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TOP STORY

SCRA gets grant, discusses municipality involvement

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Bobby Hughes, from the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, presents a check to SCRA President Jim Koharski at the SCRA meeting Tuesday night in Kulpmont. Also taking part in the check presentation were, from left, SCRA director Jeff Herb, Vice President Steve Motyka and Northumberland County Conservation District watershed specialist Ben Paul.

KULPMONT — The Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA) was presented with a \$4,300 check at the organization's meeting Tuesday night to update a passive water treatment system on a tributary of Shamokin Creek in Coal Township by installing a leaping weir.

A leaping weir allows water to enter the passive treatment system during times of low flow, when the water is most concentrated with acid mine drainage pollution, and stops sediment from stormwater from entering the treatment system. Installation of a leaping weir would prolong the life of the passive treatment system, SCRA said.

The installation of the leaping weir will be relatively quick, with only 40 hours of construction time needed, according to SCRA.

Grant funding for the leaping weir was awarded by Anthracite Region Independent Power Producers Association (ARIPPA), Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Acid Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR) and Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Acid Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR).

Bobby Hughes, a representative from EPCAMR who presented the check to SCRA, said that the group is pleased to partner with SCRA on the project.

Municipality cooperation with SCRA was put forward twice at Tuesday's meeting. The Borough of Kulpmont, which has consistently worked with the organization, submitted an application for a \$30,000 grant to capture sediment runoff from a dirt road on the Quaker Run section of Shamokin Creek.

Coal Township's relationship with SCRA was also discussed at the meeting, and the organization is yet again trying to reach out to commissioners. SCRA President Jim Koharski estimated that "90%" of potential SCRA projects need to be completed on Coal Township land.

"We tried many times with the new commissioners. We reached out to one and told him hopefully there is big money coming through to make changes, and the majority of the projects will be on Coal Township Land," said Vice President Steve Motyka, who also serves as a Kulpmont councilman. "They should be involved with us if we do a big treatment site."

According to SCRA, the unnamed commissioner said that he would try to get all three commissioners on board for a meeting.

Ben Shimer, the SCRA intern from Bucknell University, completed several different maps for the organization, which will be used to apply for grants.

One grant that SCRA is gearing up to apply for is up to \$100,000 from the Office of Surface and Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. The funds would tentatively be used to clean out sludge from a Ranshaw portion of the creek.

SCRA voted to accept Jeff Herb as a new director, and is actively seeking new members and directors.