



West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition

Winter 2008



Trout Unlimited & WBSRC Open New Office

Trout Unlimited and the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition have relocated! Our new office is located at 18 East Main Street Suite 3 in downtown Lock Haven.

Amy Wolfe, TU's Director for Abandoned Mine Programs remarked that "The momentum of West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Initiative has just been so great lately. Our program

continues to grow as has our staff and we realized it was time for us to find a central location". And, the new location couldn't be more appropriate. The office is located just two blocks away from the main stem of the West Branch Susquehanna River. "It's easy to remember what you are out there working for when you are so close to it!" Wolfe stated.

An office open house has been scheduled for Tuesday December 9th from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Refreshments will be provided. Call the office for more information: 570-748-4901.

Join Us for An Open House at our New Office:

Tuesday, December 9th
6:30pm

Our New Contact Information:

18 East Main Street, Suite 3
Lock Haven, PA 17745
570-748-4901



The West Branch Susquehanna River at Lock Haven, PA.

Work Progresses on Morgan Run AMD Treatment

Over the past six or seven years, the Morgan Run Watershed Group (MRWG) and the Clearfield County Conservation District (CCCD) have been working to develop a restoration plan and secure funding for

restoration of the Morgan Run watershed in Boggs and Decatur Townships, Clearfield County. This stream is impacted by abandoned mine drainage (AMD) most of its length, but thanks to construction projects that started just about a year ago, all that is beginning to change.

Thanks to funding from the state's Growing Greener grant program as well as many other federal, state, and local funds, **two miles**

of Morgan Run are about to once again be able to support a native brook trout fishery for the first time in over 50 years.

Two passive treatment systems in the headwaters, MR Tuff and MR Frog, are nearing completion, as well as a wetland mitigation area just downstream.

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Free Technical Assistance

Trout Unlimited (TU) is pleased to announce that through funding provided by the DEP's Growing Greener Grant Program, it is able to continue its Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) Technical Assistance Program. TU has assisted over two dozen watershed groups, TU chapters, county conservation districts, and others with a variety of AMD projects through its previous AMD Technical Assistance Program as funded by a grant from Growing Greener. Based on the assessments and/or recommendations provided in the last round of technical assistance projects, most of these groups have successfully obtained grants from Growing Greener and/or other funding sources to move forward with full-scale AMD watershed assessments or implement AMD remediation projects. TU is looking forward to continuing to provide this *free* technical assistance to groups across the Commonwealth as we all work together to restore our streams, watersheds, and revitalize our communities from the largest source of pollution to our state's waterways -- AMD.

Visit www.wbsrc.com for more information.

About the West Branch Re-evaluation...from DEP's Mario Carrello



Twenty-six years ago everyone took it for granted that the West Branch Susquehanna River was a dead waterway destroyed by acid mine drainage (AMD). At that time, however, the 1977 SMCRA regulations were finally put into effect when PA gained primacy in 1982. Maybe we shouldn't have been surprised to hear recent reports that fish were returning to the river, but we were. A journey starts with a small step forward—and we've taken many of these small steps like changing mining practices, enforcing water treatment requirements, reclaiming abandoned mine lands, and partnering with local citizens and volunteers to initiate and participate in clean-up projects. So maybe we shouldn't be surprised that these many small steps forward have started to return environmental benefits. The West Branch re-evaluation project will help us see just how far we've come, celebrate our newfound success and see where we still need to go. Our plan is to get updated water quality and biological data to document the current conditions in the river and its tributaries. The sampling will quantify the improvements in water quality due to past and current AMD remediation projects and will also establish a current benchmark to measure the environmental benefits of any future proposed projects.

For more information about this project see the article at the top of this page.

West Branch Re-evaluation—finally!

There has been tremendous effort by West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition (WBSRC) partnering organizations and others to restore the waters of the West Branch Susquehanna watershed from abandoned mine drainage. However, we cannot quantify these efforts or know how the millions of dollars spent to date have been of benefit because there has not been a concerted effort to re-evaluate the West Branch Susquehanna and its tributaries. In fact, the most

recent attempt to comprehensively inventory the fish populations in the upper and middle West Branch occurred in 1998 and 1999 by the PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC). In addition, the most recent effort to evaluate the West Branch Susquehanna's tributaries, with respect to AMD, and their impact to the main stem of the river was in 1984 by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Recognizing this problem, Trout Unlimited (TU) has

partnered with the PA Department of Environmental Protection and the PFBC and will be completing a widespread analysis of flow, chemistry, fish, and benthic macroinvertebrates of the West Branch Susquehanna and its tributaries during the spring and summer of 2009.

To find out more about this project or to find out how you can volunteer contact TU's Becky Dunlap at rdunlap@tu.org or 570-748-4901.

Welcome Ryan Day to Team Trout Unlimited!

Trout Unlimited (TU) is excited to welcome Ryan Day to our West Branch Susquehanna team. Ryan is a graduate of Penn State University with a B.S in Environmental Resource Management and Watershed/Water Resource Management.

Ryan is an avid outdoors-

men and is a native of Cambria County so he is no stranger to abandoned mine drainage.

Ryan was hired as TU's field technician and will be working with WBSRC members and partners to collect biological as well as water quality and quantity data throughout the watershed.



You can contact Ryan at rday@tu.org or 570-748-4901.

Work Progresses on Morgan Run AMD Treatment contd..

The treatment systems both consist of a series of vertical flow ponds, settling basins, and polishing wetlands that will increase the pH, boost alkalinity, and remove a significant portion of the metal load in about two miles of Morgan Run. There are several other sources of AMD pollution downstream of MR Tuff and MR Frog, mostly due to deep mining for clay that occurred in the area for

many years. Plans are already underway to address these additional sources of pollution using a top-down approach to restoration. The good news is that at least two tributaries to Morgan Run, Alberts Run and Crooked Sewer Run, still contain viable populations of brook trout that should make their way into the main stem as water quality improves. Besides

AMD, there are no other sources of impairment to the stream, which only has two road crossings along its entire 14-mile length. Most of the watershed is forested and contains very good instream and riparian habitat.

For more information, please contact Rachel Keister at 814-765-8130 or rkeisterccd@atlanticbbn.net.