

SCRA recognized by state for improvements project

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KULPMONT — The Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance received a Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence for the Veterans Memorial Field Improvements project.

The state Department of Environmental Protection recognized 21 projects completed by schools, businesses, and community organizations around the state with the 2023 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence.

"Prior to 2016 the recreation complex was underutilized; the walking track needed repair, the stream channel had no vegetation, and the site lacked amenities," according to DEP about SCRA. "Believing in the site's potential, the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance applied for and won the first of 6 DEP Environmental Education grants directed toward the site. Since 2016, hundreds of students have participated in events highlighting the history of coal mining in the region and the effects of coal mining both on the surface landscape and in the form of acid mine discharges impacting local streams. Students have also learned what a healthy stream looks like and how planting riparian buffers can restore impaired streams."

The design and permits, paid for by the environmental penalty, were used to apply for and win a \$548,000 Growing Greener Plus grant to restore the stream channel through the recreation complex and seal the stream bottom preventing water from entering the mine pool and becoming polluted, according to DEP.

Applications for the Governor's Awards were evaluated for their degree of environmental protection, innovation, partnership, economic impact, consideration of climate change, sustainability, and environmental justice, and outcomes achieved.

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