

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

NEXT MEETING: March 14, 2024, at 7 pm at Jennings Environmental Education Center. New faces are always welcome! Free pizza and pop provided! February meeting was cancelled.

Improving the Prairie at Jennings

On Saturday, January 20, 2024, Jennings Environmental Education Center held the 23rd annual Prairie Improvement Day. It was a day when upwards of 80 members of the community pitched in to assist with resource management in the prairie. By removing shrubs and other woody growth that is competing with the native wildflowers and grasses, volunteer workers helped to ensure the prairie remains open and a viable habitat for the various plants and animals that call it home.

This unique prairie ecosystem is home to the blazing star flower (*Liatrus spicata*) and the endangered eastern massasauga rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus*). These species, and many others, are shade intolerant and depend on full sun for growth and regulating body temperatures. The work completed during this year's Prairie Improvement Day will be apparent in late July and early August when the prairie is in full bloom.

All those who dedicated their time and efforts were thanked with a customized soup mug to take home and a buffet featuring 15 different types of soups generously donated by local restaurants, volunteers and park staff. Thank you to everyone who attended and made the event a success! An extra special "Thank you" to Prospect BSA Troop 33 who showed up before daylight to prepare everyone hearty breakfast sandwiches.





Volunteers at the annual Prairie Improvement Day gather near a sign for Jennings Environmental Education Center just outside the prairie area. About 80 folks participated in clean-up and management activities on January 20th to help Jennings staff keep the prairie healthy (see article front page).

SRI Welcomes a New Employee

Stream Restoration Incorporated (SRI) hired their newest environmental scientist, **Natalie Lamagna**, who started working for SRI this past August 2023. Natalie is excited to be involved in a variety of watershed restoration projects and has had an interest in abandoned mine drainage ever since she completed an internship focusing on AMD pollution. As part of the internship, she participated in SRI's 2020 Statewide AMD



Passive Treatment Snapshot project which involved sampling of streams and passive treatment systems. Prior to working at SRI, Natalie received her Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from Saint Vincent College and received her Masters of Science in Environmental Science & Management from Duquesne University. Natalie did research in Dr. Trun's lab at Duquesne where she studied the abundance and role of sulfur reducing bacteria in AMD passive treatment systems. Natalie had presented some of her research at two of the Westminster College and SRWC "Student Symposium on the Environment" events as an undergraduate and graduate student. In December 2020, she participated in the virtual event on "Phosphorus Adsorption to Iron Precipitates from AMD." At the December 2022 event, she gave a poster presentation entitled "Microbial Sulfate Reduction in Acidic and Circumneutral AMD Passive Remediation Systems." She says her favorite part of the job so far is getting out in the field as well as meeting different watershed groups. When not on the job, Natalie may still be spotted by water doing hobbies such as fishing, canoeing, and just enjoying the outdoors. SRI and the SRWC are excited to have Natalie a part of our team!



The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Super Solar Eclipse Word Search

A solar eclipse happens when, at just the right moment, the moon passes between the earth and the sun. If the moon blocks all of the sun's light, this is called a total solar eclipse. If the moon blocks only part of the sun's light it is known as a partial solar eclipse. If you're in the path of totality it will get as dark as dusk or dawn! Animals can get confused because they don't understand what is happening. We can't normally see the sun's outer atmosphere (the corona) because the sun's surface below it is so much brighter, but the corona is visible during a total solar eclipse. Mark your calendars for April 8, 2024 to catch a rare glimpse of this amazing celestial event! See if you can locate the 24 words hidden in the puzzle below, related to the 2024 eclipse. If you find them all, send us your completed paper in exchange for a \$1 Amazon credit that can be saved and added to! The credits are sent to a parent's email address, and you can buy yourself something extra fun!

Totality Eclipse Solar Path	Corona Diamond Ring Moon Shadow	Safety Eyes Glasses Darkness	Rare Orbit Celestial America	April Umbra Penumbra Align	Sun Dallas Erie Buffalo
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I	L	L	A	R	W	O	M	K	J	I	H	G	C	I	H	U	R	F	F	B	L
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Name _____ Age ____ Parent email address: _____



Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
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