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Newstreams

A publication of Kentucky Waterways Alliance: Working to protect and restore Kentucky's waterways.

Announcing the Establishment of the Kentucky Aquatic Resource Fund

Judy Petersen, Jennifer Milburn, and Carrie Lona (US Fish & Wildlife Service)

Kentucky Waterways Alliance has partnered with the United States Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Kentucky Field Office to administer the newly created Kentucky Aquatic Resource Fund (KARF). The USFWS and KWA are both concerned about Kentucky's aquatic resources and identified the need to accumulate and disseminate funding for priority projects that will



Photo By: Jim Blasdel

protect and conserve aquatic resources within the state. The

new Fund can receive funding from a variety of sources, including grants, donations, settlement agreements, agency discretionary funding, and aquatic mitigation programs.

KWA was chosen to serve as fiscal agent for the KARF because of its leading role in the protection of watersheds throughout the state. As a nonprofit,

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KWA Recent Victories! Obama Administration Moves to Slow Coal Wastes Dumped in Streams, Promises Tougher Enforcement

Judy Petersen and Jason Flickner

Fast-tracked Permits

In June, the Obama Administration announced steps to end the fast-tracking of certain coal mine permits and to add tougher enforcement on mining operations in Appalachia, important steps that – with additional actions – could greatly reduce the devastation to Appalachian communities, waterways and mountains. Following a recent West Virginia court ruling against it, the U.S. Army Corps of Engi-

neers proposed to revoke the "one-size-fits-all" Nationwide Permit 21 it had used to authorize the dumping of coal mining waste into hundreds of miles of Appalachian headwater streams. At the same time, however, the Obama administration fell short of conclusively protecting additional streams and communities from devastation when the EPA dropped their review of 42 out of 48 coal mining permit applications.

For years, KWA has challenged the use of Nationwide Permit 21 stating that we believe coal companies should be required to obtain individual permits for the extent of damage caused to Appalachian streams from surface coal mining and valley fills. The judge never ruled on the merits of the case – instead choosing not to rule, and then determined the issue was moot

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Events

July 1: Webcast on the Clean Water Act, 1st of EPA's series of Webcasts about the CWA. Register: www.epa.gov/watershedwebcasts

July 10- 12: The 8th Annual Forecastle Festival in Louisville *music, art, activism! www.forecastlefest.com

July 11: Volunteer Day w/Weed and Restoration Team at Blackacre SNP (Jefferson Co.) at 9 a.m. EDT. Remove invasive plants, clear fallen trees, restore fences, make small repairs & work on trails. www.naturepreserves.ky.gov

July 25: GREENing Western Kentucky Expo Location: Brescia University, Owensboro, KY Contact: Aloma Dew, aloma.dew@sierraclub.org

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From the Executive Director Looking toward an exciting future!

I'm an optimist. And lately I've been feeling really good about our work. I think we're making significant progress and I am excited about the future. As many of you likely know, Kentucky Waterways Alliance has been working on several very long-term issues to change the way in which we protect streams in Kentucky from new pollution. I just returned from a national conference (River Rally) where I presented information on where Kentucky was back in 1997 and where we are today. And we've come a long way baby!

In particular, back in 1997 about 2 % of rivers, streams and lakes received additional protection and scrutiny from proposed new or increased pollution. Today nearly 90% of our waters receive this protection! In addition, many of our streams that supported rare fish or mussel populations were not well protected back in 1997. Today they receive additional protection when new or expanded permits are proposed. KWA is still actively working on protecting our clean waters – not only is it central to our mission – it just makes sense. It's much easier to protect clean waters from pollution that it is to clean up a stream that is already polluted.

On the front page of this issue are two articles about other exciting developments. The Obama administration has promised changes in mining permits and protecting streams, and increased enforcement of existing laws – regulatory programs we've been dealing with for at least eight years. And how the administration has now

taken a position on both the Army Corps 404 permit (Nationwide Permit 21) and the Stream Buffer Zone that are nearly identical to the positions KWA has advocated for years! Again, I see some reasons for hope.

Also, on the front page is a description about a unique new partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky Field Office. The Kentucky Aquatics Resource Fund will maximize the amount of money available for aquatic restoration and make certain these funds are spent here in Kentucky. This is a new and innovative program and a big responsibility for the KWA board – but it is a wonderful way in which we can develop new partnerships and work to accomplish our mission.

Finally, in a time where many groups are cutting staff and programs we are not only expanding our work, we will be expanding our staff. Thanks to the generous support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation we have a start on funding to hire a Development program staff person. I envision our new staff member will be a great help to me in navigating through this national economic crisis, and keeping our organization moving forward.

So, to all our faithful and generous members – thank you for your support. I believe we are doing really important and exciting work. I think KWA is working to position our organization and our work to protect and restore Kentucky's waterways. I look forward to updating you again soon.

Judy Petersen

Newstreams

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Kentucky Waterways Alliance

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Send your comments or letters to the editor to Kelly@KWAlliance.org.

Establishment of Aquatic Resource Fund

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membership-based organization that works with watershed groups and government agencies across the state, KWA is well positioned to administer the Fund, as it complements KWA's other advocacy work.

KWA has long been active in communities to establish protected watersheds which include areas containing large concentrations of rare species, including those aquatic species listed as endangered and threatened that occur in Kentucky. And KWA has worked for years to establish better regulatory protections for rivers and streams that are not polluted. Kentucky is blessed with a large number of fish, mussel and other aquatic species that depend on clean and abundant water. Many aquatic species including mussels work to filter and help clean our streams as well. This Fund is another way in which KWA can work to accomplish its mission of "protecting and restoring Kentucky's waterways."

The two main objectives of projects funded by the Aquatic Resource Fund will be to ensure that:

- 1) the direct, indirect, and cumulative adverse effects of aquatic species are adequately addressed, and
- 2) projects result in tangible conservation and recovery benefits to aquatic species.

The USFWS, with input from KWA, will be responsible for reviewing projects proposed for funding by the KARF and will approve or disapprove proposed projects as appropriate and consistent with the purpose and objectives of the Fund. Once sufficient funding has been received, it is anticipated that the funding will be distributed to federal and state agencies, non-government organizations, and other organizations that propose projects involving the protection and/or conservation of aquatic resources.

"This partnership will work to further our mission of protecting and restoring Kentucky's waterways. Protecting threatened and endangered species and indeed aquatic species across Kentucky goes hand in hand with protecting our waterways. Kentucky Waterways Alliance is excited to be a part of this effort," said Judy Petersen, KWA executive director.

The State Field Office Supervisor for the USFWS, Lee Andrews, echoes those views. "We've recognized the need for just this type of partnership & funding source for many years, but the right situation just never materialized. When we approached KWA with this opportunity, I believe everyone could see that the Fund would be a natural fit. We're extremely grateful to Judy and KWA for working with us on this effort, and, in a few years, I

expect that we can report some significant benefits to Kentucky's waterways and aquatic species that will be directly attributable to the Fund's work. With the limited funding already in the Fund, we will be working in the next year with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources to initiate propagation efforts for three of Kentucky's endangered freshwater mussels the Pink Mucket, the Rough Pigtoe, and the Fat Pocketbook." (pictured below)



Photo's courtesy of US Fish & Wildlife

The Fund can accept outside donations, so private, public, and corporate entities interested in conservation of Kentucky's waterways and aquatic species can contact KWA to learn how.

2009 Summer Professional Development Opportunities at Morehead State University:

- ♦ WOW! Wonders of Wetlands, July 6
- ♦ Flying WILD and Population Connection, July 7
- ♦ Project Learning Tree, July 13
- ♦ Food, Land & People, July 14

For more information or to register for the workshops contact April Haight by email at a.haight@moreheadstate.edu or by phone (606) 783-2455. Sponsored in part by the Environmental Education Center, IRAPP, MSU

KWA Victories!



(Continued from Page 1)

when Nationwide Permit 21 expired and was re-issued.

The Clean Water Act only authorizes nationwide permits for stream-filling activities that have minimal environmental effects, both individually and cumulatively. Mountaintop removal coal mining and several other types of surface mining methods, produce enormous quantities of waste that is commonly disposed of in adjacent valleys and streams. Scientific studies have shown that the waters downstream from these valley fills are degraded; and there is no scientific evidence that buried headwater streams can be re-created successfully elsewhere.

The Army Corps' revocation proposal is an admission that its long-standing permitting practices are scientifically and legally indefensible," said Jim Hecker, Environmental Enforcement Director at Public Justice in Washington, DC. "This permit should never have been issued, because it was based on the Army Corps' unsupported assumption that filling these streams has minimal environmental effects."

Judith Petersen, executive director of Kentucky Waterways Alliance, called the announcement mixed. "By moving to end the Nationwide Permit, the administration is making it harder for coal companies to bury streams and promising tougher enforcement. But we believe that if fully enforced, the Clean Water Act would prohibit filling streams with mining waste, making mountaintop removal coal mining

nearly impossible."

It remains uncertain that without Congressional action the Obama administration can simply ban mountain top removal. But they can and should fully enforce the Clean Water Act and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act – and together these laws can put a stop to most valley fills.

Stream Buffer Zone Rule

As a parting "gift" to the coal industry the outgoing Bush administration's EPA agreed with the Office of Surface Mining that coal companies no longer need to keep a 100 foot buffer zone between mining activities and streams. EPA took this action without even providing the public an opportunity to comment on their proposed actions.

Since 1979, EPA had consistently insisted that the 100 foot buffer zone between mining activities and streams was "required to protect streams from the adverse effects of sedimentation and from gross disturbance of stream channels."

The Bush administration had been pushing for this rule change for nearly eight years and the first time the Office of Surface Mining proposed this change the agency received over 135,000 comments from citizens who opposed the change. KWA has been working to "defend" the stream buffer zone rule for eight long years.

KWA was one of several groups who worked to delay the rule change from taking effect until the new administration could review it. It appears our strategy has paid off. The Obama

administration has asked the US District Court to vacate the rule change.

Enforcement

Rules alone aren't enough. In Kentucky, waivers of the Stream Buffer Zone are routinely granted. KWA found that between 2001 and 2006, in Kentucky alone, 71% of all Department of Surface Mining permits received a variance to the existing Buffer Rule, and 56% of all surface mining permits issued with a variance required **no stream buffer zone at all**. Ultimately, 40% of all surface mining permits issued completely neglect the existing Buffer Rule and allow mining activities in the stream channel.

The new administration has also promised that:

1. Coal mining permits will undergo more thorough and coordinated reviews under both the Clean Water Act and the Surface Mining Control & Reclamation Act.
2. They will reevaluate how Office of Surface Mining conducts oversight of state mining programs.
3. They will ensure protection of wildlife resources and endangered species by coordinating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Added together, will these actions protect streams in Appalachia from being buried under tons of mining waste? It's too soon to tell, but it seems like a good first step. KWA will remain vigilant and engaged and we'll keep our readers updated.

Rally Ho! KWA staff, Judy, Jason, Tessa, and Kelly attended River Network's 10th Annual National River Rally this year in Baltimore Maryland.

Kelly Craig

We were excited to be able to attend River Network's River Rally this year! The Rally theme revolves around Education, Inspiration, and Celebration; and River Rally lived up to it! The highlights of the Educational aspect included a variety of workshops— some of which KWA staff led. Tessa and Judy discussed community approaches to watershed-based planning; Jason and Judy covered issues around the Clean Water Act, antidegradation, and ultimately keeping clean waters *clean*.

And were we inspired? Well if having longer "to do" lists, more ideas, awesome encouragement, and that happy feeling in the tummy counts...then YES! There was a keynote speaker, Peter Forbes who spoke about the importance of a strong human relationship and connection with the land. Appropriately, right after this speech, I was able to attend a poetry class inviting members to find personal expression about their encounters with the waterways.

Finally, River Rally is a time to re-unite with old friends and meet new ones—and this is where the celebration comes in. Although, these faces pictured below after the "Watershed Quiz Bowl" may seem misleading...did Judy and her friends win?



From left rear to right front: Megan Ward, John Tippett, Barry Tonning, & Judy

← I will just let the picture speak for itself here. 😊

There was also a River Heroes Award Banquet where five fabulous individuals were recognized for their river work. The evening was followed by live music and dancing.

In an environment made up of like-minded environmental enthusiasts, a person is bound to be educated, inspired, and celebrated. A special thanks to all those who helped make this event possible (you know who you are), and for those who helped sponsor KWA staff to attend—River Network, USEPA, and Marc & Lisa Hult. I wanted to extend a special thanks to Marc and Lisa for helping to sponsor my trip along with River Network. It was my first time experiencing River Rally and these generous folks helped to make it happen. I was enlightened, and at times overwhelmed, to be in the presence of people who have worked so hard to protect the land and waters I love and am dependent on. Thanks all!

Photo By Peg Jones



Stop by our table at the Forecastle Festival

on the waterfront in Louisville: July 10-12th! Visit: www.forecastlefest.com.

Welcome Alec Edward Milburn!

We wanted to congratulate our Outreach Director, Jennifer Milburn & family on their newest addition! Alec was born on May 13th at 3:38 pm. He weighed 7 lbs 14 ounces and was 19" long. What a cutie!



KWA Participates in Southeast Stormwater Conference

Jason Flickner

In March, KWA took part in a Southeast Stormwater Conference that drew representatives from a variety of water protection organizations from around the southeast to Atlanta to discuss the most significant source of pollution to our nation's waters: stormwater discharges and runoff from communities and construction sites.

Stormwater pollution occurs during and following precipitation events when water flows over land and impervious surfaces and does not absorb into the ground. The runoff accumulates sediment and chemicals that flow untreated into streams or into storm water drains.

Construction sites are a significant source of stormwater pollution because of the disturbance and extended exposure of vast areas of soil. Impervious surfaces, such as rooftops, streets and parking lots, reduce the area available for water to infiltrate into the ground and increase flows into storm drains. Construction sites and municipal storm drain outfalls are considered point sources and require a discharge permit.

The intensive two-day conference was highlighted by a roundtable discussion with EPA Region IV staff working on stormwater and stream restoration issues. EPA has recently started requiring municipal governments to

attain MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system) permits in phases based on the size of the community, and has proposed effluent limitation guidelines for large construction sites. The discussion focused on additional tools EPA can require in discharge permits such as additional monitoring, effluent limits, and low impact development. Ultimately, more stringent requirements and enforcement are needed to reduce the effect stormwater plays in lowering the quality of our waters.

For more information on stormwater issues in Kentucky, please contact KWA staff.

Kentucky Stormwater Survey

Yvonne Miechtry

A stormwater telephone survey was conducted between June 2008 and January 2009 in 88 communities which are regulated by the Kentucky Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II permit. The survey was designed by the KY Transportation Cabinet and KY Environmental Education Council and was conducted by the University of Kentucky Survey Research Center. Local survey results were reported to the communities. The compiled results of all communities and the randomly selected 4,527 adult respondents can be viewed at

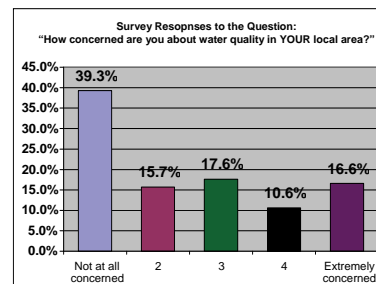
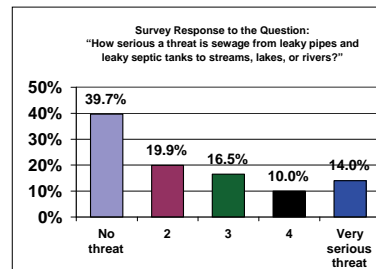
http://www.stormwater.kytc.ky.gov/MCM1/mcm1_MS4surveyresults.html

The survey measured knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to stormwater pollution and venues that are effective for educating the public about water quality. Results indicate a

lack of general knowledge and concern about water quality and stormwater pollution. For example results, see charts. Effective education is key to addressing the lack of knowledge and concern and ultimately leading to citizen behaviors that protect our water resources. Over 60% of the people surveyed said they didn't know what they could personally do to prevent storm runoff pollution.

The MS4 Phase II program, administered by the KY Division of Water, requires public education and involvement, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction runoff control, post construction management, and pollution prevention.

For more information about stormwater pollution prevention and outreach, see www.stormwater.kytc.ky.gov.



Spotlight on Thaxton's Canoe Trails & Paddler's Inn

Kelly Craig

Here's an idea...let's go kayaking! This month, KWA is recognizing family owned and operated Thaxton's Canoe Trails and Paddler's Inn. Jim and Ann started Thaxton's in 1980 and have watched their 4 children: Lori, James, Glen, and Sara grow right along with the business. Now, 5 grandchildren; Danielle, Cory, Jason, Jonathon, and Marie are growing up with various connections to the business too.

Their operation offers canoe, kayak, raft and tube trips on an internationally recognized Class I river. Trips range from 6 to 30 miles. They also have beautiful cabins at affordable rates nestled above the river that include paddling privileges for their guests. Or, if you want to rough it, they offer river front primitive camping too.



From left to right: Anne Thaxton, Yvonne Meichtry (chair of LRWW), & Jim Thaxton

The Licking River is recognized by the Kentucky Division of Water as an Outstanding Water Resource with over 100 species of fish and over 50 species of mussels—about 25% of the mussel population in the US. The Licking River is a unique ecosystem and the Thaxton's have sought to protect the diversity of the Licking River as avid supporters of Watershed Watch; stream monitoring has been an event that the whole family takes part in. Jim and Anne have been volunteering for Licking River Watershed Watch since its inception. It was at the last annual conference of LRWW that both Ann & Jim were honored for their years of service (pictured above).

Education is important to the Thaxton family, and Jim has taught two classes at NKU for the past 12 years: Introduction to Canoeing, and Introduction to Kayaking. Glen, who is also the Operations Manager, generally assisted with the on-water sessions. They also distribute a Smart Start program for folks who have never been on the river before. Glen believes in educating people about the river & safe canoeing practices and connecting people with their waterways not only by having fun on the waters, but by caring enough to keep the waters clean. One of his favorite quotes about canoeing and the business is: It's a wonderful way to make a living and enjoy a great lifestyle at the same time. The Thaxton's work winter jobs so they can enjoy the summers as canoe outfitters and guardians for Licking River. So why not join them? If you decide to head their way, please be sure to tell them you are friends of KWA! And tell 'em we said "Hi!"

Thaxton's Canoe - & Paddlers' Inn is located on the northwest side of the US 27 bridge on the banks of the Licking River at Butler. That is only an hour North of Lexington and just a half-hour South of Cincinnati. To find out about rates or more information about Thaxton's CanoeTrails and Paddlers' Inn please visit their website: <http://www.gopaddling.com>. Or call: **859-472-2000** direct from Northern Kentucky or Greater Cincinnati or outside the area call **877-643-8762**; E-mail info@gopaddling.com

Call for Volunteers

Are you interested in volunteering for an organization that is dedicated to protecting and restoring Kentucky's waters?

WE NEED YOU!

Please contact Kelly Craig KWA Membership Assistant at kelly@kwalliance.org or 270-932-2884. Thanks!

Statewide Drought Preparedness Plan

(This is not an announcement of impending drought!)

Pamla Wood



All natural disasters impact people and the natural world in varying degrees. A tornado passing through a harvested hayfield isn't necessarily a crisis, but when it crosses the road into a subdivision, it becomes life-threatening and incredibly expensive. Chances of flooding at a specific site can be calculated, and the differing impacts of floodwaters have been seared into our brains. However, tornados leave as fast as they come and floods subside. A good emergency response program knows how to conduct triage and how to allocate resources to begin cleanup. Droughts, on the other hand, "take the cake" when it comes to natural hazards with varied impacts and fuzzy edges.

Droughts leave emergency response personnel a little at odds. Emergency crews can arrange to provide hay and they can help pump water if they have the equipment and an alternate water source, but what else? Droughts creep in, sometimes so subtly that many don't even know it's happened. Or they come with scorching heat, ruining crops but not endangering public water supplies that are stored in large reservoirs or underground. Sometimes an agricultural drought ends with a good storm near harvest time, but the public water supply still remains in trouble.

Kentucky's Water Shortage Response Program developed in response to droughts in the 1980's—and is helpful for small systems management—but Kentucky has *never* had a statewide drought plan. A 2008 legislative resolution called for Drought Mitigation and Response Advisory Council (Drought Council) to guide development of a plan to coordinate drought response and mitigation among various state agencies.

Working from a model plan published by the National Drought Mitigation Center (Wilhite et al), Kentucky Division of Water's Bill Caldwell and his capable staff led the Drought Council and Jennifer Thompson facilitated very lively discussions. Formal presentations provided: historical context of Kentucky's droughts and drought response (Bill Caldwell and State Climatologist Stuart Foster), details of the KY Pollution Prevention Center's Process Water Man-

agement Program (Cam Metcalf), and clarification of water programs of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy (Tim Hughes). Emergency Management and National Guard representatives explained their drought response functions.

There were 45 Council members in all. Yours truly was asked to serve as an "environmental representative," because of my earlier drought response work, but some of the other especially vocal non-DOW participants included KY Association of Counties' Roger Recktenwald, Toyota's Carl Kurz, National Weather Service's Mike Callahan, Canoe Kentucky's Ed Council, and KY Rural Water's Gary Larimore. The Council experience was rare because it was a lively and pleasant public-private work group able to focus on planning without great divisions of values or economics.

The Division of Water (DOW) submitted the Kentucky's Drought Mitigation and Response Plan to the legislature on the due-date of December 31st, 2008. The Plan recommended a permanent Drought Mitigation Team chaired by the Energy & Environment Cabinet and four Assessment Teams that would focus on the following: climate and water resources data, agricultural and natural resources, drinking water & public health, and finally drought & water emergency. The full Mitigation Team would be convened only when drought indicators show a need.

The Plan also outlines coordinated monitoring of drought conditions and levels of response. The Council strongly recommended a website be established that would provide monitoring information and clarify which types of monitoring would impact which kinds of activities, e.g. public water supplies vs. agricultural needs. Some of these recommendations have already been incorporated into DOW's current site: <http://www.water.ky.gov/wateruse/drought>.

The Plan addresses drought preparedness—including inventorying resources, identifying vulnerabilities, and encouraging water usage efficiency as a preparedness measure. It also recommends measures for increasing public understanding and preparedness for drought.

Visit **KWA's blog** on the *Courier-Journal's Kentuckiana Green* website (www.kentuckianagreen.com) to stay up-to-date on clean water issues and events. Have an idea for a good blog topic? Contact Judy at Director@KWAlliance.org

Red River Gorge Grant Award

Tessa Edelen



Red River Gorge cliffline

We are proud to announce that KWA will be partnering with the Daniel Boone National Forest on an EPA 319 funded grant to create and implement a watershed-based plan for the Red River Gorge area. The project area includes Swift Camp Creek, Copperas Creek, Gladie Creek, Wolfpen Creek, and Indian Creek. The Forest Service's analysis of the lower portion of the watershed, "The Limits of Acceptable Change," points to overused and rogue hiking trails, vista lookout spots, and campgrounds as sources of erosion contributing to stream sedimentation. The new project will implement Best Management Practices outlined in the analysis in the lower portions of the waterway and begin the planning process in the headwater areas. KWA Watershed Program Director Tessa Edelen will be working with the Forest Service on the project.

Watershed Teams Taking Care of Business

Tessa Edelen

Four communities in Kentucky are creating watershed based plans and helping KWA write and revise the *Watershed Planning Guidebook for Kentucky Communities* in the process:

- ♦ **Darby Creek** (subwatershed of Harrods Creek) in Oldham County
- ♦ **Dry Creek** (subwatershed of Triplett Creek) in Rowan County
- ♦ **Hancock Creek** (subwatershed of Strodes Creek) in Clark County
- ♦ **Stockton Creek** (subwatershed of Fleming Creek) in Fleming County.

So far, all of the groups have finished the introductory and information gathering chapters and are in the process of analyzing data and getting down to business with Best Management Practices recommendations. Each of the watershed teams will be hosting a roundtable event in the fall to update communities on the plans. They are doing great work!

If you would like to keep up with our progress or take a look at the draft version of the *Guidebook*, visit the "Watershed Planning Projects" section of our website: www.KWAlliance.org

Activists invited to chat with Corps about Coal

Jason Flickner

In April, KWA staff Judy Petersen & Jason Flickner joined several of our partner organizations from around the state at the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Louisville District's office to meet the new District Commander Colonel Landry, and to discuss the Corps' regulatory practices for coal mine permitting. After a warm introduction, Colonel Landry explained he had met with industry representatives and was inviting the environmental perspective, to gain a well-rounded understanding of issues surrounding surface coal mining in Kentucky.

Many vital concerns were raised on USACE 404 permits required to fill streams & construct valley fills including: problems surrounding Freedom of Information Act requests & public comment period limitations, inadequate mitigation requirements, after-the-act permitting, and finally, insufficient monitoring, inspection, and enforcement.

As the meeting concluded, Col. Landry identified 4 areas where the Corps' practices could improve: transparency, information availability, notice of actions given sooner rather

than later, and routine meetings with all stakeholders. Colonel Landry agreed to visit Eastern Kentucky with KFTC, and also agreed to a possible town hall style meeting in the region. KWA would like to thank Colonel Landry for his willingness to hear all sides concerned with the controversy of coal mining in Kentucky and for inviting our participation. We look forward to continuing the discussion in the near future.

Reforestation Old Mine Sites

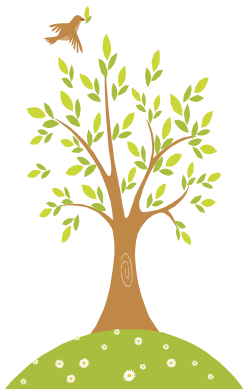
Tessa Edelen

If you put aside the issue of coal mining - just for a moment, and consider the mine sites as reclamation projects, there are some interesting things going on in Appalachia. In recent years, mine site reclamation has often consisted of replacing the topsoil to the former mine site and driving over it with heavy machinery until the soil is so compacted that almost nothing will grow on it. There are folks who apparently value the aesthetic of this method. Some grasses will grow on these sites, but not much else. Other folks would prefer to see trees growing there, both for their intrinsic value and their potential commercial value. But trees will not grow on compacted soil. So ARRI stepped in to loosen things up - the soil that is.

The Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) is a coalition of groups, including citizens, the coal industry, and government, dedicated to restoring forests on coal mined lands in the Eastern United States (see [www. http://arri.osmre.gov](http://arri.osmre.gov)).

ARRI was established in early 2004 as people in neighboring states realized that many of their reforestation efforts were similar. Kentucky's Reforestation Initiative began in 1995 as a cooperative effort between the Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (DSMRE), the University of Kentucky, and the Environmental Quality Commission to promote reforestation by requiring the planting of high-value hardwood species on mined lands. Several other branches of our state government also partner with ARRI.

The technique that ARRI calls Forestry Reclamation Approach is, in a nutshell, a way of piling up a lot of soil and growing material and not driving over it to give trees a chance to thrive. Ideally, the growth medium is four to six feet deep! They also focus on proper tree planting techniques and suitable species for the habitat. Having a forest on a former mine site, the thinking goes, is much better for the environment than a field of fescue. The Forestry Reclamation Approach may be the post mining land-use of choice



Arbor Day 2008 – was indeed *A Walk in the Park*

An interest group, Plant for the Planet! made up of neighborhood associations, local businesses, and individual donors were able to give away over 1350 native KY trees to help the urban tree canopy, protect watersheds, and reduce global warming on Arbor Day this year at Warheim Park in Louisville. **Do you live in Deer Park, Upper Highlands, Highlands-Douglass, Bonnycastle, or Belknap?** This event is looking for a leader for next year. Please contact KWA member and supporter Stephen Spanyer: srs@iglou.com

Events

Aug. 2: Summer Wildflower Hike at Blackacre SNP (Jefferson Co.) at 2 p.m. EDT. Hike through Blackacre's fields of wildflowers & native grasses with botanists Julian Campbell and Pat Haragan.
www.naturepreserves.ky.gov

Aug. 8: Green River Day at Riverside Park in Livermore on Green River. Starts at 10:30 CDT w/streamside litter pickup; riverside nature hike, fishing, & afternoon canoe floats.
Contact: alomadew@sierraclub.org

Sept. 18 – 19: KAAE 2009 Conference: Currents in Environmental Education at General Butler State Park in Carrollton, KY. Contact: Jennifer Adler, 859-707-7421, conference@kaee.org.

Sept. 22: KRWW Annual Picnic
Time: 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm Location: Don & Pat Dampier residence in Georgetown, KY. Celebration of another successful year of sampling in KY River Basin. Contact: Hank Graddy, hgraddy@aol.com

Sept. 24-26: Year of the Ohio Celebration and Watershed Watch Fundraiser held by Jackson Purchase RC&D Foundation in conjunction with BBQ on The River in Paducah. Contact: Robert Johnson, Robert.johnson@jpf.org

Sept. 26: KWA Governing Council Meeting. Contact: Judy Petersen, Judy@kwalliance.org

Oct. 17: Kentucky Conservation Committee Annual Meeting from 9 am. - 4 pm. at The Green Building, 732 East Market St. Louisville KY 40202, www.thegreenbuilding.com

Oct. 29-30: Southeastern Water Trails Forum in Chattanooga TN. Please visit:

<http://www.southeastwaterforum.org/> for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust Protects More Old Growth Forest

Hugh Archer, Executive Director KNLT



Photo U.S. Forest Service

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust (KNLT) recently purchased 400 acres in Harlan County adjoining the Blanton Forest State Nature Preserve. Blanton Forest is Kentucky's largest remaining old growth forest and the 14th largest uncut forest east of the Mississippi River. In partnership with the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, KNLT has helped acquire more than 3,100 acres for Blanton Forest, Kentucky's largest nature preserve.

The 400 new acres add to the protected landscape level forested migratory corridor through the coal fields of eastern Kentucky. Through the Pine Mountain Legacy Project, KNLT is striving to preserve and protect Pine Mountain's ecologically significant natural areas like Blanton Forest by providing an ecological corridor and contiguous forest block for plants and animals and encouraging long term environmental stewardship.

Pine Mountain spans well over 120 miles and forms the northwest border of the Cumberland Mountain Ecoregion. It is home to many species of rare plants and animals, and, because

of the numerous caves, harbors federally endangered bats (including Indian bat) and even native animals known from nowhere else in the world.

KNLT continues to raise funds for the stewardship of these natural areas as well as for new acquisitions. The next acquisition will be nearly 2,000 acres of forested wild lands in Whitley County which will anchor the project on the southern end of the mountain. KNLT is a statewide land trust working with the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission and other organizations to secure funds for the protection of natural land and its long-term stewardship and to serve as a resource and partner to other land trusts and conservation groups. More information is available at www.KNLT.org.

ORSANCO Accepting Public Comments on Ohio River Water Quality Standards

The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) has formally released the proposed revisions to its Pollution Control Standards for the Ohio River. On initial review, we believe most of the revisions are minor and are designed to reflect current US EPA criteria. KWA's formal comments will be available via our website, www.kwalliance.org, in the near future. ORSANCO's proposed revision can be found at:

<http://www.orsanco.org/index.php/standards>

The public comment period on the Pollution Control Standards will remain open thru July 24, 2009. Written com-

ments should be directed to the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission, 5735 Kellogg Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45228.

Students Recognized for their Work on Beargrass Creek



Photo Fife Wicks

Ms. Page and her Male High School environmental science class received the first annual "Steering the Future of Beargrass Creek Award" at the Louisville Zoo during the 39th anniversary celebration of Earth day this year. For the past 3 years, the AP Environmental Science class has applied their studies to their work on Beargrass Creek. The students have spent time conducting soil and water tests, and mapping the general area, along with identifying sources of pollution and recognizing native & invasive plants. Good job guys! Thank you for watching over our waters! For more information visit David Wick's blog: <http://www.courier-journal.com/blogs/greenblog5/blog.html>

For Watershed Watch in Kentucky SAMPLING DATES please visit our website: www.KWAlliance.org under events.