

# NEWSLETTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CALL KAREN SZWAST  
(570) 654-933

**TOPICS DISCUSSED  
LAST MEETING**

*Exeter Coal Refuse Fire*

*Update on Coal Refuse Fire*

*HCWA received \$4,773  
Grant from EPCAMR*

*NonProfit Status*

*Logo*

*GIS Grant Application*

**Special Points Of  
Interest For Next  
Meeting**

- Comment on HCWA Logo
- **Plan Hicks Creek Clean Up—  
Saturday, April 27  
9 AM to NOON**

**TOPICS DISCUSSED AT  
WATERSHED ASSOCIATION MEETING**

The coal refuse is the refuse that comes from coal breakers and is piled in mounds on the ground. The fire is only in the refuse material and is not underground. In this area the water level of the mine pool (water in the mine tunnels) is above the level of the closest coal bed to the ground surface. This would make it near impossible for a coal vein to burn. An isolation trench has been dug around the three acre fire site. Waterfilled lagoons (pumped up from the mine pool) have been built into the trench. Coals from the refuse pile roll down the embankment into the water. This caused the white steam clouds seen from a distance during the past week. The excavator removes the cooled coals from the lagoon and places them in piles to be leveled and spread. Many residents were concerned the fire was worsening, but the smoke seen is primarily steam. The refuse bank has been reduced to half size, but the process of cooling hot

coals takes more time. The fire is expected to be put out by April's end. There will be updated photographs of the coal refuse fire at the next meeting.

Robert Hughes from the Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR) presented HCWA with a \$4,773 Grant for postage, development of HCWA Brochure and logo, water quality monitoring kits and legal fees to establish the association's nonprofit status.

If you know of any attorney that would be interested in helping, please contact Karen Szwast.

Several logos have been developed by Rincemedia, Erie St., West Pittston. They will be displayed at the next meeting for comment. Please give or send me your comments! Decision must be made soon.

HCWA has applied for a DEP Grant for Geographic Information System Software (GIS). The grant will

**HICKS CREEK  
NEXT MEETING**



be for GIS software and training for two. HCWA President, Dave Ruskey and environmental engineer, Tomas Barnard, Ph.D., P.E. will be beta testing training. If anyone has GIS experience and is interested in helping develop layers of mapping, please contact Karen Szwast.

People have used maps for thousands of years to present and analyze geographic information. GIS is the latest extension of the ancient tradition. GIS can be used to retrieve previously developed spatial data or to create new data. GIS creates great maps but more importantly it easily enables people to solve environmental problems by uncovering and analyzing trends and patterns.

**NEXT MEETING TUESDAY , MARCH 26 AT 7:00PM AT  
SCOUT & COMMUNITY CENTER , CORNER OF LINCOLN AND WYOMING AVE .**

**Please attend this meeting if possible. We need help planning Hicks Creek Clean Up held on Saturday, April 27. If you can't attend, please call to help.**

Help is needed in many different areas - passing out flyers, asking businesses for donations, walking & inventorying the clean up site, preparing site drawings & purchasing equipment needed. Volunteers for the clean up are needed. There

will be a sign up sheet at the meeting or you can call Karen at 654-0933. Volunteers of all ages are needed. There is something for everyone to do. If getting in a creek bed is not what you prefer, then consider running for the lunch hoagies,

helping with registration or being a driver taking groups of volunteers into the various sites. Two years ago we had a very successful clean up and with your help I know we can again. Please make a difference **BY VOLUNTEERING!**