



SCWA Newsletter

WINTER EDITION

JANUARY 2014

Sewickley Creek Watershed Association

*Working Together
For A Better
Environment*

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Now Taking Reservations for 2014 Annual Banquet!

SCWA would like to invite you to our Annual Banquet! The banquet will be held Saturday, March 8th at Giannilli's II Restaurant located on Route 30, east of Greensburg. Our guest speaker this year will be the Honorable Mike Reese. Representative Reese, whose local office is just a few miles from the Brinkerton AMD treatment site, is very familiar with that project as well as the other great work we are doing. He has been a long-time supporter of state funds for local environmental projects. In addition, awards will be presented to local environmental leaders and volunteers.

Join us for a relaxing evening as we celebrate all our Association has done this past year to make our communities a littler cleaner, healthier and attractive! At last year's banquet, over \$1,700 in raffle prizes were given away and one guest won \$225 for the 50/50 prize.

Individual tickets can be purchased for \$25 each in advance. Business sponsorships are also available for \$250, which includes (8) dinner tickets, a one-year Association membership, and recognition as a sponsor at the dinner, as well as in our newsletter and on the SCWA Website. Contact a Board Member for tickets!

Banquet Details

Saturday, March 8
6:00—9:00 pm

Giannilli's II, Route 30 East
Greensburg

Tickets: \$25.00
Call (724) 836-8764

Lowber Footbridge Completed



Board members Ted Curnow (front) and Darl Dodson install decking on the bridge.

The Association has opened its Lowber AMD project to local schools, universities and organizations as an outdoor lab to learn about the treatment of abandoned mine drainage water as well as the flora and fauna supported by the treatment system. Several guided field trips were conducted in 2013.

Phase II of this educational project was completed in late 2013 and involved constructing a footbridge across the discharge stream of the system. The footbridge will provide better access for sampling and adjusting the water level of the treatment system. It will also allow us to eventually extend the walking trail around the back side of the system to complete a one-mile loop.

Financial support for this project was provided by the Dominion Foundation which is dedicated to the economic, physical and social health of the communities served by the Dominion companies. This grant program was administered by the Western PA Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystem through science-based strategy, leadership and collaboration. We applaud the Dominion Foundation and the Western PA Conservancy for their continued, generous support!

Volunteers Repair Flood Damage at Lynch Field



Volunteers, Firestone Warehouse Manager Tom Molina and grandson Taylor (foreground) and SCWA Board Member Dean Nelson and Firestone Plant Manager Michael McCrea, plant trees along Jack's Run.

Volunteers from Firestone Building Products Company, LLC and members of SCWA planted trees and shrubs to help stabilize the banks and prevent erosion along Jack's Run on November 16, 2013. The effort is part of a three-phase, three-year project to repair damage from previous floods and to prevent future damage at Lynch Field Recreation Complex in Greensburg.

Sewickley Creek is partnering with the City of Greensburg's Department of Parks and Recreation and Firestone Building Products Company, LLC on the project. With two grants from The Bridgestone Trust Fund for materials, and matching donations in terms of manpower and heavy equipment from the City, two heavily damaged sections of stream bank have already been restored.

Last fall the group re-graded the stream banks, placed riprap to stabilize the banks and planted trees, shrubs and grass to help prevent erosion. The group also repaired a jack dam installed on the stream several years ago to channel the water and oxygenate the stream. The project benefits the park by minimizing damage from flood waters and makes the park even more aesthetically pleasing. But, it also serves as a model for other communities and homeowners on how to deal with similar flood-prone areas.

Phase III of the project will include an education kiosk between the walking trail and the stream, along with interpretive signs to explain the function of the project components and how they can be replicated at relatively low-cost elsewhere. As visitors walk along the trail, they can read the signs and see first-hand how each component, including the riparian buffer, serves to protect the area surrounding the stream.



This jack dam was repaired to control erosion of the nearby stream banks and add oxygen to the water.

Environmental Study/Water Sampling Program Initiated at UPG



Water sampling at Lowerby by a UPG student from Dr. Mark Stauffer's Chemistry class.

In 2013, SCWA developed partnerships with the Chemistry and Biology departments at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg and California University of Pennsylvania to discuss involving college and high school students in hands-on experiences in the Sewickley Creek Watershed.

As a result, student-faculty scientific research projects investigating current issues within the watershed have been initiated with UPG's Dr. Mark Stauffer of the Chemistry Department and Dr. Tim Savisky of the Biology Department. Drs. Dean Nelson and Tim Savisky are currently working with student interns to assemble all available water related data for study and sharing.

In addition, Dr. Robert Whyte and his students at California University of Pennsylvania will conduct a comprehensive inventory of the vegetation along the Brinkerton treatment facility dikes beginning in summer, 2014. Students will note all species, their abundance and location and utilize GPS/GIS technology to produce a map of the vegetation. The project goal is to document any problem areas where the vegetation may be interfering with the integrity of the dike.

Eagle Scout Project Completed at Brinkerton

The Association welcomes the opportunity to work with Eagle Scout candidates and has completed several projects at our AMD treatment sites over the years. On October 26, Nicholas Wolfe from Troop 465 in Hempfield Township, finalized his Eagle project at the Brinkerton facility. The project included the construction of six wood duck boxes along the lagoons and stream, and one large Purple Martin "hotel" in the open field. If attracted to nest at this site, Purple Martins will add to the biodiversity and more importantly, help control mosquitoes! Nicholas recruited fellow scouts, scout leaders and Association board members to assist with the installation. He will present his project at the Association's annual banquet on March 8.

