



SCWA Newsletter

FALL EDITION

NOVEMBER 2012

**Sewickley
Creek
Watershed
Association**

*Working Together
For A Better
Environment*

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*Thomas W. Keller
Executive Director*

We're On The Web!
www.sewickleycreek.com

Trough Installation and Sludge Cleanout at Lowber



New trough installed between the first and second ponds at Lowber.

The last two weeks of June were very busy at our Lowber passive treatment system. Three of the pipes that have been creating operational issues because they were being plugged with iron solids were removed and replaced with open troughs so they will be easier to maintain. Two additional pipes will be replaced with similar troughs later this year. Funding for the work was provided by the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds and Trout Unlimited's Technical Assistance Program.

Simultaneously to the trough installation, iron sludge was removed from the first three ponds of the treatment system. Over the past six years, approximately 15 inches of sludge accumulated in the ponds and it was starting to decrease the system's effectiveness. The sludge was

pumped into geotubes placed adjacent to the first pond. The geotubes retain iron solids while releasing water that then flowed into the treatment system. Over 3,000 tons of iron sludge was removed using this method!

In August, the geotubes were cut open to promote drying, and by next summer, the dried iron oxide solid will be removed and processed into a saleable iron oxide pigment.

The iron sludge recovery and processing project is being managed by Iron Oxide Recovery, Inc. (IOR). This project was funded by IOR and a Growing Greener Grant administered by the Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation.

With both of these projects completed, the Lowber system has been producing crystal clear water all summer long!



Geotube being filled with iron sludge.



Save The Date!

2013 SCWA Annual Banquet

**Saturday, March 9
6-9 pm**

**Giannilli's II Restaurant
Greensburg**

Membership Renewal

If you haven't remembered to renew your membership in SCWA, please do so! Your membership directly supports our projects and programs. Please contact our office at (724) 925-3621, or visit our Website at www.sewickleycreek.com.

Thank you for your support!

Landowner Reclamation Project in Huntingdon Township

A large landowner reclamation project was recently completed in South Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County, adjacent to the town of Wyano. This 60+ acre site once showed the ugly scars of past surface and deep mining. The former owners and operators left the property in disrepair by not reclaiming the property as required, thus forfeiting their reclamation bond.

The recently new owner of the property is Triple C Recycling, managed by Charles Casturo. He was approached by the Westmoreland Conservation District and the Department of Environmental Protection to reclaim the property using the forfeiture funds allocated by the State Conservation Commission. Mr. Casturo was more than willing to assist with the project, and in 2010, contracted with Westmoreland Conservation District to perform the work.

Over the past several years, Mr. Casturo has worked to not only remove the scars of mining, but he has gone above and beyond to improve the property. Through the use of heavy equipment, the land was reshaped to more closely resemble the natural landscape. In addition, biosolids were used as a soil amenity to boost nutrient and pH levels to a point capable of sustaining vegetation. This once unproductive, barren land has been transformed into a more natural, productive and lush landscape thanks to this great effort.



Before



After

Beginning in the spring of 2013, area students and teachers will have the opportunity to visit our Lowber Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) treatment facility to see first-hand how we are cleaning mine discharge water. A tour map of the facility and description of how the treatment facility functions will also be available to groups for a self-guided walking tour, and can be found on our website, www.sewickleycreek.com. We encourage our members, neighbors and the general public to take advantage of this great tour experience!



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