



## Sewickley Creek Watershed Association

*Working Together For A Better Environment*

### Upcoming Events



**April 9<sup>th</sup>**  
SCWA Annual Fundraising Banquet  
Giannilli's II  
6:00 - 9:00 pm

**April 16<sup>th</sup>**  
Westmoreland Earth Day at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve

**April 30<sup>th</sup>**  
SCWA/Westmoreland Cleanways Cleanup

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# SCWA Newsletter

SPRING EDITION

MARCH 2011

## Join Us For Our Annual Fundraising Banquet!



The Sewickley Creek Watershed Association will hold its 2011 Fundraising Banquet on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 - 9:00 pm at Giannilli's II Restaurant. Giannilli's, formerly Charter Oak Bowling, is located east of Greensburg on Route 30 near the Mountain View intersection. Individual tickets are \$20.00 each, and must be purchased in advanced from a Board member or by calling (724) 836-8764.

Business sponsorships are available for \$250.00, and include eight (8) dinner reservations, a one-year SCWA membership and recog-

nition as a sponsor at the dinner, as well as in our newsletter and on our Website.

The buffet dinner will feature stuffed chicken breast, carved Italian beef, vegetables, salad, dessert and coffee. A cash bar will be available and raffle prizes will be given away along with a 50/50 drawing.

Following dinner, there will be a short presentation on the numerous accomplishments of this past year and award presentations to two local Eagle Scouts. Gary Sheppard, Westmoreland County Extension Director, will be our guest speaker on what Marcellus Gas drilling means to our watershed.

We welcome all members and friends to this fun event! This is a great opportunity to relax, put the memories of winter behind us, and learn how SCWA has been improving the quality of life in your backyard. We hope to see you there!

## Local Eagle Scout Candidate Completes Project

Michael Pacacha, Eagle candidate from Boy Scout Troup XXX in New Stanton, completed his Eagle project at Sewickley Creek's Brinkerton mine water discharge and remediation site in December, 2010. On a bitter cold Saturday morning, Michael supervised fellow scouts and their parents, as well as volunteers from SCWA to make repairs and enhancements to the abandoned mine drainage (AMD) project in Brinkerton, Mt. Pleasant Township.

The work involved repairing damage caused by vandals to a water level control structure, clearing brush from around two aerators, relocating a concrete barrier, constructing and installing a bat house, and eliminating unwanted vegetation alongside the treatment ponds. Michael's project involved over 100 hours of planning and on-site work.

The project site had been damaged by vandals repeatedly, including illegal timbering of mature trees on the site. Besides repairing prior damage, the barriers will hopefully eliminate trespassers on ATVs.

The bat house will help restore the diminishing bat populations suffering from a disease called "white nose syndrome." The treatment ponds should provide a sustainable food source for these bats by way of insects once they are reestablished.

Eagle projects such as this help the Association complete enhancements to our AMD projects and elsewhere throughout the watershed. SCWA will present Michael with an award in appreciation for his service at our upcoming Fundraising Banquet.



This damaged water level control structure was repaired, thanks to Michael Pacacha's Eagle Scout Project at the Brinkerton remediation site.

# Sewickley Creek Watershed Assessment Plan Nearing Completion

All 368 stream miles of Sewickley Creek have been assessed by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) and the preliminary results of the assessment have been entered into a database and mapped in a Geographic Information System (GIS). A detailed interpretation of the results will be provided in the final Sewickley Creek Assessment, Restoration and Implementation Plan.

To begin the assessment, the Sewickley Creek watershed was divided into five sub-watersheds to allow for better management of the collected data. Streams throughout the sub-watersheds were broken into segments and numbered according to the Department of Environmental Protection numbering system. (A stream segment is determined by the point at which a stream is joined with another tributary.) Each segment, regardless of length, was evaluated with the same criteria - there were over 550 segments in the watershed!

For those familiar with the abandoned mine drainage (AMD) issues of Sewickley Creek, you may notice there are stream segments identified in the assessment that have good to excellent ratings, but are known to be impacted by AMD. This is because the assessment protocol took 10 different parameters into account, including: available cover, embeddedness, velocity/depth regimes, sediment deposition, channel flow status,

channel alteration, frequency of riffles, bank stability, bank vegetation protection, and riparian zone width. AMD has limited influence of these parameters and little effect on the overall score, which primarily measures the habitat condition within the stream and along the stream corridor.

The final assessment report is being finalized, and will contain a detailed plan for the restoration of impacted stream segments in the entire Sewickley Creek Watershed. We will make you aware of when this publication is available for your review!



WPC's Alysha Trexler stands at the mouth of Sewickley Creek, and the end of the 368 mile assessment.

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## SCWA Awarded Mini-Grant

The Association was recently awarded a \$2,000 Dominion Watershed Mini Grant to partially fund a kiosk to showcase the Lowber Remediation Project, and provide financial support for electrical service to operate the Maelstrom Oxidizer at Wilson Run.

Financial support for the projects is provided by the Dominion Foundation which is dedicated to the economic, physical and social health of the communities served by Dominion companies. The grant program was administered by Western PA Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving PA's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership and collaboration.

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## Annual Cleanup April 9th

SCWA is partnering with Westmoreland Cleanways once again this year in the statewide "Great PA Cleanup" event planned for Saturday, April 30, 2011 beginning at 9:00 am and ending with a pizza lunch at the train station pavilion in Youngwood.

Volunteers will pick up litter from several area roadways and work to clear brush from around the historic coke ovens at our Brinkerton project. Safety gloves, vests, trash bags and bottled water will be provided. Youths who would like to participate should be 12 years of age and accompanied by an adult.

We need your help to remove the abundance of litter from our scenic roadways! Anyone interested in volunteering for this worthwhile event should contact Larry Myers at [myersld@comcast.net](mailto:myersld@comcast.net) or (724) 836-8764.