

**Volume XXIV
Number 2
Spring 2017**

Save the Date:

June 17–
Kayaking 101, at
Prince Gallitzin
State Park, hosted
by the park, 3-
4:30pm.

July 6– SCRIP
board meeting,
Greenhouse Park,
3pm. Please bring
food or beverages
to share.

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Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project

Looking Towards a Sustainable Future by Adam Cotchen



INDIANA – On April 21, the League of Women Voters (LOWV) of Pennsylvania presented a unique, one-day event entitled “Thrive: Sustainable Economy Summit” in collaboration with the LOWV of Indiana County, the Center for Community Growth, Evergreen Conservancy, Indiana University of Pennsylvania’s (IUP) Sustainability Studies Program, and the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development. These organizations filled the historic Rustic Lodge with interested community members and representatives to hear presentations from an impressive list of speakers on a wide range of topics on the theme of sustainability.

The Summit was kicked off by Indiana County Commissioner Sherene Hess, a career conservationist and public policy worker, now serving her first term as commissioner.

Sharon Pillar of Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2) set the tone for the day with her presentation stating that “the Sustainable Economy is here” citing facts from the Clean Jobs Pennsylvania report. With 3 million clean energy jobs in the US and growing exponentially, it is hard not to be excited about the future for this industry.

As outlined in E2’s “Clean Jobs PA” report, there are 66,000 clean energy jobs at nearly 6,000 clean energy businesses in Pennsylvania already. Renewable energy is certainly not a new concept to our region, with Somerset and Cambria counties ranking second and third in PA in renewable energy production, primarily from wind. Only Lancaster County, the state’s solar leader, produces more renewable energy, thanks to a large number of farms now utilizing solar energy.

A panel of academic speakers from IUP, Duquesne University, and Saint Francis University (SFU) spoke on energy innovation, including; a unique windmill design, biodigesters for animal and food waste, and SFU Institute for Energy’s PA Wind Maps project. Dr. Terrence Collins from Carnegie Mellon University also spoke about green chemistry and its applications in clean manufacturing to reduce harmful by-products and emissions.

One of the highlights of the Summit was Joe Pizarchik’s presentation on mine reclamation and job creation. Pizarchik served as Director of the Department of Interior’s Office of Surface Mining Reclamation & Enforcement (OSMRE) in the Obama administration (2009-2017) and previously as Director of Pennsylvania’s Department of Environment Protection (PA DEP) Bureau of Mining & Reclamation.

Continued on page 2

Looking Toward a Sustainable Future *continued from page one*

He shared an interesting fact about the historical significance of coal mining in Pennsylvania, that before 1977, when regulations on reclamation tightened, one third of all coal mined in the US was mined in PA. This provided growth and prosperity that defined our region, but left a legacy of environmental issues. However, as Pizarchik pointed out, other opportunities can come from reclamation. He highlighted the Ehrenfeld reclamation project, currently underway, in Cambria County as one such opportunity. Pizarchik also spoke about the important reclamation work being completed by our co-generation power plants in the area as they provide us with energy from waste coal.

Over lunch, Jessica Shirley, PA DEP's Policy Director spoke about a new statewide planning project called "Finding Pennsylvania's Solar Future" which will equip the state to produce more solar energy by 2030. The project, which kicked off this year, was funded by a \$550,000 award from the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Program.

The afternoon featured a presentation on eco-tourism, geo-trails, and a grassroots sustainable asset mapping project from the Indiana County Tourist Bureau and Evergreen Conservancy.

The highlight of the afternoon was a presentation on sustainable agriculture, jobs and economic development from former PA Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and current Executive Director of the PA Association of Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), Hanna Smith-Brubaker.

She spoke about the importance of the \$7.5 billion PA agriculture industry, with 1 in every 15 jobs in the state relating to agriculture. She also spoke about challenges and opportunities for the future in improving local food sourcing, as currently, the average fresh food travels about 1500 miles from source to consumer.

The rest of the afternoon featured capacity-building sessions and presentations from a municipal perspective, including an interesting look at Monaca Borough's efforts from Borough Manager, Mario Leone, Jr.; a guide for sustainable municipal planning with Dr. Patricia DeMarco; and a talk on Sustainable Pennsylvania Community Certification program with Jim Price from Sustainable Pittsburgh.

Not only was the Summit a very informative event, it was also a great success for the grassroots organizations that planned it. The event has initiated the formation of the Indiana County Area Task Force for Sustainable Economic Development which received the blessing of the Indiana County Commissioners at their May meeting. Stay tuned as Indiana County looks towards a sustainable future.

Welcome New Board Member– Pam Milavec

Pam retired in 2015 from a 32-year career with the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The majority of that time was spent with the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, managing watershed restoration work. Since retiring, Pam has split her time between western PA and northern Arizona, getting involved in volunteer work on the Coconino National Forest while in Arizona. Pam hopes to use her work experience restoring watersheds impaired by abandoned mine drainage to help SCRIP in their efforts. She lives along the divide between the Stony Creek and Little Conemaugh watersheds. We are excited to have a person with her experience on board!



ASMR Conference A Student Perspective

by Justin Hugo



American Society of Mining and Reclamation (ASMR) held their annual conference in Morgantown, West Virginia, this year from April 9-13.

Saint Francis University (SFU) faculty members Ms. Morgan Whited, Ms. Kelsea Green, Dr. Julie LaBar, and Dr. William Strosnider all attended along with eleven student members of Saint Francis University's ASMR student chapter. In addition to Ms. Green and Dr. Strosnider, other SCRIP board members in attendance were Stefan Long, Melissa Reckner, and James Ecknerode.

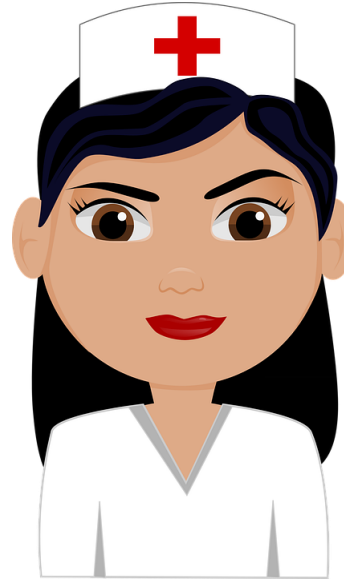
While at the conference, students and professors attended presentations and events which focused on the accomplishments and findings of professionals who have been focusing on mine reclamation work. Oral presentations on research and work in the field were given by six people from Saint Francis University, students Hannah Patton, Ashley Rovder, and faculty members Dr. Julie LaBar, Dr. William Strosnider, Ms. Kelsea Green, and Ms. Morgan Whited.

Saint Francis had a strong showing of students who presented research posters during the poster session to professors, judges and professionals working in reclamation. The SFU students who presented posters were awarded an undergraduate poster award for the research they conducted. Many students were also generously awarded travel grants to cover their expenses. Student Stefan Long was the recipient of the \$1000 ASMR Memorial Scholarship for his excellent work as a student in reclamation. Dr. Strosnider was nominated by his peers and recognized at the awards ceremony with the Early Career Award for his many accomplishments to date.

Students had the opportunity to present their research and display the hard work they had done in preparation for the conference. They were able to learn more about the field as well as make connections to help with future careers. All in all, it was a great success!

Justin attends Saint Francis University and is a student researcher of Ms. Morgan Whited, Engineering Lab Instructor, SFU Service Ambassador Coordinator for the Center for Watershed Research & Service.

Board Member in the Hospital



SCRIP Vice Chairman Joe Gorden is currently in Memorial's Lee Campus Specialty Care Unit in Johnstown Room 362 suffering from a very serious infection.

You can visit anytime from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM daily. However, be aware that Joe's current condition sometimes makes communication challenging.

In Memoriam—Frank Sojak

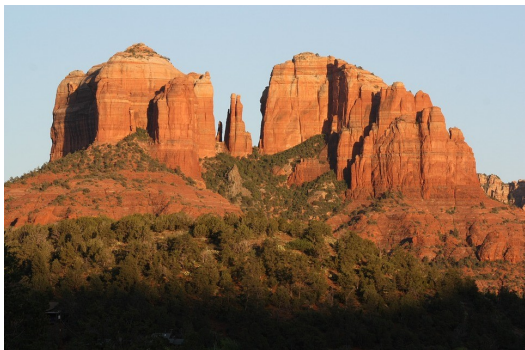


A moment of silence was held before the May 5 SCRIP board meeting to honor Frank Sojak who died on March 19. Even though Frank was not a board member, he did attend many board meetings and volunteered his time with the group. One creative contribution was the box of wooden key chains in the shape of various fish that he made with the SCRIP name, utilizing his wood-working skills. They were distributed at Outdoor Night before the Pirate game on May 25, 2016, as part of the information display that SCRIP participated in along with other environmental groups and state agencies.

Frank was a veteran news reporter with The Tribune Democrat in Johnstown before his retirement. His "Person of the Week" column was a popular feature in the paper. We wish to extend our condolences to the entire Sojak family.

AMD Passive Treatment Residual Used for Graffiti Removal

By Pam Milavec



Sedona, Arizona is famous for its beautiful red rock formations. Over 2.5 million people visit the surrounding Coconino National Forest Red Rock Ranger District annually. Unfortun-

nately, some of these visitors feel the need to leave their mark on the red rocks. Graffiti is a continuous problem on many popular hiking trails. Friends of the Forest is a volunteer group that works hand in hand with the US Forest Service to maintain, monitor and build trails, monitor and document thousands of archeology sites, lead educational hikes, provide trail information to visitors, and many other activities to minimize impacts to the forest. Friends of the Forest provides nearly 30,000 volunteer hours annually! The Friends of the Forest graffiti team has been busy removing graffiti as soon as it's reported.

Unfortunately, graffiti removal also removes the patina that develops over tens of thousands of years on the red rock formations. This patina is the result of interactions between microorganisms and minerals, and ranges in color from red to brown to black. As the team has refined their techniques, they've been experimenting with how to replace the patina once the graffiti is removed, usually with sand paper.

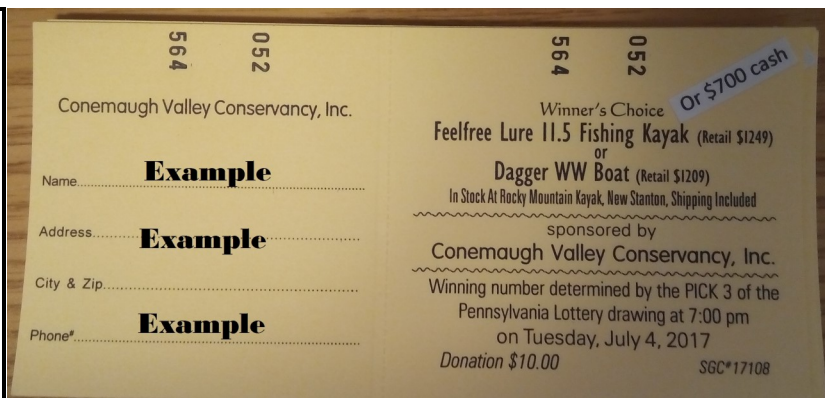
I'm very fortunate in that my husband and I have a small house in Sedona and are spending winters there. We are also very active with Friends of the Forest. Last winter, we took a small sample bag of iron oxide with us that was produced from AMD passive treatment systems in PA. This material is a pigment-grade iron oxide that was collected and produced by Iron Oxide Recovery, Inc as a beneficial re-use process. It is being used as a paint pigment and a small market has been developed with assistance from state and federal watershed grants. We thought we might find a use for it in Sedona, since so much of our surroundings are rocks that have a red color due to iron oxide.

When we learned that Friends of the Forest was experimenting with restoring the red rock patina, we offered the team some of the iron oxide. Turns out it was very successful! The resulting color matches very well with the natural patina color. The team has now incorporated the iron oxide pigments from PA's AMD treatment sites into their graffiti removal operations! A little pigment goes a long way, so it's not going to help in creating a market and restoring AMD-impacted watersheds. But, it's great that PA's AMD waste is helping to restore Sedona's red rocks!

Raffle Tickets Available to Support Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team

The Conemaugh Valley Conservancy is selling raffle tickets to support its Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team, which just wrapped up a busy spring of sampling and Trout in the Classroom Release Days. Please contact Missy at 814-444-2669 or mreckner@kcstreamteam.org if you'd like to purchase any or sell some.

Winning number will be determined by the PA Lottery drawing on Tuesday, July 4 at 7 pm. For more information, see the example to the right.



Winner's Choice— Feelfree Lure 11.5 Fishing Kayak, Dagger WW Boat or \$700 cash. Winning Number Determined by the PICK 3 of the Pennsylvania Lottery drawing on Tuesday, July 4, 2017 at 7 pm. Proceeds benefit Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team. Tickets are \$10.

Family Fishing Day at the Quemahoning Reservoir



Top three photos provided by Matt Hughes.



Fourteen people participated in the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)/ Stonycreek Conemaugh River Improvement Project (SCRIP) Family Fishing Day on Sunday, June 4, at the Quemahoning Reservoir Family Recreation Area from 1-5 pm. The PFBC staff, led by Kristi Niekamp, provided the instruction. Randy Buchanan, Jim Weaver and Len Lichvar assisted.

For more photos of the event, please visit the Stonycreek Conemaugh River Improvement Project Facebook page.

Bottom two photos provided by Len Lichvar.



A Guide to Safer Paddling



At the last SCRIP board meeting, the problem of kayak fatalities was discussed. Spring is a dangerous time for paddling because of the high, fast moving water. With spring activities already underway and summer approaching, it is a good time to review some safe paddling techniques.

*Information below is a summary of the Be Smart, Be Safe, Have Fun
A Beginner's Guide to Safer Paddling booklet.*

1. Always wear a life jacket.

- Adjust it to make sure it fits. Modern life jackets come in all sizes with models for children as well as adults.
- 85% of fatal canoeing accidents and 48% of kayaking fatalities involve those who were not wearing a life jacket.

2. Know Your Limits.

- Have the right boat for the conditions. Most canoes and kayaks are for use on protected waters and moderate currents. Specialized boats are used for whitewater, surf and exposed lakes or oceans.
- Practice in safe conditions and return to shore if you don't feel comfortable.
- Drinks and drugs are hazardous on the water. Coast Guard and state BUI laws apply to all vessels.

3. Carry the Paddling Essentials

- For safety: drinking water, signaling devices. Sit-inside kayakers should take a paddle float and pump.
- For communications: cell phone in waterproof case. A handheld VHF radio or Personal Locator Beacon may be called for in certain situations.
- For comfort: energy bars, lunch or extra layers in a "dry bag."

4. Plan for Changing Weather Conditions

- Treat the forecast as the best case, prepare for the worst case and pay attention.

5. Make Yourself Seen

- Dress for visibility, practice defensive paddling and know the rules of the road.

6. Tell a Friend

- Share your plan so someone will know where to send help if you need it.
- Include the 4 W's: Who (you and who is with you), Where (planned put-in and takeout), When (Estimated launch and return time), What To Do (if you don't check in or return as scheduled).

7. Dress for Immersion

- Cold kills— Your body loses heat about 25X faster when immersed in cold water than it does when dry.
- Dress your children well. They lose body heat faster than adults.
- High tech fabrics keep you dry and comfortable longer than cotton clothing.

8. Take a Paddling Class /Get More Information

- Check with the PA Fish and Boat Commission (fishandboat.com) or a local paddle shop for classes.
- Visit canoekayak.com for a series of tips.

Olivia Wolff is the 2017 Recipient of the \$500 SCRIP Scholarship

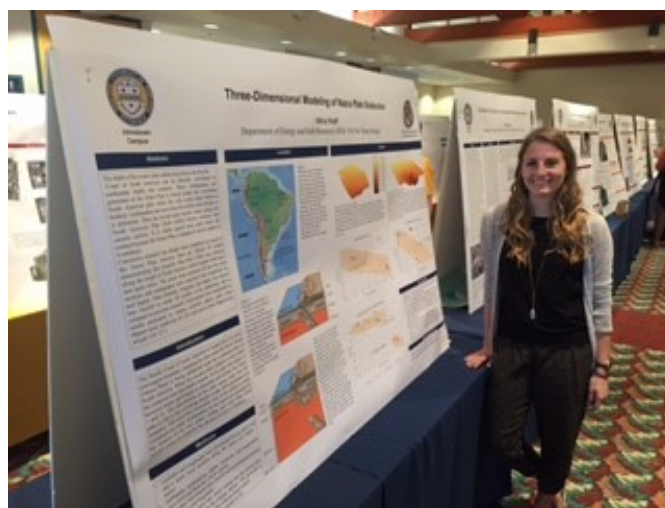


My name is Olivia Wolff and I am very honored to have been awarded the \$500 SCRIP scholarship for 2017. This scholarship is very much appreciated and I would like to thank everyone who made this possible. I am currently enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown and am on

track to graduate next spring with three majors; Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies, as well as with a GIS certificate. Although it hasn't always been easy, I am extremely thankful for the opportunity to triple major because it has allowed me to explore various environmental fields and has exposed me to numerous environmental classes just within four years.

In the fall, I intend on finding an environmental internship to solidify my in-class experiences while also performing geology research with Dr. Ryan Kerrigan along with working as a teaching assistant for Dr. William Kory.

Last fall I presented a map titled "Applied Drone Technology to Aerial Mapping at Height of 400 meters: Renfrew Museum and Park, Waynesboro, PA," at the annual Pennsylvania Geographical Society conference and was awarded first place for the Elaine Bosowski Map Award at the Undergraduate Level. I will present my geology research with Dr. Ryan Kerrigan at the Northeast Section of the Geological Society of America conference in the spring of 2018 in Burlington, Vermont.

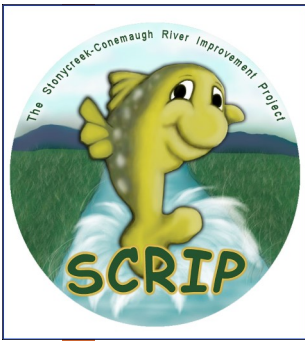


My goal is to use these opportunities and achievements as a basis to begin my graduate studies in the fall of 2018. Although I do not know which environmental field I will be focusing on, my intention is to apply to numerous graduate schools across the country. Once again, thank you for the giving me this opportunity and investing in the future of environmental sciences.

Join or renew* SCRIP today!

Name _____
 Street Address _____ City _____
 State/Zip _____ Email _____
 Phone _____ Date _____ Do you wish to volunteer? _____
 Student (\$6) Individual (\$15) Family (\$20)
 Club/Small Business (\$50) Patron (\$50) Sustaining (\$100)
 Sponsor (\$500) Lifetime (\$1000)

Make your check payable to **SCRIP**, or for a tax-deductible contribution, make the check to **Southern Alleghenies Conservancy/ SCRIP**. * If you are not sure of your membership status contact SCRIP's secretary at 814-444-2669 or mreckner@kcstreamteam.org. Send donations to: **SCRIP, P.O. Box 164, Windber, PA 15963**



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SCRIP is the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project,
 a coalition of grass-roots groups and local resource agencies working to
 restore and promote the Upper Conemaugh watershed.

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