

Volume XXV
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Save the Date:

Sept. 20– Fish Habitat Day at Que Family Recreation Area, 5 pm. See block at bottom of page 1.

Sept. 27– SCRIP Board meeting at Saint Francis University in Loretto at 3pm. Post meeting activities at Coal Country Brewery.

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Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project

Kayak Angling Event at the Que

by Len Lichvar



Dave Ohmer, of the Laurel Highlands Chapter of Kayak Anglers, discusses specialized kayak equipment and techniques to the attendees.

Photo by Len Lichvar

The attendees prepare to test their new skills on the water.

Photo by Len Lichvar



On July 25 SCRIP sponsored a Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) Kayak Angling program at the Quemahoning Reservoir’s Family Recreation Area. The event drew 17 participants who were instructed on all aspects of paddling and kayak safety. Chad Foster, Education Specialist for the PFBC, coordinated the program and conducted specific instruction on angling from a kayak. Also several members of the Laurel Highland Chapter of Kayak Anglers were on hand to cover detailed kayak angling techniques and equipment. All of the attendees then had the opportunity to test their new kayak and fishing skills on the water. SCRIP board members Joe Gorden, Robb Piper and Len Lichvar attended and assisted at the event.

The ongoing Somerset Conservation District sponsored Quemahoning Reservoir Fish Habitat Project will continue on Thursday September 20 beginning at 5:00 PM. The PA Fish and Boat Commission Bureau of Habitat Management Lake Division will coordinate the construction and installation of 40 fish habitat structures. Volunteers are welcome and needed. For more information contact Len Lichvar at 814-659-7057 or email at LennyLL@yahoo.com.



One of the three igloos staff would cover with ice for the penguins.

Photo by Melissa Reckner

Long-Time Stream Team Director and SCRIP Secretary Accepts New Position

In July, Melissa Reckner, the long-time Stream Team Director and SCRIP Secretary, accepted a position with the Brandywine Conservancy. Although it is based in eastern PA, the Brandywine was bequeathed to Mr. Richard Mellon Scaife's family estate and farm along Thomas Road in Laughlintown in 2015. The estate, called Penguin Court for the 10 penguins that used to roam the grounds, is over 900 acres of mostly forested land and there is a 7,000 square-foot conservatory, a large greenhouse, and a small pond on the property. Melissa will be serving as Penguin Court's Program Manager, working to utilize the grounds for educational purposes and collaborating with partners to support research, conservation, and especially the use of native plants, which are grown in the greenhouse and adjacent production garden. Stay tuned for Penguin Court programs!

Adopt a Site Intern by Andrew Ferko

The Adopt-a-Site internship has been one of the most beneficial experiences I have had as an environmental engineering undergraduate student at Saint Francis University. During our Field Measurements course, my class was contracted to improve the performance of the Reitz #1 Passive Treatment System in Central City for the Shade Creek Watershed Association. Fortunately, the system was within close distance of my home. Through the help of Drs. Bill Strosnider and Julie LaBar of Saint Francis University, and funding from the Center for Watershed Research and Service, I am able to assist the Shade Creek Watershed Association in maintaining an efficient treatment system. I also obtained hands-on experience with the instrumentation and critical thinking skills associated with my major.

In the past 7 months, I have performed a variety of different tasks for the system. My work began in class, where we rebuilt limestone barriers, fluffed compost, performed a water quality assessment, and built a wildlife habitat in the bioreactor. Since then, I have performed my own water quality assessments, unclogged pipes, cleaned stop logs, cut grass, constructed miniature educational models of the system, repaired limestone barriers, and a variety of other minor maintenance jobs as directed by the head of the Shade Creek Watershed Association, Larry Hutchinson. My current work centers upon upgrading the discharge pipe so that it is possible to measure the amount of water being discharged from the system.

The Adopt-a-Site internship has proven itself a valuable educational tool in that it gives undergraduate students a chance to work in their field and experience real problems, while still having professors to mentor them along the way. This job has also given me opportunities to meet new people in my field and make contacts that may help me advance throughout my career. Through this work, I have met several members of the Department of Environmental Protection. In conclusion, the adopt a site internship has helped me dig deeper into the fundamentals of Environmental Engineering, adapt to working with new people, improved my water quality instrumentation skills, and helped me meet some of the environmental work force. I would recommend a similar opportunity to any undergraduate student.



SFU Environmental Engineering students Andrew Ferko IV (left), of Central City, and Ashley Rovder (right), of Richland, doing a goofy dance on the habitat structure they just constructed at the Reitz #1 passive treatment system.

Photo by Dr. Bill Strosnider

Oven Run AMD Site Tour Showcases Rehab Project

By Len Lichvar

The Somerset Conservation District sponsored an Oven Run AMD Site Tour on May 17, 2018. The concept was to showcase the Oven Run Rehab Project that is currently under way. The group of over two dozen attendees included State Representative Bryan Barbin and Somerset County Commissioner and SCRIP Board member John Vataavuk. The group stopped at Site A where the contractor is currently reconstructing the water intake that has been problematic since its original installation that has hindered the water reaching the treatment system.

The group next arrived at Oven Run Site E near Wilbur where the stone washing process was occurring. This project, when completed, will not only totally bring the system into full operation but will also treat more water that has been bypassed for the last 20 years.

At both sites District Manager Len Lichvar and District Watershed Specialist Greg Shustrick, along with PA Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) Technical Assistance Group Conservation Engineer Danielle Kalp and PACD Technicians Phil Wilson and Phil Gardner, provided the attendees with project information and answered questions.

The final stop was at Oven Run Site D, known as Oaks Trail, that is not functioning properly and along with Site F, known as Hawk View, where there is not sufficient funding currently in place to begin any rehab work at either site.

The take home message was that unless funding can be found these systems along with the Site A treatment system will continue to lessen their essential functions of AMD abatement and the Stonycreek River's water quality will begin to significantly degrade.

The District has recently submitted a million dollar grant request to the PA Department of Community and Economic Development to enable the rehabilitation of these remaining systems. The request also includes an initial amount of funds to create a trust fund for future operation and maintenance. Time will tell if this grant will be funded. The future of the Stonycreek River currently hangs in the balance.



Limestone rock being washed and cleaned for reuse in Oven Run site E.
Photo by Len Lichvar

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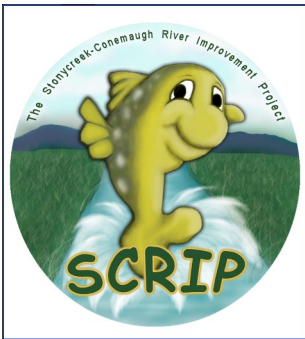
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SCRIP is the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project, a coalition of grass-roots groups and local resource agencies working to restore and promote the Upper Conemaugh watershed.

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