

Hello from the Shermans Creek Conservation Association!

Brrrr, January is almost over! These days there are so many things to be concerned about – lead and cadmium in toys, hormones in meat, pesticides in fruit...even rocks can be hazardous to your health; however, this one is a natural (not man-made) evil. Hard to believe but radon, the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, emanates from certain types of rocks. This colorless, odorless gas has been known to creep into homes, especially those with basements. The only way to know if your house is affected is to test for it. It is very location specific - Your neighbor, whether you have a 5 acre property or an adjoining townhouse, could have high radon levels while you may not. January is the best month to test for radon because your doors and windows have been closed for a while now, keeping fresh (but cold) air out. Home test kits are available or you can hire a professional. See more details in the Other Announcements section of this email. Add radon testing to your list of things to do in 2010!

Come to our Members and Community Meeting on Monday, January 25th – agenda attached and further information below. We will be discussing ideas for upcoming events as well as holding our annual elections where half of the board positions are elected!

SCCA Announcements, Meetings and Upcoming Events

If interested in volunteering for helping with any of the following events (in blue/italics), please contact SCCA at shermanscreek@embarqmail.com or call Linda Sieber at 582-3376. For a membership form, please print and mail the form found on our website at <http://www.shermanscreek.org/application.htm>.

Shermans Creek 2010 Crocks are in – only 5 left!!!!

These crocks were again designed by Keaton's pottery and exhibit a beautiful cattail design. Don't miss out; if you didn't pre-order, there is a limited supply available of your 2010 Shermans Creek collectible crocks! Fill out attached order form and mail with \$29 (per crock) payment to SCCA, 385 Dark Hollow Road, Shermans Dale, PA 17090.



SCCA Members and Community Meeting – January 25, 2010

Meetings are generally held the third Monday of each month. Meetings usually involve a summary of recent past events and upcoming events that require some volunteers, as well as ideas for newsletters, grants, educational workshops, working with school districts and community partners, and much more! Meetings are held in the Carroll Township Municipal Building at 50 Rambo Hill Road in Shermans Dale from 7PM – 8PM. Members and non-members invited to attend. **Agenda is attached for the Jan 25th meeting!**

2010 Upcoming Events and Ideas

We're always looking for ideas for programs or events. Come out to our meetings to volunteer to help with an event or just come to brainstorm some ideas! At the September meeting, below is a list of the following events SCCA will try to plan for in 2010.

- Annual Stream Clean Up
- Rain Barrel workshops throughout Perry County

- Riparian plantings with Boy Scouts
- Earth Day Program: April 22, 2010. Plan a program for middle school age kids
- Kid's Creek Day w/ALLARM: If ALLARM students are available-week of July 11-19th, 2010
- Cold Water Fishery Initiative
- Healthy Yard Initiative w/Master Gardeners (see below). Check out Bay Scapes ideas.
- World Wide Monitoring Day- March 8 or 22nd. ALLARM will provide kits at no charge.
- Awards for volunteers or other community members demonstrating environmental stewardship

Healthy Yard Initiative

"Healthy Yard" project with local Master Gardeners, using our Enviroscope Model as a means to demonstrate the proper use of pesticides and fertilizers, encourage the use of native plants, address runoff through buffers and to inspire others to create Habitat gardens & Wildlife corridors. Master Gardeners will also assist the SCCA and Perry County Conservation District with other public programs regarding storm water management, improving wildlife habitats, removing invasive species, planting native vegetation, butterfly gardens, non point source pollution, and other related topics of interest.

Other items of interest in Perry County and surrounding areas...

Recycle your Holiday Cards

St. Jude's Ranch for Children is accepting greeting cards for recycling through February 28. By removing the front and attaching a new back, beautiful new cards are made by the children and volunteers of St. Jude's and sold via their online store. Customers receive "green" holiday cards for use and the children receive payment for their work and learn the benefits and importance of "going green". Send your cards to: St. Jude's Ranch for Children, Recycled Card Program, 100 St. Jude's Street, Boulder City, NV 89005.

Perry County Conservation District Tree Pre-order

The District is now taking orders for its annual tree sale. Proceeds benefit environmental education programs in Perry County. Visit the conservation district website (www.perrycd.org) to download an order form.

Opt Out of Receiving a Phone Book

Part of being "greener" or more environmentally conscious is to rethink the simplest activities...do you really need a new phone book every year? Or sometimes even 2 or 3 a year per household! The phone book industry has created an official national website where consumers can easily find out how to opt out from different phone books. The website will ask for your zip code and then provide the phone numbers of the distributors of the phone books in your area. Just call the distributors and say you want off their distribution list. The website is <http://www.yellowpagesoptout.com>

Funding for Farms

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service's Acting State Conservationist, Dave Brown, is encouraging Pennsylvania agricultural producers located within the Chesapeake Bay watershed to apply for conservation assistance under the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative. "CBWI offers technical and financial assistance to help producers implement a system of core conservation practices to help control erosion, and to minimize excess nutrients and sediments in order to restore, preserve, and protect the Chesapeake Bay," said Brown. "Core practices include crop residue management (especially no-till and mulch till systems), crop nutrient management, manure management, cover crops, buffers, and streamside fencing to keep livestock out of streams and protect fish and wildlife habitat. In addition, a limited number of other conservation practices are available to address specific resource problems, such as barnyard runoff." The first

step for producers should be to contact their local NRCS or Conservation District office to request assistance. The application and information about the new Chesapeake Bay initiative for fiscal year 2010 and a watershed map are available on the Pennsylvania NRCS website.

Water Resource Webinars

Penn State Cooperative Extension is offering monthly water resource webinars. Each webinar is offered at 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on the scheduled day. **January 27: "Water Testing and Monitoring Strategies Near Gas Drilling Activity" webinar with Bryan Swistock, Penn State University. Strategies to monitor water wells, springs and streams in areas where gas well drilling is occurring.** --February 24: Saving Money and Your Septic System Through Water Conservation (Tom McCarty, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Cumberland County). Tips on how to reduce water use in and around your home to save money on energy and water bills while also reducing the stress on your septic system. --March 31: Managing Your Pond or Lake (Susan Boser, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Beaver County). Assessing pond and lake structures, testing water quality, identifying and managing aquatic plants, managing wildlife and fisheries. --April 28: Safe Drinking Water Clinic (Peter Wulfhorst, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Pike County). How to construct and maintain your private water well, spring or cistern to ensure safe drinking water quality including water testing strategies and water treatment methods. --May 26: Managing Your On-Lot Septic System (Dana Rizzo, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Westmoreland County). Proper strategies to locate, construct, and maintain a home septic system to prevent costly failures.

You will need to pre-register to view these webinars through the Water Webinar Series webpage (<http://water.cas.psu.edu/webinars.htm>).

40th Anniversary of Earth Day in 2010 – Schools Register Now

The IConservePA website urges your school to commemorate the 40th Earth Day on April 22 by undertaking a meaningful conservation project at your school! Register now for the Earth Day 40 School Challenge (www.iconservepa.org/earthday40/schools.html) and undertake a project to improve the environment and conserve natural resources at your school or in the nearby community. A Grand Prize package worth more than \$1,500 is up for grabs, plus three schools will receive honorable mention prizes. Every school who participates will be acknowledged on the Earth Day 40 website.

Seedlings for Schools

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is offering tree seedlings to Pennsylvania schools. Teachers can participate in the program and receive bundles of seedlings for their students. There is no charge to schools participating in this project, as the seedlings are provided by the Game Commission's Howard Nursery. The cost of shipping seedlings is covered through donations of Waste Management; Mealey's Furniture; Wildlife for Everyone Foundation; USFWS-Partners for Wildlife; and Pheasants Forever Chapter 603. The program provides two levels of involvement based on the grade level. For more information, visit the Game Commission's Seedlings for Schools webpage (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=648457&mode=2>).

Subscribe to Keystone Wild!Notes

Subscribe today to Keystone Wild!Notes, a free online publication about Pennsylvania's wildlife and native plants. Every issue of Keystone Wild!Notes is packed with great stories and photos about the latest research and conservation news about non-game animals and wild plants. <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/wrcp/subscribe.html>

January is Radon Action Month

Although testing for radon is easy and inexpensive, 80 percent of the homes in the U.S. have not been tested. Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that EPA has reported as causing 20,000 lung cancer deaths nationwide every year. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, after cigarette smoking and is a problem in some Pennsylvania homes. January is the

best time to test for radon now that doors and windows are all tightly closed. Now is the time to test and if needed, reduce your exposure to radon. The only way to know if you and your family are at risk from radon is to test your home for radon or have it tested by a certified professional radon tester. For do-it-yourselfers, radon kits can be purchased for \$25 at building supply, hardware and general merchandise stores. A basic test takes 10 minutes to set up and when complete is mailed to a lab for analysis. If test results are above the EPA recommended action level you need to have the radon level reduced by a certified radon 'mitigator.' Reducing radon is not technically difficult and costs approximately \$800 - \$2,500. For more information, visit the DEP Radon page (http://www.dep.state.pa.us/brp/Radon_Division/Radon_Homepage.htm)

See you on Shermans Creek!!

Shermans Creek Conservation Association

If you do not wish to receive future monthly updates or other announcements from SCCA, please respond to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the Subject Line. If you have any comments/suggestions or even announcements you would like included, please email us as shermanscreek@embarqmail.com