



## Summer Newsletter, 2013 #30

[www.evergreenconservancy.org](http://www.evergreenconservancy.org)

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### Evergreen awarded the PA Environmental Award

Members from Evergreen Conservancy were on hand to accept the 2013 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award on Thursday, May 23rd at the Westin Hotel and Convention Center in Pittsburgh. The Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards recognizes and honors outstanding achievements of organizations, businesses and individuals in a wide range of environmental initiatives throughout the region, and pays tribute to those who have demonstrated a commitment to environmental excellence, leadership and accomplishment in their respective fields. The Pennsylvania Environmental Council, sponsor of these awards, hopes to encourage the community to emulate the achievements of the successful nominees, thereby promoting innovative environmental efforts and enhancing the quality of life in Western Pennsylvania. The Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards program is made possible by a grant from Dominion Energy. The award includes a \$5,000 donation. In 2013, five awards were given out. In addition to Evergreen Conservancy and Nature Abounds' Senior Environment Corps program, winners included Shenango River Watchers, Inc., college students Tyler Umstead and Lance Jubis, and Beaver Valley Slag. Evergreen was honored to win this award!



### Evergreen Conservancy Partners with Indiana County Emergency Management to Protect Our County Waters

This project is a unique and progressive partnership between Indiana County Emergency Management Agency and Evergreen Conservancy to protect and clean our waterways. Project Funds were provided through The Foundation For Pennsylvania Watersheds via GenOn Settlement funds. Information regarding The Foundation For Pennsylvania Watersheds can be found at [www.Pennsylvaniawatersheds.org](http://www.Pennsylvaniawatersheds.org). The project will place real time cellular telemetry multi-parameter data loggers that will record pH, temperature, flow and conductivity in our county streams. These Manta 2 probes from Measurement Specialties will monitor water at key locations on highways where

there is a high risk of traffic accidents with trucks that haul toxic fluids and waste products that could potentially impact our waters. Emergency Management identified five locations and Evergreen is currently installing the stations to monitor the water. Alerts can be created to text or send e-mails if parameters go above a certain level alerting staff if there is a problem as soon as it is detected. This can provide critical response time to preventing wide spread water pollution and will protect and preserve our county water resources. So far we have three installations in place and working. The data can be seen on the web site 24/7 and can be accessed by Emergency Management staff and others.



### OUR MISSION:

To advance the preservation, protection and stewardship of Natural, Cultural and Historical Resources in and around Indiana County, PA

### Evergreen's Website

[www.evergreenconservancy.org](http://www.evergreenconservancy.org)

For The Latest News.



### On Facebook

If you use Facebook, please go to our page and tell us if you like it. We can send you event notices and update you with current events! Become our Friend. [Like](#)



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### And on YouTube:

[About Evergreen Conservancy – crNa11j5J2M](#)

[Tanoma AMD Wetlands – yaGLM4Ob8Ks](#)

[Renewable Energy – S3VOATx0mRY](#)

YouTube

## Pa Gas Expo 2013

Cindy Rogers represented Evergreen Conservancy at the PA Gas Expo 2013 on a panel about water quality at KCAC in Indiana Pennsylvania on July 26th. Panelists included Cindy, Nate McElroy, IUP Chemistry faculty about the Beaver Run Study, Scott May, and Anngela Chapman from Environmental Services Laboratory. Questions included: What are the main concerns to water quality related to shale gas development? With all the AMD (abandoned mine drainage) issues in this region, is there any reasonable way to define "baseline water quality" for streams and/or aquifers (well-water supplies). What efforts are currently underway to do this in Western Pennsylvania? And, is there much concern from neighboring states about the "downstream" effects of shale gas development? Questions were taken from the audience.

## Learn Geocaching at Evergreen Conservancy Fall Event

Have you ever wondered about geocaching? Thought you might like to do it but didn't know how to get started. You will learn what you need to know to start geocaching at Evergreen Conservancy's Fall Event. "Geocaching 101" will be Andy Davis's topic on Friday November 8th at 6 p.m. at the Lakeside Center of Blue Spruce Park. Prior to Andy's presentation those attending will be updated on recent activities of Evergreen Conservancy. The fall event will be at the Lakeside Center rather than the lodge and start at 6 instead of 7 p.m. Those attending should dress to be outside during a portion of the program. You may get your hands on a real geocache.



Andy Davis resides in Indiana and operates a web design and training business. He serves as the webmaster for Indiana County Parks. He is also an outdoor person. He is active in mountain climbing, cycling, kayaking and hiking. He has given programs on geocaching, map and compass reading, and other outdoor programs for school and other groups. Geocaching is a real-world out-door treasure hunting game using GPS devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location. Think of it as a treasure hunt, a workout, and a technical challenge. Again that's Evergreen Conservancy's fall event at Blue Spruce Park's Lakeside Center on Friday November 8th at 6 p.m.

WARNING: GEOCACHING CAN BE HABIT-FORMING!

## Visit our Story Book Walk

The Storybook Walk this year at Tanoma is Henry and Mudge and the Happy Cat by Cynthia Rylant. You still have time this year to visit our outdoor story walk with your children while you enjoy reading the story together.



### WHAT WE CONSERVE:

Wildlife Habitat • Stream Access • Scenic Vistas • Land in need of Restoration • Working Landscapes • Historic • Cultural Sites

## Tanoma Updates

We will be purchasing and installing a new water wheel this fall to provide more energy and power the aerators 24/7.

## Water Monitoring:

We have 33 data loggers in the streams at present. We just completed fall maintenance and recalibration of all the loggers.

If you are interested in becoming a water monitoring volunteer with this project, please contact us at [info@evergreenconservancy.com](mailto:info@evergreenconservancy.com). Time commitments vary, and we are looking for volunteers to come on our bimonthly downloads when their schedule allows!

Visit our web site to learn more about these projects... [www.evergreenconservancy.org](http://www.evergreenconservancy.org)

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## Dataloggers and Water monitoring: What can Conductivity Tell Me About Water Quality?

By Brooke Ejaery

Since January of 2011, Evergreen Conservancy has installed over 32 pieces of water monitoring equipment in streams all across the Indiana County region. These data loggers monitor temperature, pH, and conductivity (a few also monitor dissolved oxygen). Temperature and pH are easy to understand, but do you know what conductivity means? It is one of the easiest and most helpful water tests that can combat pollution.

Conductivity is the measurement of how well water can carry an electrical current. In order to conduct electricity, there must be positive and negative ions in the solution. Common positively charged ions are calcium, iron, magnesium, and sodium. Negatively charged ions can include nitrates, sulfates, phosphates and chlorides. The most basic unit of measurement is siemens or mho, and most measurements are microsiemens or micromhos per centimeter (us/cm or umhos/cm). The conductivity of most rivers in the US range from 50 to 1500 umhos/cm.

Conductivity is influenced mostly by geology. For example, in areas where bedrock is predominant, streams will have a low conductivity. In areas with clay soils, the conductivity will typically be higher. This is because clay is made up of more compounds that ionize easily in water, like those listed above. The geology of the surrounding area dictates what "normal" levels of conductivity are for a given stream. It is the other sources of ions (from pollution) that most people are interested in. Other sources of ions can come from surface water runoff (like animal wastes), sewage treatment systems, industrial discharges, and other miscellaneous sources. So why is it helpful to monitor conductivity? Conductivity is a great general indicator – meaning it can't tell you exactly what contaminants are in water, but it can tell you something is in the water. In other words, it's a great general indication of water quality. If a data logger measures a spike in conductivity outside its normal range, it could mean something has happened upstream – like a spill. Once you suspect a problem, then you can do further testing to figure out where the pollution is coming from. It is a simple, yet helpful test that helps to protect our local streams and water quality.

Sources: <http://water.epa.gov/type/rsi/monitoring/vms59.cfm>

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## Join Evergreen Conservancy Today!

Support the all-volunteer Evergreen Conservancy and its mission through your membership.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Levels:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15: Student      \_\_\_\_\_ \$25      \_\_\_\_\_ \$45      \_\_\_\_\_ \$70      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1 Youth (17 and under)      \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Other      \_\_\_\_\_ \$75: Business/Org

Additional Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Complete this form and send check to:

Evergreen Conservancy, PO Box 0783, Indiana, PA 15701





## Eagle Scout Project



Kyle Heckert completed his Eagle Scout project at Tanoma this past month. He researched, planned and organized the construction of a storage shed at Tanoma for Evergreen Conservancy. With the help of several Evergreen Conservancy members, scouts, friends and family the shed was constructed in two long days plus a few more hours to stain the siding. We now have a place to store equipment and materials we use for programs. It is a great shed and Kyle's work is VERY much appreciated!!!



## Annual Membership Meeting and Award

Evergreen Conservancy held its annual membership meeting Tuesday June 4th at the Tanoma Environmental Education Center with the usual potluck. We had a great turn out and beautiful weather. The meeting included an update of Evergreen activities and a system tour including our alternate energy projects. We re-elected our board officers: Cindy Rogers – President; Malcolm Hermann – Vice President; Sally Thornton – Secretary; (Kelly Cossey is acting Treasurer until November) – still looking for a permanent Treasurer. We recognized and thanked our many long-term water monitor volunteers, including Ron Moretti, Pat Scanlon, Doris and Paul Hicks, Joanne and John Ferraro, John Dudash, Carol Cummins, Paul Yacovone, John Somonick, as well as Katie Farnsworth for her work on our data. The meeting concluded with the awarding of the second annual Evergreen Award to the late John Novak. Mr. Novak was a lifetime advocate of the natural world. He was called “The Consummate Volunteer” because he was involved with so many different projects, was an outdoor educator, and was a member and officer of Crooked Creek watershed. A number of family members were present to accept the award.



## Evergreen Award

Please think about a person or group that really deserves to be recognized for their stewardship of our environment. You can nominate them at any time. Send us information about that person and why you think they should be given our Evergreen Award. There is a form you can fill out on our web site or contact us for what information we need. We would like to award this award at our 2014 annual meeting.

## Membership

July 1st was the start of our new 2013/14 membership year. If you have not done so already, please renew your membership and help support the important work done by Evergreen Conservancy.

If you think Environmental Education, water protection, and monitoring our county is important, and you support the many projects Evergreen is involved with, we need your support.

We invite you to join the Conservancy today.

## Environmental Education News

- May 16th – Cindy and Kelly joined volunteers from Trout Unlimited, PaSEC, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and the Indiana County Conservation District for a program with Saltsburg Elementary 5th graders at Blackleggs Memorial Park. The event was organized by the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team as part of Saltsburg's Trout in the Classroom Release Day. We did an activity on watersheds and water health for 45 students. They also toured an AMD treatment system, learned to fly fish, and caught macro-invertebrates in the creek.
- May 17th – Fifty 9th graders from Marion Center visited Tanoma for a systems tour and a program about watershed health with Cindy, Paul, Sally and Kelly. Dan Boone also gave a talk on the renewable energy system at Tanoma.
- July 30th – Pre-school students from IndiKids came to Tanoma and toured the wetlands, identified plants, and took a storybook walk before a nice lunch under the pavilion. We think they have some budding water scientists in their midst!
- August 2nd and 3rd – We had a great turn out for our stream clean ups. We worked with White Township, clearing debris out of two area streams. The Township brought in all the necessary equipment, and volunteers worked hard lugging logs, branches, and brush out of the streams and clearing the banks. Thanks to everyone who came out to help, and thank you to White Township, Dingbats, and the Indiana Mall for the pizza and drinks afterwards!
- August 8th – Eighty pre-school to high school aged kids from the YMCA summer camp visited Tanoma for an educational field trip. We even had kids from as far away as Philadelphia and Maryland! They caught bugs in the creek, ran in water relays, made iron oxide chalk, went on scavenger hunts, and more! Thank you to Bob, Anne, Joanne, John F., John D., Cindy, Caleb, Adam, and Kelly for making it such a great day!
- August 17th – Cindy and Kelly manned a table at the inaugural Knotweed Festival in Blairsville, talking to attendees about Evergreen and selling handmade crafts. It was a beautiful day for the festival, and it was very well attended!
- August 21st – Eleven interested adults and kids came out to Tanoma for a systems tour and iron oxide tie-dye tee-shirts with Kelly and Cindy. Check out their cool designs!
- August 24 – On a Saturday the Friends of the Parks program came to Evergreen Conservancy's Tanoma Wetlands for a Renewable Energy Program led by Board member Dan Boone. Dan talked about Renewable Energy, as well as giving the whole system tour about how our passive system cleans iron oxide from AMD. Eight people went on the tour with Dan. I found it interesting that one was an elementary education professor from IUP who has brought some of her classes to Tanoma. She said that some of the students prior to coming to Tanoma were not certain where their electricity came from. One of the highlights of the program was our electric lawn mower, which is charged from our solar panels.



## New Grant Work

**Pennsylvania American Water** – We received a \$985 grant from Pennsylvania American Water through their Environmental Grant Program. We will use the grant to purchase a solar panel and battery to power the data logger at Tanoma. This system can also be used in environmental education about renewable energy. We will also publish a new brochure with information about renewable energy to be used for educational programs.

**ARIPPA Award** – Our renewable energy project at Tanoma keeps expanding! We will use a \$1,000 ARIPPA Award, granted through WPCAMR, to purchase and install a water turbine at Tanoma to replace the damaged water wheel. With the addition of the water turbine, we will hopefully be able to provide full-time power to the aerators in the first pond. They are currently running off power generated by the wind turbine and solar panels.

## Evergreen Up-Coming Events Calendar:

- September 5th, 6th & 7th Northern Appalachian Folk Festival in Indiana, Pa
- September 19th . . . . . Networking Watershed Cruise in Pittsburgh
- September 21th . . . . . Evergreen will be participating in IUP's Into the Streets, which offers students an opportunity to become familiar with area organizations by participating in service projects throughout the county.
- September 29th . . . . . Girl Scouts will visit Tanoma for a Brownie Bug Badge program.
- October 26th . . . . . Hoodlebug Trail Clean Up
- November 8th . . . . . Mark your calendars to attend our fall program on Geocaching at Blue Spruce Lakeside Center.

## Mark your Calendars for September 5 – 7

Folks in Indiana are planning the first ever Northern Appalachian Folk Festival. Evergreen is happy to support this festival as part of our mission in the preservation of our cultural heritage. Thursday night there will be a play written by Si Kahn about a woman musician in Appalachia. The play "Precious Memories" will be held in the Indiana Theater Building, on Philadelphia Street. Gordon Glen will perform before the play.

There will be children's activities, a puppet parade, 100+ accordions in the streets, music, artists, workshops all day Saturday in Spaghetti Benders, Cooney Island and the Brown Hotel, vendors, theater performances and food in the downtown Indiana where streets will be closed and the festival will be held. The festival will be unique to the Northern Appalachian region. Visit their website and Facebook page for schedules and updates at [www.northernappfolkfest.org](http://www.northernappfolkfest.org).

