

**EPCAMR Board Cooperating Organization Reports for the
EPCAMR 4th Quarter Board Meeting**

October 19, 2006

Compiled by Michael Hewitt

Presidents Report

Ed Wytovich

- Water loss points report? Some data has been gathered on a watershed basis. Catawissa, Nescopeck, Schuylkill (Hechersville Valley) are already done, some areas of the Wyoming Valley. Mike will be looking to create these files.
- Audenried Treatment System - Working with FEMA to receive \$ ½ Million and revamp the project in 2 phases.
- Oneida 1 Treatment System - Received an Emergency Repair Grant from WPCAMR. Miller Brothers from Pottsville will be doing the work.
- Chesapeake Bay Conference in Sheppardstown, WV.
- Recently became an Ed Zern Awardee from Chevron, met many interesting people in California and will be having a party to celebrate.

Dauphin County Conservation District

John Orr, District Manager

Wiconisco Creek Restoration Association

Bear Creek Treatment System

- Contracts are awarded and signed after a second bidding process. Gleim Environmental will be the general contractor. Construction will start soon and continue over the winter.

Northumberland County Conservation District

Dennis Strouse, District Manager

Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance

Treatment Systems

- Site 15 along 901 - getting around some design flaws, but just about done with construction
- Site 42 on Carbon Run - new compost is being put in to revamp the system

Columbia County Conservation District

Cathy Haffner, Watershed Specialist

Mary Wagner, District Manager

Roaring Creek Valley Conservation Association

- Writing a Coldwater Heritage Partnership grant to develop a conservation plan
- Still waiting to hear about Growing Greener grant for outreach monies
- Participated in Susquehanna River Conference

Catawissa Creek Restoration Association {Ed will provide major updates}

Audenreid Treatment System

- Tom Davidock has been meeting with FEMA to obtain funding to stabilize the bank around the tunnel and other necessary fixes.
- Funding from FEMA is promising
- Treatment system is still working at about 30%

Oneida 1 & 3

- Funding to reconstruct Oneida 1 system approved. Construction bids started by Schuylkill County.

Fishing Creek Watershed Association

East Branch Fishing Creek/Heberly liming

- Liming of 100 acres completed in the headwaters of the East Branch of Fishing Creek (acid rain remediation)
- Monthly sampling for East Branch Fishing Creek watershed assessment completed (for now).
- Terry Ritenhouer, Principal Hydrologist at Water's Edge Hydrology Inc., will be presenting the restoration plan on November 13, 7 pm, Ag Center in Bloomsburg.

Kocher Park

- Career link has started work on Kocher Park to repair trails. Working on getting the US Fish and Wildlife back in to assess damages from flood to the Natural Stream Design Structures

Educational Activities

- Audenreid poster displayed at AMR conference and Susquehanna River conference
- Upcoming Rain Barrel Workshop compliments of a Chesapeake Bay Foundation Grant
- Receiving a Pelletizer to heat Benton School District with the help of Pocono Northeast RC&D

Other

- Mary was awarded the Silver Trout Award from Columbia Montour Trout Unlimited Chapter
- Mike and I assessed a couple of sites on McCauley Mt. in Beaver Twp – a tributary to Beaver Run and headwaters of Beaver Run. Chemistry of the tributary looked o.k., higher iron found in headwaters of Beaver Run, however this may be attributed to geology.

Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association

Bruno Najanka, Board Member

Bernice Mine Treatment System (aka Lewis Mine Site or Birch Creek)

- Several bids were received at the Moshannon District Mining Office. Met at the site to see Hedin's site for the treatment system

B Tunnel Treatment System

- ALD blew out and needs to be repaired. PA DEP BAMR assessed the site after the storm.

Schuylkill Headwaters Association (source: SHA Newsletter Vol. 10, Iss. 11)
Bill Reichert, President
Paul Lohin, Board Member

Post-storm Projects Update

- *Minersville Wetland* -- Our first completed project is working exactly as designed. During the recent floods along the West Branch of the Schuylkill, the wetland was inundated with water. High water markings indicate that the river flowed across the berm directly over top the intake structure. The water coursed through the wetlands and exited over top the outlet structure. A good portion of the berm along the Minersville side of the wetlands was not submerged. After the flood waters receded, the project needed only some minor cleanup of both the inlet and outlet structures. The system is currently working normally.
- *Oak Hill Boreholes* – The Oak Hill Project is simply several weirs placed into a serpentine stream channel in an effort to slow down the water long enough to allow the iron to settle out. As you can imagine, nothing was able to slow the amount of water that drained the Oak Hill area as a result of the 15” rainfall we received. The flow from the boreholes appears to have risen approximately 2 feet above the normal outlet height. The strong force of the water was sufficient to flush a good portion of the iron that had previously settled in the retaining pools downstream into the river. Iron sediment flushing was a concern prior to this storm event and strongly emphasizes the necessity to re-visit the discharge with a different strategy for remediation. The system is currently operating as before.
- *Bell Colliery* – Bell worked fine through both Hurricane Ivan and the recent rains. During Ivan, the river overtopped the wetland berm, leaving debris in the wetlands, and causing some erosion along the river channel. The recent event did not top the berm and did minor erosion to the river bank. Thankfully, we had Lloyd Aungst Excavating armor the stream bank with large stones. The discharge did show indications of a really large flow with evidence that the overflow spillway worked exactly as planned. The system is currently working normally.
- *Otto Discharge* – The system at Otto is designed to capture a portion or all of the discharge depending on the amount of flow. During the recent rains, the flow volume was more than the inlet structure could allow into the treatment system and the excess water continued down the original channel into Muddy Branch. Erosion and sediment controls put in place at the end of construction, i.e., drainage ditch, diversion swale, and vegetated stabilization, prevented any problems. The drainage system the township required us to install along the baseball field appears to have kept the ball field dry. The system is currently working normally with some overflow still occurring into the original channel.
- *Newkirk Tunnel* – Technically this is not one of our projects, but it is within the watershed and of concern to us. This system was inundated with coal fines during Hurricane Ivan from an upslope coal operation. The coal operators swiftly corrected that problem after Ivan. During this event, the system was again hit with sediment and coal residues but from another direction. This time the waters came from the drainage channel along Route 209. Curiously, a large amount of trash has collected inside the tunnel’s bat gate as though this trash was flushed from inside the mine.

This system has been challenged from the start by its very small size for the amount of flow and will need to be re-visited to develop a different strategy for remediation.

- *Reevesdale* – Completed in April 2006, the system is an oxic limestone drain that empties into wetland settling basins. Flows from the discharge have increased to the point that the excess flow is by-passing the system to flow through the original discharge stream channel. This feature was designed into the system and is working as planned. The system is operating normally.
- *Pine Forest* – Work on this project got underway one week prior to the rains. Only the rock construction entrance and some fabric sediment fence have been installed. The project will address the discharge (no oxygen, high iron, sulfur odor, and constant flow) originating from the borehole. A second discharge (high aluminum, intermittent flow) joins the drainage channel immediately outside the borehole. The second discharge will not be immediately addressed due to the aluminum loading.

Monitoring Stations

- Dr. Chuck Cravotta, USGS installed seven continuous gauging stations around the watershed. At this time, only the Pine Knot station has been visited. Two gauges were installed near the confluence of the discharge and the West Branch of the Schuylkill. The discharge gauge appears to be working normally. The gauge monitoring the West Branch took a direct hit from large debris flowing down with the floodwaters. The affected gauge will need to be re-installed.

Friends of the Nescopeck (source: FON July Meeting Minutes)

Betsy Doan, Secretary

Tim Ference, Board Member

- The Black Water episodes that had been reported to DEP resulted in no action by that group except to blame the Butler Township Sewer Authority, which we feel is in error. Unfortunately, SRBC is more concerned with sedimentation than with Acid Mine Drainage so there is little concern there.
- DEP Pottsville Mining Office offered a tour of the 3 major active mining sites in the Nescopeck Watershed in an effort to dispel any notions that the black water was coming from active mining. Several members were able to visit these coal washing, re-mining, and mining activities
- In the aftermath of the recent flood, the problem of storm water management becomes even more important. There is a sample ordinance, Act 167, which is not finalized, from DEP for municipalities. Better Management Practices, (BMP), for storm water management include, among many others, rain barrels, parking lot alternatives to asphalt paving, etc. The Nature Conservancy has a program on storm water management.
- Michael Hewitt, EPCAMR, Reported his assessment of the Nescopeck Creek after the flooding: The Gowen tunnel had eroded 30 feet back from the outlet, Black Creek cut a new course near Tank, and other photos of damage from the Nescopeck. A letter of support to EPCAMR from the Friends of the Nescopeck in their efforts to improve storm water management would be helpful. As of now many storm water basins empty themselves into old mines, which eventually empty out into a town. A

good project would be to use BMP to prevent detention basins losing water into our watershed. Finding that project site may be tricky.

- Sponsored a COALS Presentation at the last meeting. This is the first step in planning and to begin choosing cleanup sites for the COALS Program, a cooperative plan with DEP and coal companies to clean up dump sites. Man power is needed to identify sites of Abandoned Mine Lands. Steve Barto will be coming to investigate the sites we choose.

Catawissa Creek Restoration Association

Tom Davidock, Natural Resource Specialist

Oneida #1 Treatment System:

- Received the funding to repair the Oneida #1 system. We're putting these repairs out to bid ASAP and will hopefully have active construction by the end of September.

Audenried Treatment System:

- Over the past 2 months, the SCD and CCRA have been flushing the system just about every week. It took about 4-5 cycles to flush all of the dirt and fines out of the system. For the first several flushes, the flush water was black. Last week when I flushed the system, the flush seems to be back to normal and is primarily flushing Aluminum. It is still hard to tell (since we don't have normal flows going through the system) if there is any blockages in the lines and piping in the tanks. From my observations, it doesn't seem to be a problem. The distribution box at the intake area seemed to hold back much of the larger stones and debris. A lot of the smaller materials seemed to flush through the system. However, we'll need to take a closer look at it when we meet with FEMA.
- We currently have the system operating on manual mode. All three siphons are currently offline until we get the intake repaired. In the interim, we are working to get individuals with siphon experience together to try and get them all working correctly.
- On another note, the Columbia Conservation District applied for funding through the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program for additional stone for one of the treatment tanks. Ed and I ran some test onsite before the flooding and saw a significant improvement in water quality with additional contact time with limestone. Smaller size stone produced a much quicker reaction with the mine water. Some additional alkalinity and a boost in pH will help with Al precipitation and additional buffering downstream.
- I would like to schedule a technical steering committee meeting after we meet with FEMA. I want to get an idea of what we have to work with and then start to come up with some fixes. I will be in touch with everyone after we meet with them.