

**Volume XXVIII
Number 3
Summer 2021**

Save the Date:

September 9– SCRIP Board Meeting, Orenda Park, 3421 Penn Avenue, Boswell, 3 pm.

September 11– Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited annual banquet, Holiday Inn, Johnstown, at 5:30 p.m. Doors open at 5 pm. Tickets \$35 per person. Call 814-266-4763.

September 29– 30th Anniversary Tour and Green Drinks. *See page 3 for details.*

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Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project

Oven Run Reconstruction of Sites D, A and B

By Len Lichvar



Washing of the limestone rock at Oven Run Site D.
Photo by Shane Rudnik
Other photos of Oven Run on page 2.

Reconstruction of Oven Run Site D, aka Oaks Trail, AMD treatment system is underway. Site D is one of the four Oven Run systems the Somerset Conservation District is legally responsible to perpetually maintain. The reconstruction of the site will consist of washing of existing limestone, new compost, new water control structures and the planting of a wetland. In addition, new interpretive trail signage will be installed after the project is completed.

Prior to the start of the work at Site D, the intake for Oven Run Site A was fitted with a Coanda Screen (*photo on page 2*), which will for the first time since the system was constructed over 20 years ago, allow for a consistent flow of water to reach the system and be treated. When Site D is completed, the reconstruction of the treatment system at Site A will begin. Both projects are anticipated to be completed by the end of the year.

The funding for both projects comes from federal AML Pilot Funds through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) and contracted and administered by the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds to the District. Project design was completed by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District’s Technical Assistance Group and the project management and oversight is being accomplished by the Somerset Conservation District.

Oven Run Site B is currently being reconstructed by the PA DEP which funded, designed and constructed the site over 20 years ago. SCRIP is responsible for encouraging the Department to review the original system and consider a redesign and reconstruction. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

**SCRIP’S 30th Anniversary Celebration!
Oven Run Tour and Green Drinks (*see page 3*)**



Left-Oven Run AMD Treatment System Site D aka Oaks Trail under reconstruction. *Photo by Shane Rudnik*

Above- The functioning Coanda Screen at the Oven Run Site A intake. *Photo by Len Lichvar*

Oven Run Challenge Contribution

The Somerset County Conservancy has initiated a \$5,000.00 challenge contribution for the Somerset Conservation District's Oven Run Site A, D, E and F Trust Fund. The Conservancy will match up to \$5,000.00 in donations to the fund through October 31, 2021.

The Casselman River Watershed Association has taken the challenge and has contributed \$500.00 to the Fund. Currently the Trust Fund has over \$40,000.00 that has been contributed in less than one year of existence. To contribute go to cfalleghenies.org/oven-run.

Podcast on History and AMD Abatement In Upper Conemaugh River Watershed



SCRIP Vice-Chairmen Len Lichvar recently completed a 50 minute long podcast for the Johnstown *Tribune-Democrat* on the 30th Anniversary of SCRIP and the background and history of the AMD abatement efforts in the upper Conemaugh River watershed. *Tribune-Democrat* photo/journalist John Rucosky conducted the interview which will be available on the newspaper's website in conjunction with the upcoming additional media coverage of the **September 30th Anniversary** events and Oven Run Tour.

Oven Run Tour/Green Drinks Event

In Celebration of SCRIP'S 30th Anniversary!



Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Bus Tour of the Oven Run Abandoned Mine Treatment Project
and Green Drinks Event

Do One or Both!

Free Tour 4:00-6:30 pm leaving from Greenhouse Park Green Drinks at Crow's Nest 6:30-8:30pm

Do you enjoy tubin', kayaking, canoeing or fishing on the Stonycreek River or one of its tributaries? Or do you just like looking at clean, unpolluted streams and enjoying the benefits to our local economy? The Oven Run passive treatment systems that restored the Stony were installed nearly 30 years ago and were desperately in need of rehabilitation. Take a bus tour with us (**leaving from Greenhouse Park, 100 Greenhouse Road, Johnstown 15905**) to see how these systems work, what work has been completed and what still needs to be done to keep these systems functioning properly. Then join us for free snacks and a cash bar afterwards at the **Crow's Nest, 510 Tire Hill Road, Johnstown 15905**. Stay as long as you like and get to know others who share this same interest.

Bus tour is free but you must register.

Deadline is September 22, 2021

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/scrips-30th-anniversary-oven-run-tour-green-drinks-tickets-165418817135>

**No registration needed for Green Drinks
(Donations for Oven Run Trust Fund
Appreciated-- to Keep Stony Alive!)**

Green Drinks is an informal network for anyone interested in or working in environment, sustainability, climate change or other related fields.

Green Drinkers come from many different walks of life, but with a common interest in the environment.

For more info: www.greendrinks.org

Sponsored by:



SCRIP's 30th Anniversary– A Look Forward and Back by Len Lichvar

SCRIP was officially created at an “ad hoc committee” meeting at U. S. Congressman John Murtha’s office in Johnstown on August 7, 1991. The concept was to have SCRIP become the coordinating force behind the attempt to reduce historic AMD pollution in the Stonycreek and Little Conemaugh watersheds. That goal was something that had not been attempted in the past and success was not assured. The initial board members of SCRIP were chosen from the Conservation Districts in Somerset and Cambria Counties, sportsmen groups, non-profits, business and industry and state and federal agencies. Their assignment was daunting.

As founding and still current SCRIP board member Joe Gorden relates, “When Congressman Murtha created SCRIP, he charged it with making Johnstown’s rivers swimmable, fishable and drinkable by 2000. The task seemed insurmountable and there were many doubters. But, that goal has largely been achieved in the community with facilities such as Greenhouse Park and water borne recreation such as the Stonycreek Rendezvous and businesses such as Coal Tubin’ bring people from far and near to recreate in a region that had little to offer in that regard prior to SCRIP’s efforts.”

SCRIP took advantage of new and untested technology such as wetland passive treatment systems and assessed the countless AMD pollution sources, secured land rights to locations where systems could be built, enabled the funding, design, administration and eventual construction of the treatment systems through orchestrating and empowering its local, state and federal partners to achieve those goals.

The historic improvement of water quality in the Stonycreek River has fueled an economic revival in the Cambria-Somerset region. The water quality improvement, that has provided clean water for industrial and potable water and restored over 20 miles of fishery, is the foundation upon which all of the other outdoor oriented amenities now in place were built that have collectively created a thriving eco-tourism industry in the region.

The success of SCRIP was highlighted with the naming of the Stonycreek River as River of the Year in the state in 2012.

SCRIP’s successes have not stopped there. Among other major achievements is the public acquisition of the Manufacturers Water Company properties that included the Quemahoning Reservoir and over 5,000 acres of land and water. That initiative began at a SCRIP board meeting in 1997 and SCRIP and its conservation partners created a plan for acquisition, secured the purchase costs and built public and legislative support for the effort to bring two counties together to do something that had not been done before. The formation of the Cambria-Somerset Authority in 2000 was a direct result of those challenging several year long efforts.

More recently SCRIP was the most influential organization in working with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) to resolve a major permitting issue with Corsa Coal that will now enable an active AMD treatment system to be designed, funded and constructed in the Shade Creek watershed. When complete it will restore over 18 miles of Shade Creek and significantly improve the water quality of the lower Stonycreek River.

As SCRIP Chairman Tom Clark puts it, “I believe the resurgence you are seeing in the region is a direct reflection of the resurgence of our rivers. That would not have happened without SCRIP bringing parties together over the last 30 years. Every year we take a bigger bite of the apple with restoration projects and every year our rivers improve a little more. The biggest bite is yet to come with the planned PA DEP Little Conemaugh River Active Treatment Plant near Portage.”

Joe Gorden adds, “If SCRIP quit now, it would have to be considered a success beyond expectations. But there is much more to be done. Among other things there needs to be continuing funding support for and maintenance of the treatment systems that brought the Stonycreek River back. Otherwise we stand to lose much of what we have gained.”

To learn more about SCRIP visit www.scrippa.org or contact the [Somerset Conservation District](#) at 814-445-4652 Ext. 5 or the [Cambria County Conservation District](#) at 814-472-2120.

Introduction to Kayaking at the Que Held on August 14

The PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), in partnership with SCRIP, presented an Introduction to Kayaking program in classes offered at 9 and 11am on August 14 at the Quemahoning Reservoir's Public Recreation Area. Sixteen participants learned about PA legal requirements, choosing and properly wearing a life jacket, water hazards, and basic paddling skills from PA Fish and Boat Commission staff. After the instruction, they had time to paddle the Quemahoning Reservoir to practice their newly learned skills.



1



2



3



4

(1) PFBC staff member, Kristi Niekamp, reviewed PA legal requirements, gave instructions on choosing and fitting a personal floatation device (PDF) or life vest and other safety tips. (2) One safety example is having a sounding device, like a whistle that works if it gets wet, attached to your life vest. (3) Miranda Smith,

Specialist, demonstrated paddling techniques. (4) Of the variety of kayaks that were available, she noted that one of the kayaks, unlike the others, has a rudder. Final tip: Have a float plan and notify others before you head out on the water.

Join or renew* SCRIP today!

Name _____

Street Address _____ City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Date _____ Do you wish to volunteer? _____

To renew or become a Member, please complete Parts 1 and 2 below.

Part 1. Check your desired membership level.

<input type="checkbox"/> Student (\$6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$20)
<input type="checkbox"/> Club/Small Business (\$50)	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron (\$50)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (\$100)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor (\$500)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime (\$1000)	

Part 2. Select Option A OR Option B:

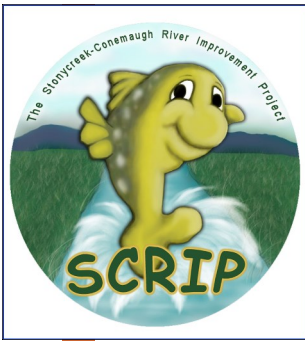
A. I am fine receiving an electronic version of the newsletter for the cost listed above for my membership level. My email address is: _____

(Please mail your check in this amount to the address below.)

B. I would like to receive a mailed copy of the newsletter. Add \$5 to membership cost listed above.

(Please mail the membership fee plus \$5 mailing fee to the address below.) Total Cost \$ _____

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



SCRIP
P.O. Box 164
Windber, PA
15963

**Place
Stamp
Here**

www.scrippa.org

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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