

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

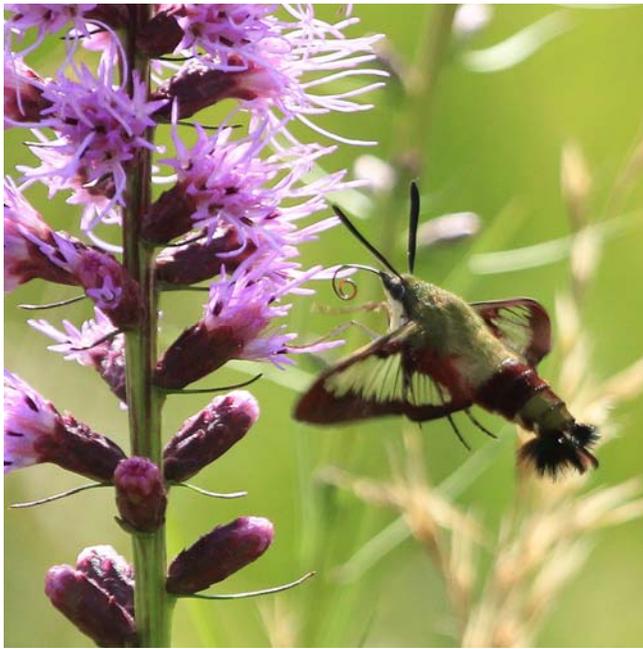
NEXT MEETING: TBD per COVID-19 regulations; tentatively planned for 7 PM on 9/8/22 at Jennings Environmental Education Center. Pizza/pop return; social distancing will be followed. 8/11/22 meeting attendance: J. Belgraden, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, D. Johnson, B. Kuben, S. Smith, W. Taylor, F. VanAtta, S. Vanderwal

PA AMR Conference A Success

Once again, the Pennsylvania Abandoned Mine Reclamation conference was a great success! Held at the Ramada Inn at State College June 22-23, this year's event was a hybrid conference and had nearly record turnout. Most of the 150-ish attendees chose to show up in person at State College, but there were also about 30 virtual attendees. SRWC participant **Cliff Denholm** serves on the planning committee and attended the event, which this year had a theme of "New Opportunities on the Horizon." As usual, there was a variety of great presentations with topics ranging from the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to solar development on abandoned mine lands to water treatment of AMD. **Miranda Crostley** from the Jennings Environmental Education Center gave an excellent presentation called "Creating Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences and Real-world Inquiry using AMD and Treatment Systems as Living Labs". Another interesting presentation, by **Scott McGill**, was about beaver! Beaver once numbered in the hundreds of millions across North America, were nearly extirpated in the late 1890's, but have recently seen their numbers increase in many regions across North America. The presentation discussed how beaver were long regarded as a nuisance species but their role as ecosystem engineers has only recently been promoted and recognized. Presentation information included how beaver dams and the water they store provide important ecosystem services, including increased groundwater recharge, floodplain reconnection, significant reductions in peak flow discharges, enhanced wildlife habitat, nutrient processing, sediment storage, fire breaks, and wetland creation.

Due to uncertainties related to Covid, a field tour was not planned; however, several "virtual" video tours were presented during the event. Two Mayfly Awards were given this year. The Mayfly Award winners are chosen by the committee and awarded to individuals who have dedicated much of their life to improving streams impacted by AMD. The award recognizes individuals who have dedicated a lifetime of knowledge and expertise to the reclamation of abandoned mines in Pennsylvania. The mayfly was selected as the symbol for this award because its presence in a stream signifies clean water. The tradition of giving out the "Mayfly Award" started with the 2007 Conference and the list of Awardees has grown to represent a group of distinguished individuals. This year, two Mayfly awards were given. One went to **Donna Wagner** (see photo), formerly of the PA DEP and project advisor to a number of SRWC and Stream Restoration Incorporated projects. The second award was presented to **Tim Ference** from the Friends of the Nescopeck. Many thanks to conference sponsors, which included the Pennsylvania DEP, Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Association, Tetra Tech, Solar Landscape, Earth Conservancy, New Jersey Resources Clean Energy Ventures, BEG Group, Pagnotti Enterprises, and Kleinfelder, Inc.





A hummingbird moth visits a Blazing Star flower at the prairie of Jennings Environmental Education Center. Celebrate the Bloom was a festival held at the end of July to showcase this beautiful and unique flower.

SRWC Partners with Westminster College High School Science Camp

On July 7th, SRWC participant **Cliff Denholm** provided assistance to Westminster College's High School Science Camp program. The summer camp program led by Westminster College professors **Dr. Helen Boylan** and **Dr. Patrick Krantz** was a week-long event that included a variety of field trips and experiential learning activities. The camp came to the Jennings Environmental Education Center to learn about acid mine drainage and passive treatment systems. Cliff provided a tour of the treatment system and included an overview of the Slippery Rock Watershed, coal mining, formation of acid mine drainage, and treatment options. During the tour he discussed the individual treatment components of the passive system and some of the biogeochemical processes of how the system worked. The students then had the opportunity to conduct water monitoring of the system utilizing field kits to assess how the system was performing and see firsthand how the water quality changed from low pH water with no alkalinity and high amounts of iron to a neutral pH with alkalinity and very little iron as the water flowed through the system. The student also collected and identified macroinvertebrates from one of the wetlands which further indicated the success of the system. What a great way to spend the day!





The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Connect the Dots: The Amazing Owl!

Owls are incredible creatures! In Pennsylvania there are 9 different species of owl, with the Great Horned Owl being the largest and also one of the most common. Interestingly, the Great Horned Owl doesn't have horns. Those protrusions that stick up at the top of this owl's head aren't ears, either — they are actually tufts of feathers called plumicorns. Great Horned Owls make the common owl sound that can often be heard at night, as males and females will sometimes call back and forth to each other: it sounds like “hoo-h-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo!” Owls are able to rotate their necks 270 degrees in either direction, which means they can see behind them by turning their head! This ability is made possible by owls having 14 bones in their necks. Humans only have 7 neck bones. Owls also have amazing hearing, being able to hear sounds that are 10 miles away! Their eyes are about the size of our eyes; if this proportion was kept the same, our eyes would be the size of oranges! We hope you enjoy our owl connect-the-dots activity for the month. Once your owl is created, if you send him to us we'll email you a \$1 Amazon credit through a parent's email address! You can save credits to buy something extra cool!



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

Thanks to The William & Frances Aloe Charitable Foundation, Environmentally Innovative Solutions, LLC, Dominion Peoples, Amerikohl Mining, Inc., Quality Aggregates Inc., Drs. Ron & Kathy Falk Family, BioMost, Inc., Allegheny Mineral Corporation and PA DEP for their support. For more information contact: Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition, c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated (PA non-profit), 434 Spring Street Ext., Mars, PA 16046 (724)776-0161, fax (724)776-0166, sri@streamrestorationinc.org, www.srwc.org. August distribution: 240 copies

Blacks Creek Maintenance Pond Completed & BC19 System Cleaned

In May, a sludge pond was constructed uphill of the BC16 system in the Blacks Creek subwatershed of Slippery Rock Creek. The pond was strategically built to be able to be used for maintenance of the BC16, BC19/19B, and McIntire systems as well as potentially other future projects in the area. The project was funded by an EPA 319 Nonpoint Source grant. The pond was designed by BioMost, Inc and constructed by Solid Rock Excavating. Once the pond was built, maintenance was conducted at the BC19/19B System, which was originally constructed in 2004. Excess vegetation and debris were removed and sludge was pumped to the pond. This maintenance will ensure the system continues to succeed in treating impacted water, and the new pond will play a critical role.

