

The Tributary

Winter 2008



Watershed Celebration Day Award

By G. Paul Richter

The West Virginia Watershed Network held its 9th annual Watershed Celebration Day on Saturday, 3 November 2007 at Lakeview Resort near Morgantown.

The West Virginia Watershed Network is a group of state and federal agencies and non-profit groups committed to providing resources for watershed management in West Virginia. Its mission is to support efforts empowering local residents to make decisions for sustainable management of their resources.

Over 100 volunteers across West Virginia from about 24 watershed groups met there to network, to tour sites, and to recognize watershed associations and

volunteers who had done outstanding work in the previous 12-month period to protect and restore local watersheds and educate their communities about the importance of

watershed protection. BRWA board members in attendance were Don Gasper (BRWA Vice-Chairperson) and G. Paul Richter (BRWA Chairperson).

Cont'd on page 2



Winter vegetation is taking hold. The BRWA followed up on its Mud Lick coal refuse reclamation project. Last summer additional grading and revegetation were necessary to stabilize the embankment.

Mud Lick Refuse Remediation Update

By G. Paul Richter

At the request of the Buckhannon River Watershed Association (BRWA) and The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's (WVDEP) Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation (OAML&R), the bench along Mud Lick Run

was regraded and revegetated in the summer of 2007. Later, Representatives of the US Office of Surface Mining AML&R and the BRWA walked the recently reclaimed Mud Lick coal refuse site to see if all of the reclamation project's requirements had

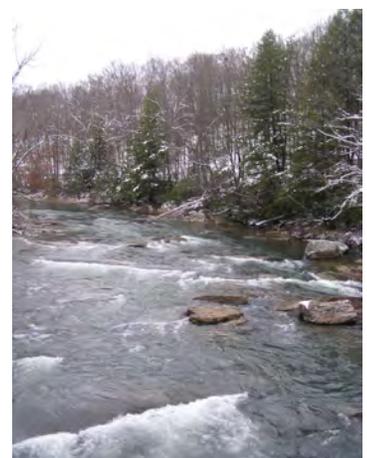
been met. At that time, some of the newly reseeded Mud Lick bench and embankment areas had shown no signs of growth. By late fall, those areas showed good growth. The January 2008 photograph accompanying this update indicates good coverage.

In this issue:

Water Celebration Day Award	1
Mud Lick Refuse Remediation Update	1
BRWA board	2
Water Celebration Day Tour	3

Special points of interest:

- The April Meeting of the BRWA is to be Announced at a later date.
- Upcoming membership meeting features speaker, board elections.
- Your own map of the Buckhannon River watershed.
- Support your Buckhannon River! Renew your membership — or become a new member! See back cover.



The Buckhannon River at Hall.

***Buckhannon River
Watershed Association***

Board of Directors

G. Paul Richter, President
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Tom Landis, Secretary
Jim Mitchell, Treasurer
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Kim Bjorgo-Thome
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BRWA
112 Fayette St.
Buckhannon, WV 26201



G. Paul Richter (left) Accepting Award on Behalf of BRWA From Brad Durst (WV Conservation Agency) Representing the West Virginia Watershed Network Directors.

Watershed Celebration Day Award *Cont'd from page 1*

The awards ceremony followed the evening banquet and preceded a showing of Al Gore's award-winning film, "An Inconvenient Truth". At this ceremony, the Buckhannon River Watershed Association received an award for having forged strong partnerships with agencies and other organizations in order to remediate acid mine drainage on two Buckhannon River tributaries and neutralize acidic deposition (acid rain, acid snow) on a number of Buckhannon River tributaries (see photo). This award follows Watershed Celebration Day awards to BRWA in previous years: Polluted Coal Mine Drainage Award-2006, Non-Point Award-2004 and 2002, Water Quality Award-2003, and runner-up in 2001 for the New Watershed of the Year.

Other local volunteer organizations in northern WV that won awards at this gathering are Horseshoe Run Watershed Association in Tucker County (Habitat) and Guardians of the West Fork in Marion County (Polluted Coal Mine Drainage). The highest honor went to the Plateau Action Network of Fayette County as the 2007 Watershed Association of the Year. The group received a plaque and a \$5,000 cash award donated by the

Dominion Foundation. The Division of Highways also provided highway signs designating that watershed association as the watershed of the year.

"It is very inspiring to see how much these volunteer watershed organizations continue to achieve in their communities," said Rick Buckley, Clean Streams Coordinator for the Federal Office of Surface Mining. "Their accomplishments are a testimony to each of us that we all can make a positive difference, for the health of our streams and rivers, by working together and being committed."

Sponsors for this year's event include West Virginia's 14 Conservation Districts, American Electric Power, Burgess & Niple, Dominion Foundation, US Office of Surface Mining, US Environmental Protection Agency, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, West Virginia Conservation Agency, West Virginia Division of Highways, West Virginia Watershed Resource Center, West Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Society, and West Virginia Commission for National and Community Service.



Figure 1.

Watershed Celebration Day Tour

By G. Paul Richter

The Watershed Celebration Day on Saturday, 3 November 2007 included a tour of sites for those who had signed up for it, and BRWA board member G. Paul Richter was one of those who took the tour. The tour ran through the middle of the day and included a box lunch at Marilla Park near Morgantown. The tour sites were Chestnut Ridge Regional Park, Dogwood Lake mine water treatment facility, and Richards Mine portal.

At the regional park, there are six different local wastewater-treatment systems located near the different types of buildings (dining hall, shower house, park office, residential cottages). Each system is located near a particular type of building and was designed to handle waste specifically from that type of building. Because the wastewater is treated locally and each treatment is designed for a specific kind of wastewater, the systems operate efficiently and are environmentally benign. The treatment systems include the following: (1) recirculating sand filter, (2) wetland, (3) aerobic with sand-lined trench, (4) low-pressure distribution, (5) sand-lined trench, and (6) drip irrigation.

The Dogwood Lake mine water treatment facility has water pumped uphill from a few nearby mines to a central area via underground pipes. The combined waters are pumped through an automatic lime-dosing system (to neutralize the acidity and remove dissolved iron) (*Figure 1*), then run downhill to a mixing area where the water is mixed and aerated (*Figure 2*).

From there, the treated water and the iron hydroxide solids flow to a settling pond, which is actually a small lake. The solid iron hydroxide that forms slowly sinks to the bottom of the lake. By the time the water reaches the far end of the lake, the water is clear and no longer acidic, and the iron compounds are immobilized at the bottom. The outflow from the lake runs through a pipe and into specially made tanks where trout can be raised. Using these tanks, WVU Professor Daniel Miller and colleagues have been studying the feasibility of raising trout in treated mine water. They have found that it is possible to raise high-quality trout in such water.

Before driving to the Richards Mine portal discharge point, the tour group was treated to a nice box lunch at Marilla Park, followed by a brief walk along a small portion of the Deckers Creek Nature trail.

The Richards Mine portal has untreated mine drainage flowing into Deckers Creek two miles upstream from Sabraton, which is near Morgantown. The outflow from the mine discharges acidity and iron directly into Deckers Creek, occasionally raising both acidity and iron levels to above those allowed by the state of West Virginia. In *Figure 3* deposited iron compounds are clearly visible. The translucent yellowish white area visible in the left middle ground of the picture is probably due to aluminum compounds from the mine discharge.



Figure 2



Figure 3



112 Fayette St.
Buckhannon, WV 26201

TO:

Time For

2008 Membership

The Buckhannon River Watershed Association is a private, 501 (c)(3) non-profit, tax-deductible organization. It is an all-volunteer group dedicated to preserving, conserving, and monitoring the health of the Buckhannon River Watershed and promoting our West Virginia river heritage through public awareness.

If you like what we do, then please support our efforts. Annual membership is \$5/individual and \$25/business.

Just clip this form, fill out the requested information, and mail to 112 Fayette St., Buckhannon, WV 26201. Call (304) 472-3317 with questions. Thank you!

BUCKHANNON RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

2008 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Individual \$5.00

Corporate \$25.00

Total \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone (Optional): _____

E-Mail (Optional): _____

Additional Donations:

\$ _____

Please Make Checks Payable to:
BRWA

Mail to:

Buckhannon River Watershed

Association

112 Fayette Street

Buckhannon, WV 26201