



SOMERSET COUNTY CONSERVANCY A Charitable Trust

Newsletter

Spring , 2009

Lamberts Run Restoration Projects

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On February 6th at a meeting (see page 4) a plan was developed to treat the AMD discharges in all of Lamberts Run. Somerset County Conservancy Board member Dan Seibert is taking the lead as project manager to spearhead these Lamberts Run restoration projects. At an April 16th meeting of all the partners involved in the project plans were discussed, refined and assigned.

The project will be done in two phases because we must wait until the Flight 93 properties are acquired by the National Park Service from the Flight 93 families. Once ownership has changed and we secure access easements the ground work can begin on the Heinemyer and Ant Hill discharges. Design and funding stages are already being done.

Initially The Conservancy site will be refurbished and improved by constructing a new treatment cell with automatic flushing capabilities to continually flush the high aluminum concentrations from the treatment rock in the new cell. The design work should be completed by Sept 30, 2009 and construction completed by September 30, 2010.

The second Phase will bring the Heinemyer water over to the Ant Hill discharges where they will be combined and treated as one. The timeline on this phase depends on acquiring access easements and DEP permits.

The overall goal for the Lamberts Run Projects is to completely treat the discharge, reduce acidity and aluminum to 1 mg/L or less. The objective is to restore a trout fishery to Lamberts Run.

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Conservationist and Environmentalist Unite!

Jeff Payne

A Conservancy is in the business of preserving land in a substantially natural state with an intact natural ecosystem maintaining as much as possible of the flora and fauna native to that particular habitat. Sometimes rehabilitation projects are undertaken by Conservancies to help repair or restore previously damaged or altered land or some of their constituent parts such as their water, wetlands, forests or open grasslands or open meadows. The work of a Conservancy is often directed towards saving habitats that contain imperiled species of plants or animals, but in preserving these natural habitats a host of other more common species will often thrive.

Maintaining healthy lands benefits not only the plants and animals but also humans. People benefit whether they live in or near an area, visit or explore, or indeed just read about and know that these areas exist and are protected. Two large groups of people who care the deepest about natural landscapes are loosely tagged conservationists and environmentalists. Generally speaking the conservationist wants to maintain the land in good shape to provide a long term human use such as farming, hunting the surplus animals, or fishing. The environmentalist is more concerned about preserving the land for its own sake. They are content with non-consumptive activities such as hiking or wildlife viewing. They are very aware that natural landscapes can have important indirect benefits such as wetlands functioning to clean and store water and forests storing carbon and cleaning the air as well as hosting many interrelated species.

Many folks, especially those who work with and support land conservancies, have a foot in both camps. They understand both ideologies and the underlying reality that healthy ecosystems are absolutely essential for both consumptive and nonconsumptive activities.

Unfortunately there is frequently friction between these groups which hurts the ultimate goal of maintaining healthy land and all the creatures which live there. Lest we forget, people who feel a connection to the land—be they conservationist, environmentalist or both—are a minority these days. People who would pollute, pave, extract the earth's resources without restoration or who just do not care about or understand the natural world outnumber those of us who do care.

The infighting can be depressing. The conservationist may complain about the “radical” environmentalist who supports reintroducing wolves (or locally fishers) which will eat elk (or locally squirrels) that could be hunted. The environmentalist may rave that the “blood-thirsty” hunting conservationist only cares about abundant deer or ducks to shoot. But the environmentalist leads the fight against non-sustainable industrial practices that damage the land and fights for environmental laws to protect our natural resources. And the conservationist often leads the way financially with licenses and fees that support our government agencies charged with protecting game and non-game species and the lands and waters that they inhabit. These hunters and fishermen also seem a little more inclined to put their “muscles where their mouth is” when it comes to on the ground habitat work. So are not both groups benefiting from the each other's work?

We should all remember that underlying all of our goals is the requirement for healthy natural habitats and ecosystems. This is true whether your passions lie mostly with preserving Cerulean Warblers and Purple Fringeless Orchids or hunting the year's surplus of White-tailed Deer. The land is the key.

So throw your support to the Conservancies. We are writing this so, of course, we hope you will continue to support the Somerset County Conservancy and our local work. Also remember that other groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy do many large scale projects and could also use your help. Perhaps you will even consider buying a “Duck Stamp” the next time you are in a post office. You will enjoy free admission to our National Wildlife Refuges and be supporting the oldest program dedicating funding for land acquisition.

Annual Membership Banquet

Our Annual Membership Banquet was held on December 3rd at the Somerset Trust Company's Meeting Room in the old bank building at the corner of N. Center Ave. and Union St. We had a great meal catered by The Chuck Wagon Restaurant under the beautiful domed roof. The evenings entertainment was a photographic trip down the Stonycreek River entitled "The Stonycreek, Beginning to End" provided by Dave Escherich. In the business portion of the meeting Directors Brooke Cook, Dave Mankamy, Bob Hook, Roger Latuch and Thurman Korn were elected to three year terms on the Board. The election of officers for 2009 was Jim Moses, President, Jeff Payne DVM, Vice President, Brooke Cook, Treasurer and Lester Brunell, Secretary.



SCC Sponsors Que Classic

SCC is again one of the sponsors of the Quemahoning Classic Fishing Tournament held this year on June 20, 2009 7:00 AM to Noon. Prizes for Men, Women and Youth participants. All participants must pre-register at 814-444-2669 or mail info to:

Quemahoning Classic
1800 Somerset Street
Windber, PA 15963

Prizes for Large and Smallmouth Bass, Trout, Pike, Muskellunge, carp and Walleye.

Contest Rules and Entry Fee's available at the above Registration Office.

WANTED

Work Party Volunteers

The SCC has numerous work parties throughout the year to plant trees, make trails, do cleanups at our sites and other tasks. This is a great opportunity for members to get involved, meet the board members and others, and to do a good deed for the day. We always seem to have fun in one of our beautiful projects. Anyone interested in participating in one or more work parties during the year can contact Jim Moses at jrmoses@shol.com to get on the contact list for upcoming projects.

The Conservancy Completes its 5 year Strategic Plan

The Board of Directors of the Somerset County Conservancy has officially adopted its five year Strategic Plan.

Our **Mission Statement:**

The Somerset County Conservancy provides for the permanent protection of land and its resources. We offer stewardship, education, and advice for the preservation and enhancement of natural, scenic, historic, and open space lands.

The following is an abbreviated listing of the primary purposes of the Somerset County Conservancy:

To promote for the benefit of the general public the preservation, restoration and improvement of natural resources principally in, but not limited to the geographical boundaries of Somerset County. These resources shall include land and water resources, the plant and animal life thereon, and unique scenic, natural, and historic sites.

To engage in and promote the scientific study and education regarding such natural resources.

To use all properties held or controlled by the corporation and the net earnings thereof for the benefit of the general public and for charitable, educational, recreational, conservation, scientific, and historical purposes.

Flight 93 Memorial Meeting

Dan Seibert

On February 6th a meeting with DEP Bureau of Mining and Reclamation officials was held at the DEP Cambria Office in Ebensburg. The meeting was attended by the DEP Bureau of Mining and Reclamation, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Somerset Conservation District, Stonycreek Conemaugh Improvement Project, **Somerset Conservancy**, and Stu Horner owner of Lambert Falls. The multi purpose meeting was 3 fold.

The first item discussed was the progress in establishing the trust fund to operate the active treatment systems on PBS land recently purchased by the families of Flight 93 victims. The trust fund has been established and 50% funded by the families of Flight 93. The amount determined to maintain the system is 2.34 Million. The remaining 50% will be placed in the fund when the Flight 93 families sell the PBS land to the National Park Service.

Secondly, the quality of Lamberts Run was also discussed. Copious amounts of data and graphs about the quality of Lamberts Run was provided by DEP. At the mouth of Lamberts Run pH levels have ranged between 7.2 and 8, alkalinity between .8 and 96 mg/L (avg. 50.7), iron between .6 and 3.42 mg/L and no acidity. The bottom line is, lamberts Run is definitely improved over a year ago. The effectiveness of the PBS treatment system was reviewed. Current water quality coming out of the system is pH- 7.8, iron 1.46, aluminum <.5, manganese 13.1, alkalinity 108 and no acidity. Flow rates out of the system has averaged 1120 gallons per minute. Quick calculations reveal that the PBS system is producing 1,452 lbs of alkalinity per day or 265 tons per year. These high alkalinity levels may possibly be used to add alkalinity to the passive systems to be constructed for the Heinemyer and Ant Hill discharges.



The last item discussed was the remediation of the Heinemyer and Ant Hill discharges on the **Somerset Conservancy** property. A Growing Greener Grant proposal has been submitted by the Somerset Conservation District to treat these discharges. The grant proposal includes planning, design and inspection costs. The grant proposal was for \$361,000. This amount will not be enough to construct systems for both discharges.



The site has been flown and photography is available to develop a detailed topographic map of the area of concern. Along with developing the topographic map, benchmarks need to be established in the field to tie the topographic map to actual ground elevations. Four benchmarks need to be established. The **Somerset Conservancy** will work with the Bureau of Mining and Reclamation to acquire the needed additional information. Once the Growing Greener Grant is received the planning and design of the system can proceed.

2009 World Series of Birding Fund Raising for the Conservancy

Each year Dr.'s Jeff and Retta Payne participate in the NJ Audubon's World Series of Birding to raise money for conservation. Once again they have selected us as one of their beneficiaries of their efforts. On May 9, 2009 their team including their son Christopher will scour the marshes, shores and woods of Cape May County NJ for as many species as possible. Because of added challenges this year they are not expecting to top their previous high count of 163 but we are hoping they do. You can help by pledging money based on their totals. You may pledge 5 cents, 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents or ? What ever you wish. If you pledge you will be sent a full accounting of the event.



Please mail your pledge to Jeff Payne at 9755 Glades Pike , Berlin, PA 15530
Or E-Mail your pledge to payment@chilitech.com ASAP

SCC Supports Outdoor Heritage Month

At the February 4, 2009 board meeting of the Somerset County Conservancy, Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team (KCST) Program Director, Melissa Reckner, spoke to the board about possible SCC involvement with Outdoor Heritage Month (OHM) and Outdoor Adventures (OA) slated to be held this April. As a result of the information presented regarding these events and the discussion which followed, the board agreed to participate as a sponsor at the Ruffed Grouse (\$250) level. In addition to the much appreciated monetary contribution, Reckner encouraged Conservancy members to attend OHM programs and, if possible, volunteer to help with the wide variety of activities and exhibits planned for elementary students from Somerset and Cambria counties at the Quemahoning Lake's Summer's Best Two Weeks facilities on April 23 and 24. Reservations have been made for a total of more than 1,000 area youngsters to participate in OA activities during this unique two-day event!

Outdoor Heritage Month programs and Outdoor Adventures, co-hosted by KCST and Natural Biodiversity (Kristin Sewak, Director), represent "an initiative of over 40 conservation organizations that is designed to recognize, conserve, and celebrate the rich natural and cultural heritage of Pennsylvania's Allegheny Mountains and to propel its citizenry, leaders, entrepreneurs and youth toward stewardship." The theme for OHM and OA 2009 is "Back to Basics - Going Old School Green." On March 24 the Pennsylvania House of Representatives unanimously passed HR 173, declaring April to be Outdoor Heritage Month in the Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Through sponsorship of this annual event, the Somerset County Conservancy and its members are doing their part to make this proclamation and the enriching opportunities it seeks to promote more meaningful for the young and the not-so-young of the Somerset-Cambria region.

To learn more about the educational, entertaining, and often family-oriented events listed for OHM 2009, go to www.ohmonth.com. If you wish to know more about Outdoor Adventures go to the website or contact KCST's Melissa Reckner at (814)444-2669 or NB's Kristin Sewak at (814)532-5049.

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 FUTURE NEWSLETTERS TO
 Jim Moses

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 — \$ 25 Family Member
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 — \$100 Patron, Club, Organization Member
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