

Local drone videographer's work to be featured at Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference

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SHAMOKIN — An eye opening video tour of the Shamokin Creek watershed will be featured at the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference in State College, June 22-23, the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA) announced.

Jeff Herb, a local videographer and active member of SCRA, donated his professional services to produce an aerial video of the impaired Shamokin Creek.

Herb is the owner of On the Fly Aerial Imagery LLC, based in Coal Township, which provides aerial video, photography, documentaries and featurettes.

SCRA said Herb captured and compiled high-quality drone video of Shamokin Creek as it makes its way to the Susquehanna river, exposing a “startling new perspective” of the sources of impairment that have stained the creek for centuries.

The 30-minute, narrated video explores the sources of the headwaters, acid mine drainage (AMD) points and treatment systems being used in the watershed.

“This video gets everyone on the same page with how severe the acid mine drainage problems are in the upper Shamokin Creek Watershed, as well as some of the things being done right now to restore the water to a healthier condition,” remarked John Bucanelli, SCRA board member.

SCRA board member Heather Makal added, “Seeing the streams and waterways from an aerial point of view helps give a clearer picture of what is happening in the watershed. This is a great way to educate people quickly and help the SCRA bring awareness to the community.”

Herb had been gathering footage of the creek for several months and collected more than 16 hours of video for a separate project. SCRA was made aware of an opportunity to possibly show the conditions of the watershed via a “virtual tour” at the upcoming conference.

Herb was asked to share what he had gathered, with a theme of “New Opportunities on the Horizon.” He submitted the abstract and is excited to announce he was notified by the planning committee that it will be featured this year.

“I’m glad I’m able to contribute, sUAS (small unmanned aircraft system) are exceptionally helpful tools for documenting the whole situation. I hope when people view how extensive the AMD contamination is, it will help bring more attention and support from the community to get involved with things happening to restore the creeks health,” Herb stated. “It may be several generations from now that will really benefit from our efforts, but that doesn’t change the fact that we are to be good stewards now. I believe there is hope, but it calls for the community to get involved.”

To watch the video, visit <https://youtu.be/WTetiFrFNfc>.