that the Ferris system was now successfully treating over 300 gpm with a final effluent pH of 7 and 80 mg/L of alkalinity. Also, at the SR101A system a sludge pond was constructed last year and the settling pond and wetlands were cleaned and ready to remove more iron. You can read about these efforts in past Catalyst issues. Look for future articles about the SR81 and SR114 treatment systems which are to be rebuilt over the next year.



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The Ferris passive treatment system, located in Venango Township, Butler County, in the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed, is shown at left when under construction. See article, front page, for information on its latest upgrade.

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Celebrate the Bloom is Back!

Jennings Environmental Education Center and 3MJC are pleased to announce that after a long hiatus, the Celebrate the Bloom Festival is back! **July 30, 2022**, will be an exciting day of music, fun, food, and amazing nature experiences for young and old, and we hope you will join us to showcase some of our region's best nature-related art and natural artisan products, and delicious eats!

The festival will take place from 9 AM to 5 PM at Jennings Environmental Education Center, where the main attraction is the amazing blazing star. This striking bright, tall, purple wildflower is a rarity for Western Pennsylvania, and its peak bloom is expected to take place during the weekend of the festival. The blazing star is as exotic as its habitat: a prairie that was first preserved by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and is now managed by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Jennings, in Butler County's Brady Township, is the most popular spot in the region to see the blazing star. We hope you will visit Jennings for this unique nature experience. Past visitors have expressed their appreciation for the festival's excellent organization, quality vendor items, great music, and beautiful surroundings. Please let event organizers know if you would like to apply to be an artisan or food vendor at this year's event by filling out an application on the new website at <https://www.celebratethebloom.com/> Each 10X10 booth space is an affordable \$35.





The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Summer Word Search

Summer is finally here! More sun AND less school! Warmer temperatures and cool pools! Have you ever paused to consider what makes summer “summer”? Why is June 21 the first day of summer? It all has to do with the position of the sun and the Earth and the tilt of its axis. The first day of summer is on what is called the summer solstice. This is the day the Northern Hemisphere angles itself at the point in its orbit closest to the sun, causing the longest day and shortest night of the calendar year. The opposite happens on the first day of winter, when we have the shortest day and longest night of the year. We hope you have fun searching for these words that come to mind when we think of summer! If you send us your completed paper, we'll send you a \$1 Amazon credit through a parent's email address. You can save your credits to buy something extra special. Happy summer to all of our readers!

Sunshine	Picnic	Ocean	Lemonade	Ice cream
Swimming	Vacation	Fireworks	Biking	Popsicles
Fishing	Lake	Sunglasses	Beach	Barbecue
Hiking	Pool	Baseball	Camping	Fireflies

G	N	I	O	L	F	P	R	E	W	O	R	N	M	S	B	A	S	L	L	E	M	I	P
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Name _____ Age ____ Parent email 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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Aquatic Invasives Program at Cranberry Public Library

Aquatic invasive species are aquatic animals and plants that have been introduced into waterways in which they do not live naturally. They have harmful effects on the natural resources in these ecosystems and the human uses of these resources. Pennsylvania has dozens of such banned species. Save the date for an interesting evening of learning about aquatic invasive species! Open to anyone interested, the public is invited to attend a free program to be held at Cranberry Public Library on **July 12 at 6:30 pm**. The program is titled Aquatic Invasive Species: Small Critters, Big Impacts.

Amber Stilwell of PA Sea Grant will speak about the impact of invasive species on our watersheds, what characteristics make a species invasive, how they move from place to place, and how to prevent their spread. Attendees will also learn about best practices for installing ponds and other water features in their gardens or backyards.

Admission is free and registration is required. The registration link for the program is:
<https://cranberry.librarycalendar.com/event/aquatic-invasive-species-small-critters-big-impacts>

If anyone has any questions, you can contact Jon Clendaniel, Development & Communications Manager at the library, at 724-776-9100 ext. 1132.

The northern snakehead fish (left) and zebra mussel (right) are 2 banned aquatic invasive species of Pennsylvania.

