



Wild & Scenic White Clay Creek

Ours to enjoy. Ours to protect.

Attendees:

Shane Morgan	Julie Bell	Don Peters	John Auerbach
Jen Egan	Kyle Sonnenberg	Chotty Sprenkle	Jake Michael
Erin Lee	Linda Stapleford	John Jackson	Martha Narvaez
Greg Gagliano	Andy Urquhart	Dorothy Miller	John Goodall
April Schmitt	Ed O'Donnell	Phil Geoghegan	

Approval of December Minutes.

First Quarter 2014 Statement of Financials.

Shane noted most of the spending went towards general admin this past quarter for the design and printing of the annual report and the postage required to send reports to elected officials, partner and government agencies, WCWA donors, and DE tax preparers (to notify them of the tax check off and how that money is spent). Funds highlighted in yellow are reserved funds for future projects that have not been spent.

Announcements

- Annual Update 2013 is available for anyone who would like a hardcopy and did not receive one by mail.
- Creek Clean Up in White Clay Creek State Park near Wedgewood Road is scheduled for April 5th @ 8am-noon (contact April @ april.schmitt27@gmail.com to sign up)
- Creek Fest, May 3, noon-4pm, White Clay Creek State Park, Carpenter Recreation Area
- Landscape Ethics Talk, March 13, 6:30pm, Bayard Taylor Library, Kennett Square
- Native Plants in the Landscape Conference, June 5-7, Millersville University

Administrative Business:

Updated List of Steering Committee Members is available and posted on the website. Welcomed April Schmitt our newest member and reintroduced Erin Lee who has taken Jake Stefferud's spot on the Committee representing Natural Lands Trust.

2014 Budget Discussion -projected budget \$99,000 (\$17,000 more than FY2013)

A preliminary 2014 budget was handed out to give the Committee a general idea of how the funds could be allocated. 40% was allocated for NLT's budget. The remaining 60% needs to be split amongst Restoration, Education, and Administration. Shane Morgan left the room while the Committee discussed her request for a \$2500 increase in pay. Dorothy Miller made a motion to approve the request and Linda Stapleford seconded it. The motion was unanimously approved. No other requests were voted on. Julie noted

that NPS needs the formal documents by the end of May for contracting so any specific budget requests need to be made by the end of the month.

Subcommittee Reports

Education/Outreach

Martha N. stated that the Christina Basin Education Group had their first meeting a few weeks back to determine interests and discuss strategy behind starting a public outreach campaign. Permit requirements for all municipalities in both PA and DE were summarized and education components presented in a table format. The group decided to research the costs to hire a professional marketer to come up with a general message on water quality that can be used to promote watershed stewardship to the general public. After a general message is defined the group could then work on more refined messages to target specific audiences. A survey was sent out to all attendants of the first meeting to determine level of interest, what education material already exists, and cost sharing potential. Results will be shared at the next planning meeting again on March 18 at Ashland Nature Center.

Shane noted that the White Clay Creek Watershed Symposium is on hold for now. Instead, we are going to work with Stroud on developing a Christina River Basin Symposium to be held at West Chester University this fall. This symposium will be similar to the Schuylkill Watershed Congress and will have tracks specific to each watershed in the Christina Basin.

Shane noted we are potentially funding three school programs in the White Clay. Two schools were awarded field trips to Stroud for stream study programs, Maclary and Holy Angels. Skyline Middle School has been approached to conduct a field trip to Middle Run to do a stream study with Delaware Nature Society. Shane noted that she would like to increase the allotment for travel in the school program budget so that we can partner and cost share with Stroud (using their EIT funds from the state) to get Pennsylvania public schools to the facility. Stroud has had trouble using these funds due to the volume of kids per grade and the capacity of the Stroud facility. If transportation can be worked out over the course of a few days, then an entire grade of children could participate in their programs.

Shane briefly noted that Delaware Nature Society is still seeking more certified habitats in the City of Newark. Registration paperwork is on our website and there may be some cost sharing incentives from DNREC to cover the registration costs of \$20.

Shane asked how the blog on the White Clay website was being received and whether it was worth continuing into the future. John Jackson and April Schmitt said they enjoyed reading it. John suggested looking into Google analytics to see what words drew the most hits and then trying to use those words more often. April said keeping the material lighter, not so technical, would be beneficial. Chotty Sprenkle and John J. both said we

could post directly to their face book pages and John suggested speaking with Heather Brooks at Stroud.

Research and Restoration

No new information to report on the Mussel Survey.

Jenny stated that we would like to continue with the Pennsylvania bacteria sampling for the same ten sites so that there are no gaps in the data. If DEP is not interesting in continuing with sampling, the costs are \$20 per sample for E. coli and fecal coliform. She would like to include this in next years budget. John J. mentioned that United Water might have done some source tracking, modeling and assessing sources and monitoring for wildlife human and livestock sources of bacteria. He stated Wilmington and Philadelphia have done this.

Shane mentioned that Jerry K. followed up on starting an early warning system for the White Clay. As a first step we could join the Delaware River Early Warning System where first responders report an event to a specific hotline then an email goes out to all signed up for the alert. This is word of mouth type of system with no real monitoring but it could help with notifying those downstream of potential hazards. It's possible there is just a small fee to join the network. The second step is to work on getting more monitoring. This is more expensive. The operations and maintenance costs alone are about \$25,000 annually, and additional probes (USGS) are on the magnitude of \$6,000. There is potential for cost sharing. John mentioned the probes that Stroud is making. They measure salinity, pH, and discharge and cost around \$1000. These probes would help detect spills involving salts. They have used these probes on farms to monitor whether a BMP is working and the probes can remain in the water year round. Generally high conductivity equates to high stream degradation unless in a limestone stream. High conductivity correlates with sewage treatment plants, population density, livestock, and high-density development. Furthermore, ion toxicity is becoming a big problem. Linda S. asked what type of stream White Clay is classified as and John answered it is limestone influenced, but considered stable, so they would have a background reading on conductivity and they would be looking for unusual spikes of conductivity above the background level. John Auerbach asked if current monitoring at sewage treatment plants is adequate enough or do they need extra monitoring. April S. noted that accidents do go unnoticed and referred to an incident in London Britain. John noted that smaller treatment plants tend to have less staff and weaker monitoring mainly due to failure to visit the smaller plants enough and poorer licensing and training of the operator. Aileen P. noted that they have one of these 'package plants' for 16 homes in London Britain and that the operator is present daily and samples weekly. It was noted that in general, most plants are being monitored adequately. John J. also mentioned that Stroud is doing a study in the White Clay. They are placing four of their probes in the White Clay and looking at upland land uses reaching the stream using salt as a tracer to determine what actions are being taken at the site if they working.

Shane noted that the Adam Mowery of the Chester County Conservation District presented two projects to the Restoration Committee. The committee agreed to support and offer \$3082 in funds towards a grassed waterway and level spreader in a crop field along the Middle Branch. This project is contingent upon another grant that the CCCD is applying for. Should CCCD not get the grant the committee would consider offering more funding to cover the costs so that this project gets installed.

William Penn Foundation updates: John J. reported that monitoring projects in the White Clay and education and outreach work being led by Stroud are being fully funded. The education and outreach work involves bringing students and volunteers out to do volunteer planting and continued monitoring of the site and conducting associated stream studies. The idea is that they will visit the site often and take more ownership. They will not just plant or just get in the stream. They will do both thereby making that land-water connection. John Goodall added that the William Penn funding is like a three-legged stool where the three legs are education and outreach, restoration and implementation, and land acquisition with the seat (or overarching theme) being monitoring.

Martha noted that DE WRA is waiting for just one signature from the State. They are hopeful that dam #1 will be removed this spring. There is the possibility of a waiver if they miss the March 15 cut off date for spawning since the water is running colder than normal. Julie noted that NPS did a section 7 review of the plans and had only a few small conditions such as the wildflower seed mixture needing adjustment.

Open Space (Land Preservation and Recreation)

Don reported that the Hendrickson house was demolished and removed before the cold and snow arrived, but not much has been done since due to the weather.

John G. noted that they are still in the process of waiting for the mortgage subordination to come through on the property they are trying to preserve. He also noted that they are in talks with a landowner of another (102 acre) property to the south of this one, also in London Grove Township.

Jake M. reported that the Chester County Natural Heritage Inventory conducted by the Western PA Conservancy, should be completed in May and that GIS layers will be provided to the Chester County Planning Commission and that they will most likely distribute these via their website. The Planning Commission would like to create a users guide for municipalities focusing on forestry and mussels to capture both upstream and downstream topics of interest.

Jake also mentioned that he is working on a regional trails map covering southern Chester County, part of New Castle County, DE, and even Cecil County, MD. He hopes to have a new updated map together by next year, in addition to a natural resource interpretation plan for the area. If he can get an intern to start gathering information in digital format from all the municipalities he may be able to pull this together by next year

with some possible cost sharing. Phil made a motion in favor of supporting a regional trails and interpretation plan, and John G seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Management Plan Coordinator Report

- **Creek Fest** Update NEW this year - Creek Life Hike before the festival and Camels Hump rain barrels for sale at a discounted price.
- **Growing Greener Grant update** - \$53,030 awarded for New Garden Park Riparian Buffer Restoration Project. Shane submitted the grant award application and should have the contract finalized sometime in March. Once the contract is in hand we will schedule our first planning meeting.
- Shane noted that she met with Martha, Andrew, and Kate at UD WRA to go over the possibility of doing a **15 year progress report for the White Clay**, similar to the 2008 report card, but with an additional sections including a municipal ordinance inventory with suggestions (similar to what Chester County Planning Commission and Brandywine Conservancy did for the Brandywine Greenway). Jake noted that that they looked at zoning and subdivision ordinances and limited them to five basic things. He also noted that they plan to do this for the rest of Chester County and that they could prioritize and do Southern Chester County first. The ordinances should be completed by the end of the year. Shane noted that our UD intern, Kate Miller, is doing a similar review for her thesis work and that she will try to compile the information from DE in a similar manner time permitting. We may need to hire an outside consultant to work on some of the DE ordinances. Linda S. suggested John Gaadt.
- **Mushroom Farm Runoff** – Shane followed up with the PA Fish and Boat Commission regarding reporting incidents on the creek. It was suggested at the last meeting that we contact an officer for PA Fish and Boat, but according to them we should contact the Conservation District first if the incident is related to sediment and erosion or a suspected mushroom farm incident. Chotty S. said that if we report a complaint they are obliged to come out and inspect it. Usually if you call DEP first, they will contact the Conservation District anyway so we should report to them first and they may get there quicker. If there is more than a 50% chance of criminal activity the DEP can take the suspect to criminal court and they can be found guilty if there is greater than 50% doubt. PA fish and boat only prosecutes under criminal law.
- **Rain Gardens for the Bay funds - Goddard Park, London Grove Township.** Two existing basins (approximately 2,500 square feet and 850 square feet) have been awarded funds from DNREC (\$5000) and UWDE (\$1552) to be planted with native landscape plugs by volunteers. May 17 is the tentative planting date. We will need 40 volunteers for 3 hours each and the township will pre drill holes. London Grove EAC and Friends of Goddard Park will help with this effort.
- **London Grove EAC** – Shane met with this group to brainstorm possible projects. Some possibilities discussed were helping the township monitor installed BMPs. Ron Ragan (the township engineer) would assist in developing a worksheet for volunteers to check the basins. Other ideas included resurrecting the Speakman

Farm reforestation with the help of our funding since it is shovel. They may also host a 'Green Fair' for residents this year.

- **Artesian Well** New Garden Township.
Artesian will be conducting a 72-hour aquifer test at the 225-foot-deep well, tentatively scheduled for the first quarter of 2014. They received a temporary NPDES discharge permit (February) from DEP and must do the test within the next 60 days. The projected rate of water use during that time would not exceed 200 gallons per minute. New Garden Township solicitor, Vince Pompo wrote a letter to DEP stating that township **R-1 zoning regulations** where the well is located permit only one principal use and that a facility erected and used for the extraction of water for commercial use would add a new, additional purpose, and thus, the pumping facility is not permitted on the property. Furthermore, **the extraction of water for commercial use is not permitted within the R-1 District**, and that such a use would only be permitted by conditional use within a commercial-industrial district. Shane spoke with a representative from DEP who noted that if Artesian wants to change anything (from what they were originally granted the right to do) they will need a new permit, which will trigger a land use review. So, unless something changes with zoning Artesian is wasting money doing a pump test since their proposed use is a violation of land use. Neither DEP nor the township can stop them from testing the well. Linda asked if DRBC was aware of the well. Shane spoke to a representative at DRBC who looked up the history of the well and as of now there is no new information on the well probably because Artesian needs to do the testing first before putting in an application. He gave her the docket number (D-1985-027CP REN 2) for the well and she is on a list to receive updates should anything change. Linda suggested talking to Jerry K. about this to see if he has any other information to share.
- **Summer Intern** Update: Last years intern Ed Trommelen has graduated and received a job offer and relocated to Colorado. We are still looking for an intern for this summer so put the work out and a description is on the website.
- **Curtis Mill** signage in progress. Shane is working with Kelley Dinsmore to develop a 24" x 36" interpretive sign for the watershed to be placed in the new kiosk at Curtis Mill. The sign will include information about the Wild and Scenic River, tips for homeowners on how to manage runoff, and an illustration of where runoff goes. We would like to somehow link it to drinking water.
- **World Fish Migration Day**, Saturday, May 24, 2014 is Memorial Day weekend (not good for most people), but if anyone is interested and around to commemorate this would be great (hikes, fishing event, historic talk etc.) Shane mentioned that one possible solution would be to celebrate it at Creek Fest and she is thinking of basing her craft table around the shad migration.

River Manager Report

- Julie reiterated that the budget is up and the two projects that NPS is interested in seeing work completed on are the 15 year report and outreach to landscapers. She noted that it also looks like we will be able to spend down the remaining funds from the old contract (@\$15,000)

- Julie noted that there will be a Partnership Wild and Scenic River Conference this Spring on April 10 & 11 along the upper Delaware. All partnership rivers from the mid-Atlantic and Northeast Region are expected to be present and a representative from each river is expected to report on that river's greatest successes, highest priorities, and long term challenges (within a 10 minute period).
- Director's Order 46 is an NPS document stating the park services responsibilities. Their solicitor is reviewing it and will post it on the Federal Register for public comment. Julie will notify us when it is up and suggested we formally submit our comments when it comes out.
- Henderson Hill Road stormwater catch basins & road reconstruction: This is a DOT project that NPS did not review under section 7 of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, because it turned out that there wasn't going to be a federal permit needed for the project. It is a blocked culvert located in Pike Creek. During a heavy storm last summer this culvert received 3 feet of sediment and debris that led to the flooding of two homes (not in a floodplain so no flood insurance). DelDOT is only cleaning out the culvert. There are no efforts to restore the surrounding area. DelDOT is contacting NCC Conservation District to see if they are interested in remediating the stream corridor and floodplain. Since no permitting is needed to clean out the culvert, NPS is no longer involved beyond their suggestions.
- Fusco / Metro Business Park development, Newark: At the southern part of this complex there is an unnamed tributary to the White Clay, but it is not designated Wild and Scenic. The proposal is for an ~300,000 sq. ft. impervious surface coverage of a commercial and industrial. NPS has not seen any reports from the County or the State, although they've been told that this has taken place. There is a state species of concern using the site as a migratory corridor and the state's Natural Heritage program has been contacted. Because the tributary is not designated NPS has less leverage and will have to prove unreasonable diminishment to the White Clay in terms of fish and wildlife and stream flow. They are not sure whether Army Corps will do any mitigation. There is also an undersized culvert under the road into this site which floods during 100-year storm events. The area is currently forested.
- Julie provided a brief summary of Delaware Governor Markell's Speech on Clean Water For Delaware's Future. He plans to ramp up projects to improve water quality and stated how degraded DE waterways currently are and that this is affecting the economy. He proposed a water service fee \$45/yr. for residents (more for businesses) to augment existing revolving fund for clean water. The Governor needs the general assemblies approval to move forward.