

Bucktail Watershed Association

Bucktail Watershed Association

Contact information:

P.O. Box 123
Emporium, PA 15834
www.bucktailwatershed.com
info@bucktailwatershed.com

Important Dates:

Monthly meeting
1st Tuesday of each month
Cameron County Courthouse
6:30 pm

Stream Cleanup
March 26th 12:00 PM

Inside this issue:

BWA New Members	1
BWA Needs YOU!	1
Sinnemahoning State Park	2
Conservation District Battles AMD	2
Position on ATV/UTV	4

BWA Board of Directors

Steve VanEerden,
Kirk Baine
Kimberly Bohn
Kim Lott
Gary Russell
Josh Morgan
Denny Neal

BWA Welcomes New Members to the Team

The Bucktail Watershed Association would like to introduce Nikki Ryan and Kimberly Bohn to the team.

Nikki Ryan, a native of Elk County, joined the BWA as the Invasive Plant Project Coordinator this past October. She received her B.S. (2014) in Physical and Environmental Geography and a minor in Climatology from the Pennsylvania State University. During college, she participated in volleyball and conducted research on jet contrails and precipitation rates. What got her interested in field work were her courses involving watersheds and wetlands. With this experience, she was able to incorporate her knowledge of surveying, GPS (geographical positioning system), and GIS (geographical information system) in conjunction with her technical writing abilities. She is a great fit for the Coordinator position. Aside from coordinator work, she is an avid outdoors person who enjoys spending time with her family and friends.

Under Nikki, the Bucktail Watershed Association will continue to treat patches of

Continued on Page 3



Nikki Ryan to serve as the Invasive Plant Project Coordinator



Kimberly Bohn joins the BWA board

The BWA Needs YOU as a Member in 2017!

In 2017, the BWA plans to continue its dedication to conserve and protect our aquatic resources but your support is key!

The Bucktail Watershed Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining and improving water quality and wildlife habitat in our watershed. It is run by a volunteer Board of Directors, Much of the BWA's work requires significant fiscal resources provided by

grant funding agencies that look for strong membership support. Your role as a member is so much more important than your dues!

Also, please remember that watershed concerns and project suggestions are always welcome from members and there are opportunities for volunteers, like you, to get involved. You're most welcome to attend any of our meetings held the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM in the Cameron County courthouse.

What's New at Sinnemahoning State Park?

The George B. Stevenson Dam at Sinnemahoning State Park received an H2O grant to complete upgrades and repairs to the George B. Stevenson flood control dam. A large portion of the grant went to stabilize the toe of the dam facilitated through an elaborate filtering system, followed by electrical upgrades and a new siren for emergency preparedness at the flood control dam tower. The remaining funds were used to dredge the lake from the boat launch area to the islands above Lushbaugh Run. Next spring, Brooks Run will be rechannelized to the former beach area to decrease sedimentation into the boat launch area.

Todd Deluccia, District Manager at the Cameron County Conservation District, will be overseeing the installation of cross vanes along the rechannelized section of Brook's Run to enhance fish habitat and optimize fishing opportunities.

Park and Fish and Boat Commission staff made great progress this fall by stabilizing the shoreline south of the mooring area by incorpo-

rating a saw tooth design. This innovative design will help stop erosion, create more habitat for fish, and will give fisherman better access to the water.

Next up, Sinnemahoning State Park will be modifying the mooring area for better boat access and will be upgrading to EZ Docks for boaters; with road and launch area paving expected to occur in early summer.

The Sinnemahoning State Park would like to thank PA Fish and Boat Commission, Waterways Conservation Officer, Bill Crisp, for his adamant support in obtaining funding for additional fisheries habitat, and Mark Johnson with the Allegheny Highlands Bird Club for his persistent efforts in designing and installing the osprey nesting platform at the northern section of the lake.

The boat launch and mooring area may not be ready for trout season, but hopefully will be completed for the 2017 summer fishing and boating season.

The Conservation District Battles AMD in the Watershed

The Cameron County Conservation District continues to make strides in the cleanup and remediation of acid mine drainage in the Sterling Run Watershed. 2 projects were completed in 2016 with funding from Growing Greener County Environmental Initiative in the amount of \$678,333.00. The FIN32/33 and the PORT14 passive treatment systems went online in October.

The FIN32/33 system is located within an unnamed tributary to Finley Run. Water coming into this system has a pH of 3.4 with high levels of acidity, zero alkalinity and lethal level of metals. After going through 3 vertical flow wetlands that comprise of mushroom compost and limestone, the water enters into an oxidation precipitation basin where metals drop out, and then finally going through a surface flow wetland, the water leaves the system at an astounding pH of 7.3 with zero acidity and high levels of alkalinity. In November District Staff saw for the first time in probably 60 years native brook trout in this tributary.

The PORT14 system is a smaller system in an unnamed tributary to Portable Run comprised of one vertical flow wetland and a surface flow wetland. Water quality at this discharge is a



Limestone treatment pond

New Members for the Watershed Association

Japanese knotweed and mile a minute vine throughout the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed. During 2016, Japanese knotweed was treated upstream and downstream of the village of Cameron. Mile a minute was treated along the Driftwood Branch and the First Fork. In 2017, we plan to continue further downstream to Big Run, along the Driftwood Branch. We cover less and less stream miles as the knotweed patches become more extensive along the river bottom. In response to previous treatments, knotweed populations upstream of Emporium are decreasing dramatically.

Kimberly Bohn received her M.S. (2001) and Ph.D. (2005) in Forest Resource Management from the State University of New York, with a focus on silviculture of northern hardwoods. She then served as an Associate Professor of Forest Ecology and Silviculture at the University of Florida from 2006-2016. While in Florida, she also developed an interest in the ecology and management of non-native invasive plants, taught an online course in Ecology and Restoration of Invaded Ecosystems, and was active with the regional Cooperative for Invasive Species Management Areas. She is currently a Forestry Extension Educator for Penn State, based out of McKean County and working throughout the north central part of the state. Her educational programs will focus on forest management and invasive species management for the

Continued from page 1

ANNUAL RIVER CLEAN-UP

Sunday March 26th

We will be holding the annual stream and roadside clean-up on Sunday, March 26th. We will be meeting at the railroad bridge in Cameron at noon. Refreshments will be provided. Any questions please call Steve VanEerden at 814-486-1740 or Kirk Bainey at 814-486-3401.

Please join us for this annual event. Each year this is held before the annual canoe and kayak race. It is a good opportunity to make our river and roadways look great when we host many out of town racers and spectators.

community, private landowners, and professionals.

As two members join the BWA, one will be, regretfully, leaving the Board. Mark McLean announced in December that he will be resigning. We would like to thank Mark for many years of service and his hard work and dedication as Treasurer and a field operations volunteer.

The Annual Canoe and Kayak

Classic — April 1st

The 43rd Annual Cameron County Canoe and Kayak Classic will be held Saturday April 1st 2017. The theme for this year's event is Cameron County—Clean, Fresh and Beautiful. Competitors will run the 12 mile course from the Emporium Country club to the finish line in Driftwood.

For more information or to register, please visit the race website at www.canoeclassic.org.

AMD Treatment

Continued from page 2

pH of 4.2 going in and after going through the system comes out at a 7.4.

Along with several other treatment systems in May Hollow the Conservation District is well on its way to cleaning up the entire Sterling Run drainage. There are still several projects that will need done in the Finley and Portable watersheds but things are looking good for the area. In 2017 the District will be constructing the FIN63 Passive Treatment System which is the uppermost pollution to Finley Run. This should extend the Class A wild trout population of Finley Run down for hopefully up to a mile.

The BWA Expresses Concern over ATV/UTV Use

The following is a letter distributed to local news outlets expressing the views of the BWA board toward recreational ATV/UTV use in the watershed.

“The Bucktail Watershed Association (BWA) is a concerned group of citizens united to promote wise watershed stewardship for property & stream protection in the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning and the First Fork”. That sentence is the Mission Statement of the BWA and is the reason the board of directors has decided to oppose any development of ATV/UTV trails or road usage in Cameron County.

The Cameron County ATV/UTV Association, with backing from the Central Mountains ATV Association, is pursuing the use of existing roads and development of connecting trails by which Cameron County would become an integral part of a much larger trail system connecting nearby counties and eventually West Virginia and New York. Expansion of road use and construction of new trails would logically follow. Dirt bikes may also be able to piggyback on any new ATV/UTV expanded riding opportunities.

Fiscal benefits to the county are being touted by ATV/UTV supporters. Cameron County could use a financial infusion but at what cost to the environment and the quality of life of those who value the county’s unique natural assets as they now exist? The many other less intrusive outdoor activities that county residents and visitors now enjoy would almost certainly be negatively impacted by ATV/UTV use.

From the perspective of our local ecosystems’ health, ATV/UTV recreational use has no redeeming value and could be considered the most environmentally damaging recreational activity in PA and must therefore be considered a potential threat to our many high quality and exceptional value waterways, their riparian buffers, and the surrounding landscape in general. The opening of new trails creates freshly

disturbed soil that invites invasive plants to become established. Even riding from one infested existing road to another non-infested road could spread invasives. DCNR suggests that machines be cleaned after every ride to prevent the spread of invasives. Many machines seen on trailers travelling locally don’t appear to have had a bath for many miles.

ATV/UTV supporters have stated that an unsubstantiated 2% of riders cause the problems associated with unethical use, equating it to those that violate the motor vehicle code. Regardless of the percentage, it’s a mathematical certainty that the more people operating these vehicles, the more damage they will cause. It’s inevitable. A few minutes of ATV abuse in the field may mean years of natural recovery. The ATV groups admit that violators are a challenge for law enforcement but counter that ethical riders can police “outlaw” riders. We are skeptical of this claim.

As was stated at a recent organizational meeting after a representative from the CCAUA said that we all want Cameron County to remain as “pristine” as it is, “...the mention of those noisy machines and pristine together in a the same sentence is an oxymoron.” So it would seem to us, also.

Respectfully,

The Bucktail Watershed Association Board of Directors

Trout Season Opener Approaches

The trout season will begin in Cameron county on April 8th with a special day for mentored youth under the age of 16. Adults can only dream for another week when the season opens statewide on April 15th at 8:00 AM on all stocked trout waters.

For more information or to purchase your license online, visit www.fishandboat.com

BUCKTAIL WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 123
EMPORIUM, PA 15834

BUCKTAIL WATERSHED ASSOCIATION WINTER NEWSLETTER ENCLOSED

BUCKTAIL WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are interested in becoming a member or renewing your membership, please send this form along with cash or a check for the annual dues to:

Bucktail Watershed Association
P.O. Box 123
Emporium, PA 15834



Name

Address

Phone

Sign up for:

- Individual Membership
- Family Membership

Annual Dues

\$5.00

\$7.00

Amount Enclosed _____

Email Address

Signature

Date