

## Recent grant helps clean up project for Deckers Creek



By Austin Pollack | Posted: Tue 5:29 PM, Oct 24, 2017

**MONONGALIA COUNTY, W.Va (WDTV)** - It has been decades since a mine in Monongalia County was last active, but environmental experts fear several different chemicals have made their way into Deckers Creek.

Friends of Deckers Creek tells us the rust-looking color is partially from draining coming from the abandoned Richard Mine in the eastern part of Monongalia County near the border with Preston County.

"When the flows of Deckers are low, you can really notice the acid mine drainage in the creek," said Holly Purpura, the Executive Director of Friends of Deckers Creek.

"Richard dumps 143,000 pounds of iron, 49,000 pounds of aluminum a year into the Deckers Creek watershed," Purpura added. "It's why Deckers Creek as it flows through Morgantown is bright orange."

It's been a while since the mine was last active. Environmental experts say it has been years.

"The Richard Mine was active during World War II," said Evan Hansen from Downstream Strategies. "It was shut down soon after that and it's been abandoned for decades."

Hansen has been looking into this issue for quite some time, but says the recent grant from the federal government will start to make a positive difference.

"It's a problem for aquatic life," Hansen said. "The fish can't reproduce and be healthy there. The aquatic insects also can't be healthy there."

Friends of Deckers Creek works to help promote the overall well-being of the watershed, and the role it can play in the community. With the help of the grant, good things are to come for the creek.

"People can fish in Deckers Creek in Downtown Morgantown, people could boat up Deckers Creek," Purpura said.