



QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

May 9, 2016, 10:00am - noon

New Garden Township Building, 299 Starr Road, Landenberg, PA 19350

Attendees:

Aileen Parrish	Martin Wells	Kyle Sonnenberg	Don Peters
Brian Styche	Al Wright	Tom Coleman	April Schmitt
Beth Burnam	Dana Cooley	Ed O'Donnell	Erin McCormick
Shane Morgan	John Goodall	Mike Zuk	John Jackson
Rick Mickowski	Martin Wells	Kristen Molfetta	

Approval of January Minutes

New Business

Kyle Sonnenberg announced his resignation as the Delaware Co-chair and nominated Ed O'Donnell to take his place. Rick seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Shane reviewed the FY16 Budget and Work Plan to be submitted to the National Parks Service. She updated the status on the Water Quality/Bacteria Monitoring with Jinjun Kan (Stroud) work on microbial source tracking will commence this summer as well as continued sampling for E. coli and enterococcus. Jinjun also applied for a Delaware River Watershed Research Grant (William Penn Foundation) to conduct a larger investigation of potential microbial contaminants in entire Christina Basin and is waiting to hear back.

Shane presented the new Green Stormwater Infrastructure Pilot Project in partnership with Brandywine Conservancy and noted that BC applied for \$20,000 in Dockstader Funding to help fund the pilot. The pilot would involve project web pages on practices homeowners can undertake to improve water quality or reduce runoff, the pilot will include public outreach to market the program, and cost share incentives for homeowners to install BMPs on their properties. The program would be modeled after the Montgomery County (MD) Rainscapes program.

Shane introduced a new proposal, the CTIP Pilot Proposal in which the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance (BRCA) applied for the NFWF Innovation Planning Grant to funds involves multi-municipal collaboration in three pilot areas, an urban cluster (Coatesville area), an agricultural cluster (Honeybrook area), and a suburban cluster (White Clay). BRCA requested \$100,000, \$10,000 of which would go to the White Clay Pilot area coordinator. This is not enough to fund a coordinator position and Shane requested that we put our remaining restoration funds towards this effort and reviewed the proposal put forth by Ellen Kohler. The main role of the coordinator is to collaborate with municipalities in the White Clay (and their engineers) to create a watershed wide water quality improvement work plan that would be the basis for each participating municipality to meet it's stormwater management responsibilities, whether through the municipal separated storm sewer (MS4) program, the total maximum daily load (TMDL) reductions, or the pollution reduction plans required to address all stream impairments. The coordinator would also be responsible for collaborating with the CTIP planning partners on behalf of the White Clay. The coordinator would develop

an enforceable agreement among participants to guide implementation of the work plan. This plan could be used as an action plan for the Wild and Scenic Committee in terms of collaborating on and seeking out additional funding to implement projects throughout the watershed while also building stronger relationships with the municipalities and DEP. Shane mentioned that 4 municipalities have expressed interest in the project and she is hoping that our seed money will encourage the municipalities and other potential sponsors and or funders to financially support this effort. Shane requested using the remaining Restoration funds from FY15 to provide seed money to partially fund a lead coordinator. This project would be complimentary to the Water Fund work already underway and Ellen and Shane will work with Martha to work out the communication piece and coordinate on both projects. The committee expressed support for this effort and Shane will put together a formal proposal and budget to send out to the Committee for final review.

Erin reviewed the projects NLT is working on and how some of the funds will be reallocated to projects closing within the NPS spending deadline. Erin noted that projects need to be committed by June 24, funds spent by July 24, and projects must close by September 24 for the current contract agreement funds to be used. A brief description of land preservation projects NLT is working on is included below.

- London Grove Township (Boddorff) – Project work continues; closing anticipated in June.
- New Garden Township (Reynolds) – Still waiting for landowners to resolve issues among themselves re: allowed subdivision rights; then needs to go to Orphans’ Court for approval; closing delayed.
- New Garden (St. Anthony’s – 137 acres) – Proposal signed w/township & landowner; DCNR & Chester County grants submitted; working on draft agreement of sale and draft easements. Because this is such a larger property and involves a church it may not close in time to use up existing funds.
- London Grove (15 acre farm) – Appraisal completed (\$210,000 conservation easement, \$190,000 purchase price and \$20,000 donation. The purchase price came in higher than originally estimated. The township solicitor indicated that this is not on the criteria map for the township; this will be discussed at the June BOS meeting.
- London Britain Township (55 acre property) – Finishing up final details, closing anticipated late April/early May
- (NEW) New Garden Township (28 acre farm) – Discussions w/landowners continue, working on public access issue. This is along the East Branch of the White Clay and will likely include a conservation easement and a trail easement. There is a public hearing at the next BOS meeting.

Shane informed the committee about the potential ideas put forth to honor Dorothy Miller. The discussion including the potential for creating a history room in the Chambers Nature Center and a new education center at the Robinson House in her name. There are no concrete plans in place, but Shane wanted the Committee to be aware of what is being discussed. April suggested naming one of Dorothy’s favorite hiking trails in her name as another option for honoring Dorothy.

Shane introduced Kristen Molfetta, University of Delaware WCCWS intern. Kristen informed the committee of her thesis project. Shane will be circulating a survey to the Committee for them to participate in her research study.

Subcommittee Reports/Updates:

Land Preservation

John Goodall reviewed the projects he is working on through the Brandywine Conservancy. It is doubtful that they will be completed before the contract deadline and these projects will likely be completed during the next contract agreement.

A conservation plan is being developed for a 180 acre farm in Penn and London Grove. The project is broken into two parts: The 38 acre woodlot is all in London Grove. The appraisal has been completed and the Township is willing to participate in the project. The Family is currently working with their financial planner to determine the best time to preserve (this year or next). The remaining 142 acre portion is in Penn Township. The conservation plan is being developed (with the 38 acres). The farm will apply this summer for the Chester County Agricultural Preservation Program.

Research and Restoration

Brandywine Conservancy is hosted a tree planting May 14th in Penn Township on private lands. The planting area is 2.5 acres and includes 500 trees/tubes/stakes along the headwaters of the Middle Branch. This will use some of the remaining funds in the contract agreement. Beth requested that the remaining funds not spent be used on buffer management. Several sites in the White Clay need help with invasive management and she would like to hire a contractor to do this maintenance. The committee agreed it would be a good use of those funds. Beth will send the reallocation request to Chuck. The committee also discussed private lands reforestation projects like the one above, and decided that they should be considered and determined on a case-by-case basis.

Dana Cooley gave a brief update on the Bella Vista Community along Mill Creek in Hockessin. The community members decided that the privately owned open space area would remain as is, that the land was never turned over to the community. The community would need to create a maintenance corporation and at this point the land is not seen as an asset to the community as there is no public access and it only falls behind a few houses. The community is interested in what they can do on their own properties to improve water quality in Mill Creek and how they can work with Sanford School upstream to decrease the amount of sediment coming down stream. John Goodall may be able to find us a good contact. Shane mentioned that DNS was also considering providing Sanford with a schoolyard habitat assessment.

Shane updated the committee on the New Garden Park Riparian Buffer Project. All the plants are in, but we are having some trouble with the no mow zone. Shane has met with the landscape contractor to go over this and the area was flagged. The remaining grant funds are being put towards a more detailed plan to remove the volleyball courts and create a stormwater infiltration area in its place.

Shane gave a quick update on some of the projects Adam Mowery is working on in utilizing waste materials from the mushroom industry.

Shane noted that the Curtis Mill Riparian Buffer Planting Phase 2 is happening Saturday, May 14 with Newark High School in Newark. 27 flats of pollinator plants will be installed. She noted this is really more of an education project, then a restoration project and they will talk about some of the issues on site preventing successful plant establishment of the first phase (namely deer).

John Jackson updated the committee on the status of the Stroud restoration project in the upper, upper East Branch (EV waters) north of Loch Nairn using the Hurricane Sandy funding. The goal is to reduce storm water runoff at a large scale. 27 level lip spreaders are being installed in conjunction with riparian buffers (@ 50 acres, or 10-15,000 trees) to help manage farm runoff during storm events. All projects should be completed by November 2016. The Chester County Conservation District is designing engineering plans for all the level lip spreaders. Stroud will be monitoring the stormwater reduction with gages to demonstrate hydrologic changes.

Education/Outreach

Shane brought copies of the 2016 State of the Watershed report, noted it was online as well on the website, and mentioned that the education committee is going to meet to discuss if making a more public friendly version to hand out and use at events would be worthwhile or not. This will be discussed further at the next Education Subcommittee meeting.

Shane asked the Committee what they thought about using Open Source Technology to help gather data throughout the watershed that could be used to inform decision-making. Data such as water discoloration, Invasive species areas of concern, trash clean up areas. Mike Zuk and or Brian Styche knew of a few existing platforms that Chester County has set up. Shane will get these links from to determine if they could be used. We would need a marketing plan to get people to use the app, and someone would need to manage the information. This idea needs to be vetted further.

Creek Fest was held Saturday May 7 despite the dreary forecast. Turnout was lower (650) due to the rain, but we had 9 new exhibitors, 5 food trucks, and sold 13 rain barrels.

School Programs Update – Shane pointed out that Stroud posted 86% increase (1500) kids we sent them 500 of the 1500. The majority of those students are from AGIS, a new school to participate this year using EITC funds and WCWS transportation funds.

Signage Update – majority of the signs have been given out, but the townships are lagging behind in installing them. Aileen is going to remind London Britain. Shane also noted that Nick Dinsmore, Boy Scout, installed a new rain garden at Franklin Township Building. The Wild and Scenic Program was able to donate a sign for the project. Brian S. mentioned that the county (Chester) is working with the Pennsylvania visitor bureau in partnership with the Delaware visitor bureau to develop new signage for the Brandywine Valley.

Reviewed first quarter financials.

Old Business

Shane updated the committee on the status of the Artesian Broad Run Well including the monitoring and modeling work being conducted by Save Our Water.

April S. addressed the committee regarding feedback on the proposed Tri-Valley trail in White Clay Creek State Park.

Announcements

John Jackson announced that Stroud would be assisting with the White Clay Creek State Park Bioblitz, May 21 at White Clay Creek State Park.

QUARTERLY/ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT NARRATIVE

Cooperative Agreement #: CA_P13AC01266
Award Recipient: White Clay Watershed Association
Project/Program Title: Wild & Scenic River Funding
Date: April 12, 2016
Period Covered by Report: January 1, 2016- March 31, 2016
Funds expended during this reporting period: \$27,743.34
Submitted by: Shane Morgan, Management Plan Coordinator
Submitted to: National Park Service – Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers

Summary of work performed during the period covered by the report:

- Published, printed (350), and distributed the 2016 White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Program Update
- Published, printed (40), and began distributing the 2016 State of the Watershed Report
- Met with Jinjun Kan (Stroud) and finalized microbial source tracking proposal, approved by Restoration Subcommittee, and developed and obtained signed contract with Stroud to begin year 1 work. Obtained necessary approvals from landowners and collected potential source samples to create a local DNA library with Stroud’s lab technician, Laura Borecki.
- Met with water purveyors, USGS, DNREC, at UD WRA to revisit the early warning system for the Christina-Basin. UD Intern, Matt Luddington, set up a google phone chain/texting alert system to be tested in the basin. Discussions continued about adding some more parameters to an existing USGS gage in the White Clay Creek (Strickersville) to include temperature, standard conductivity, pH, DO and precipitation. The current gage already measures discharge, turbidity and gage height. USGS is also looking into adding a nitrate optics gage as well.
- Continued work on the New Garden Park Riparian Buffer Growing Greener Project with Landstudies and New Garden Township; Live stakes installed along stream banks in late March. Met with Township officials to discuss management of no mow areas.

- Continued outreach via article submission to two municipal newsletters (New Garden and London Grove), the White Clay Wild & Scenic Program blog and mailchimp newsletter, social media, direct mailings, and attendance at watershed wide meetings throughout the quarter.
- Continued work with the Christina Basin TMDL Implementation Plan Partnership
- Developed Green Stormwater Infrastructure Pilot Program proposal for the White Clay Creek in partnership with Brandywine Conservancy, reviewed and approved by Restoration Subcommittee; grant paperwork filled out by Brandywine Conservancy and submitted to E.K. Dockstaeder
- Continued White Clay Creek Fest planning and communications with exhibitors and vendors.
- Visited two potential reforestation sites with Brandywine Conservancy Reforestation Manger, Rob Daniels.
- Met with Steve Brown to discuss management of the Hills of Sullivan tree planting in London Grove Township.
- Continued to provide assistance to municipalities and local watershed groups on managing their existing green stormwater infrastructure including the New Garden Township riparian buffer, Landenberg Junction Trail habitat garden, Hunt basin retrofits in Newark, and Goddard Park rain gardens in London Grove Township.
- Completed planning of the second installment of the Curtis Mill Park pollinator planting with Newark High School and City of Newark, scheduled for Saturday, May 14 installment
- Met with Marion Waggoner and Dave Yake (Save our Water) to discuss and support their Broad Run Stream Flow study. They are taking and reporting Nitrate (NO₃-N) measurements as well as DO, TSS, Conductivity, Temperature and Flow.
- Continue to work with the Bella Vista Community; met with Delaware Nature Society to determine interest in partnering on the education component involving the homeowners and the Sanford School upstream of the community. It was determined that work in the Private Open Space areas will be managed as is until we can get further clarification on the status of the land. Work will continue with members of the community and potentially this could be part of the GSI pilot program for the Delaware portion of the watershed.
- Completed and submitted Delaware SECC application renewal.
- Provided new replacement watershed road signage to Franklin, New Garden, London Grove, City of Newark. Met with Angel Burns to discuss using New Castle County signs on WCCSP lands.
- Provided wildlife habitat sign to Friends of New Garden Trails for the Landenberg Junction Project, and a rain garden sign for Franklin Townships building rain garden. Currently working with New Garden Township Parks on placement of several signs in the buffer project area.
- Watershed Master Stewards update – first class of 15 volunteers is in session, touring White Clay on May 14. Projects are needed that involve volunteers so they can meet their 40-hour requirement for their Master Water Steward certification.
- Christina Basin Education Group – met in March, working on putting together a Brandywine-Christina Basin wide Education Initiatives Inventory to track what partners are doing and materials available, but also to look for gaps in watershed education. Meeting again in June.
- Mailchimp Newsletter stats: 319 recipients, 36.7% average open rate (industry average 20.2%), click rate 7.8% (industry average 2.2%)
- Website stats: 383 average visits (unique user with several page views)/month, 955 unique page views/month, 331 unique visitors/month.

NPS Report to White Clay Creek Watershed Management Steering Committee 4-13-16

Financials

NPS funds tracking log indicate as of April 5, 2016 there was a total of **\$74,062** remaining in the White Clay Watershed Association's Cooperative Agreement consisting of 2013 (**\$8.76**); 2014 (**\$2927.50**) and 2015 (**64,377.40**) funds. The 2015 funds are being spent, **\$20,182.92** invoiced this quarter.

As of April 13, 2016, NLT has approximately **\$103,078** remaining in its Cooperative Agreement for White Clay Creek, consisting of 2012, 2013, and 2014 funds. NLT has not yet filed FY 2016 2nd Quarter Report.

Section 7 Reviews:

1) Agricultural Corrective Action Plan; 733 Glen Willow Rd; Avondale, PA; East Branch White Clay Creek - The National Park Service (NPS) was asked by the project sponsors to write to the Department of Environmental Protection in support of this Agricultural Corrective Action Plan (ACAP). This ACAP proposes one (1) stabilized livestock crossing and one (1) stabilized water access for livestock. The proposed access will replace, reduce, and stabilize the existing area where livestock accesses the stream for water. Currently the banks are denuded of vegetation with evidence of erosion at the banks. The area of current disturbance occupies a footprint 3x the size of the proposed stabilized access, which will be stabilized with stone and concrete hog slats.

NPS has reviewed this ACAP in relation to the "White Clay Creek and Its Tributaries, Watershed Management Plan, Amended Summer 2001." (This Plan guides Resource Management of the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River.) NPS believes that this ACAP adheres to the goals and objectives of water quality protection and enhancement as envisioned by the White Clay Watershed Management Plan (see Management Challenge page 60 attached from the White Clay Watershed Management Plan). In addition, existing livestock crossings are allowed to be maintained and repaired on designated National Wild and Scenic Rivers as long as there is not substantial additional construction in the bed and banks. NPS does not believe this proposal substantially alters the existing livestock crossings and is therefore permitted.

NPS has concluded that this ACAP will not significantly or negatively impact the White Clay Creek or its resource values, and should not adversely affect the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River. NPS supports this project and believes that it will reduce erosion and sedimentation and substantially improve water quality in the White Clay Creek.

2) City of Newark, DE; Windy Hills; Water Main Crossing; Mary Ella Drive to North Dillwyn Road; White Clay Creek; Newark, DE - NPS conducted a review of the proposed Windy Hills water main crossing and have determined that as proposed on the plans that were submitted dated September 29, 2015 this project should not significantly or negatively impact White Clay Creek or its resource values, and should not adversely affect the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River. Necessary precautions have been taken to limit

erosion and sedimentation and to restore the site post construction. There are no outstandingly remarkable resources associated with the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic at the project location. However, given the historical occurrence and migration in the greater vicinity of the project area of bog turtle, an outstandingly remarkable resource of the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River, we recommend that construction of this project be restricted till after June 15. A similar water main crossing was reviewed upstream from the Windy Hill crossing and was approved by NPS several years ago.

3) Metro Business Park, Minor Crossing and wetland impacts, Unnamed tributary, White Clay Creek, New Castle County, DE – NPS has reviewed this minor road crossing and associated wetland impacts from the proposed Metro Business Park. This project is located on an unnamed minor tributary approximately 1/2 mile upstream from a designated segment of the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River (P.L. 106-357); Near Rt. 7 and I-95 interchange. Section 7 reviews of projects located upstream, downstream or on a tributary to a designated segment have a different standard of review from projects located on a designated segment.

Pursuant to Section 7 (a): "Nothing contained in the foregoing sentence, however, shall preclude licensing of, or assistance to, developments below or above a wild, scenic or recreational river area or on a stream tributary thereto which will not invade the area or unreasonably diminish the scenic, recreational, and fish and wildlife values present in the area on the date of designation of a river as a component of the national wild and scenic rivers system." The National Park Service (NPS) considers water resource projects to include dams, diversion projects, bridge and roadway projects involving construction in the bed or on the banks of the river, bank stabilization projects and activities that require a section 404 permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. This project is considered a water resources project and, therefore, reviewable under section 7 of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act.

NPS believes that this project does not pose any significant impacts to the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River. The project is located beyond a major 4 lane expressway, Route 7 and is connected to the White Clay Creek by a large existing culvert. There are no known outstandingly remarkable fish or wildlife resources associated with the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic River within the project site. The plans for the site include protecting most of the existing wetlands, a majority of existing forest and riparian forest cover; and includes extensive underground and above ground stormwater management. The project will not encroach upon the designated section of White Clay Creek nor should it diminish any scenic or recreational values located in the wild and scenic designated segment. NPS, therefore, has concluded that this project will not invade or unreasonably diminish the scenic, recreational or fish and wildlife values of the downstream wild and scenic designated segment, or significantly or negatively impact the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River.

4) E23-9999 Notification for SR 3044 Ewing Rd Bridge Rehabilitation; Middle Branch White Clay Creek; London Grove Township, Chester County, PA - NPS has determined that the above referenced project, will not significantly or negatively impact the river or its resource

values, and should not adversely affect the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River with the implementation of the following: Backfill of proposed rip rap areas for scour protection of structures: a. Backfill of rip rap areas – stockpiled soil and rock material that is excavated during preparation of the site during construction should later be used to fill the voids between rip rap above the ordinary high water mark. This will leave an exposed area of rip rap at the toe of all slopes for enhanced scour protection.

Upstream and downstream from the project site, in somewhat close proximity, are existing critical forested and wetland habitat areas. Following the prescription for filling the voids of the rip rap will prevent migrating reptiles and amphibians from the critical habitats from being trapped and killed within the rip rap areas of this project.

5) Penn Dot's P3 Rapid Bridge Replacement Project - S.R. 3044 (Ewing Road), Section 000 bridge over Middle Branch White Clay Creek in London Grove Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania. - NPS has conducted a review of the proposed bridge replacement and have determined that as proposed the replacement bridge will actually improve and have a positive effect on the free flow of the Middle Branch by expanding the width between bridge abutments. The existing bridge abutments are right against the edge of the channel. The replacement bridge moves the bridge abutments approximately 8 feet back landward away from the channel, thereby expanding the area for flow of the Middle Branch. While a portion of the existing abutments will remain, most of the existing abutment will be removed. By moving the bridge abutments back from the channel the project achieves a goal of the White Clay Creek & Its Tributaries Watershed Management Plan of improving river or stream free flow.

In terms of other river impacts we do not believe this proposed bridge replacement project will significantly or negatively impact the Middle Branch or its resource values; a bog turtle survey indicated no potential bog turtle habitat within 300 feet of the site and the results were concurred by U.S Fish & Wildlife; bog turtles are an “outstandingly remarkable resource of the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic River.

This project should not adversely affect the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River or the Middle Branch with implementation of the following: Backfill of proposed rip rap areas for scour protection of structures: a. Backfill of rip rap areas – stockpiled soil and rock material that is excavated during preparation of the site for construction of the replacement bridge should later be used to fill the voids between rip rap used for scour protection of the bridge abutments. After filling the rip rap voids the scour protection areas should be topped with 4-6 inches of topsoil and seeded with a mix of perennial and annual grasses.

Following the prescription for filling the voids of the rip rap will prevent migrating reptiles and amphibians from critical habitats near the project site from being trapped and killed within the rip rap areas of this project.