



MEETING MINUTES

February 28, 1:00pm-3:00pm

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

Attendees:

Mike Zuk	Ed O'Donnell	Doug Janiec	Brian Styche
Rick Mickowski	Andrea Withers	Tom Hubbard	Don Peters
Shane Morgan	Erin McCormick	Rachael Griffith	Kristen Travers
John Goodall	Martin Wells	Martha Narvaez	Beth Burnam
April Schmitt			

Approval of November Minutes

New Business

Shane notified the Committee that Jamie Fosburgh, Chief, National Wild and Scenic Rivers Northeast Region will be the new NPS liaison to the White Clay. He plans on attending the next meeting, but he is stationed in Boston which will make meeting participation more difficult.

2016 Budget Discussion and Planning

Shane reviewed the FY17 Budget Proposal with the Committee including the potential of a \$20,000 increase over funds from last year. She indicated that we may not know what our actual budget will be until close to the beginning of next fiscal year which is a bit later than previous years. The Committee unanimously approved the budget proposal.

Subcommittee Reports

Land Preservation

Erin McCormick provided an update on current Natural Lands Trust Projects.

- Sinclair Morris is still moving forward but there is no closing date set yet. The conservation and trail easements are finalized, but the owners still need to get the mortgage subordination approved.
- St. Anthony's will be meeting with NLT in the next month to discuss the agreement of sale and draft easements, once the agreement of sale is signed the due diligence (survey, phase I, title, etc.) will begin.
- Reynolds property is still held up in Orphans' Court with no end in sight. It is very possible that New Garden Township will pull out of this project so they can look elsewhere to spend their open space funds.
- There are two potential new projects in New Garden Township. The Christie property wants to add 4 more acres to an existing easement on their land, and another 20 acre property near New Garden Township Park where the neighbor is interested in buying the neighboring property and then selling an easement on it.

John Goodall updated the committee on the Hutchinson project. Since the last meeting, the Wild and Scenic Committee approved \$2500 in support of this project and the landowner agreed to fund the remaining amount (@\$3000). The Brandywine Conservancy is now applying for RCPP EQUIP funds to implement this project. John is also continuing talks on 3 other projects in London Grove Township, and one in Penn. (These projects have been discussed at previous meetings).

Beth Burnam noted that Brandywine Conservancy submitted a grant application to Growing Green in the amount of \$242,000 for riparian forest planting and whole farm BMP work in the White Clay.

Mike Zuk (Chester County Conservation District) discussed a few projects in New Garden Township. The Hoopes farm is planning on expanding its riparian buffer to 100', install a grassed waterway, and potentially install some level lip spreaders. He will also be taking one field out of pasture and into crop production. They are also looking into the potential for an emergency water source so they can shut down the existing cattle crossing. The Conservation District intends to apply for RCPP CREP funding to implement this project. If needed, additional funding for tree planting may be sought from SUEZ from their Watershed Control Plan. This project wouldn't likely be implemented until Fall 2017.

Mike is also working with two mushroom operations in New Garden Township. One project involves installation of a concrete pad and hoop house for spent mushroom compost, in addition to installation of a water collection area and spray field for compost effluent. The other involves improvements to mushroom compost storage and manure storage for substrate production.

Research and Restoration

Shane and Beth updated the Committee on the Catch the Rain (Green Stormwater Infrastructure) pilot project progress. To date, nine site reports were sent out to participants. Two indicated that they would not be pursuing funding, three indicated that they would, and the either four have not indicated either way. Shane mentioned that they are working with Gateway Garden Center and North Creek Nursery to come up with an easier way for do it yourself participants to seek out plant material and plant selections. Gateway may be able to help promote the program through their garden coaching program, and Claudia West has put together a tool to help with plant selection based on garden size for DIY participants. The success of this program will depend on the collaboration with other interested parties who want to see this project be successful. Tom Hubbard suggested contacting Valerie George (a legislative aide) from New Castle County who has expressed an interest in this program.

Shane requested \$8500 be put aside from the White Clay Restoration Funds to implement the Catch the Rain Rebate Program in Delaware. The Committee approved this request.

Shane updated the Committee on the Christina Watersheds Municipal Partnership pilot project. To date five of the six MS4 municipalities along the East Branch have signed

resolutions to participate (London Grove, New Garden, Avondale, West Grove, and Franklin). Shane attended the London Britain Board of Supervisors meeting on November 14th to bring them up to speed on the project and extend the invitation to participate in the White Clay Pilot meetings but they are still seeking a waiver for this permit round. They did however send their township engineer to the larger CWMP meeting in Exton so he could stay abreast of the project. We will continue to invite them. Shane also showed some of the mapping work that Andrew Homsey has completed for the pilot project, including the map of the sewersheds and the map showing the estimated agricultural versus in stream sediment load.

Shane updated the committee on the bacteria research showing some of the preliminary results from the gel electrophoresis and the qPCR. She discussed the next steps in this study, which include adding continuous monitoring sites and doing more detailed collections at specific sites with high counts, as well as expanding the microbial source tracking (MST) work at some of the Delaware sites. Shane indicated that we have funding through an EPA grant and Stroud to purchase some remote sensor stations and the volunteer assistance to man the stations from Save Our Water. She requested \$9000 in White Clay Restoration Funds be set aside to do the expanded sampling and MST work in Delaware. The Committee approved the request.

Doug Janiec suggested coupling the MST work in Delaware with some benthic surveys. Shane will look into this and determine what the costs would be. He suggested contacting a professor at the entomology department at the University of Delaware as it may be more cost efficient to use a graduate student to perform the surveys. The remaining WCRF in the amount of \$5000, reserved for removal of dams 2 & 3 in Delaware, could be used to fund the benthic surveys. Martha will speak to Jerry about this funding and let him know that if he is not planning on using it in the next few months that it is likely that the funding will be there in a year from now since we generally raise about \$7-8,000 per year. This will be tabled until there is more information on costs and the dam removal work.

It was also suggested that Shane reach out to the elected officials who initially supported the WCRF to let them know how the funds are being spent. Shane will send out a letter with the annual reports specifically indicating how those funds are being spent.

Education/Outreach

Shane showed the Committee the new Creek Fest postcard and updated them on the new pre-fest event, a tour of the Newark Reservoir. She also indicated that all sponsors are back and Phung Luu will be back this year with his live animals, as well as a storyteller that was paid for via a Division of the Arts Grant to the state park.

Shane indicated two schools would be visiting Stroud for educational programming in the Spring.

Shane updated the Committee on the status of the interpretive signage for Newark Reservoir. Kelley Dinsmore was able to get a drone to fly over the Reservoir and take a high quality image and the designer is now updating the draft with this photo.

Shane showed the Committee a preview of the Annual Update. Which is completed, but not in print. She will circulate via email once she mails out the printed copies and will bring extra hard copies to the next Steering Committee Meeting.

There wasn't a National Park Service (NPS) report to Committee to review this quarter, and no comments were received on the Management Plan Coordinator report to NPS.

The Fourth Quarter 2016 Statement of Financials were reviewed.

Old Business

Shane updated the Committee on the new township managers: London Grove Township hired Ken Battin to replace Steve Brown, and West Grove Borough hired Greg McCummings to replace Sharon Nesbitt (who recently retired).

Announcements

Christina Basin Task Force Meeting, Friday March 3, 10am at Delaware Nature Society, Ashland Nature Center.

Chester County Watersheds Roundtable, March 23rd, Government Services Center, Room 170, 601 Westtown road, West Chester, 1-3:30pm

Matt Skiljo, Chester County Health Department, will discuss the county's septic and well program, emerging issues and a new initiative that CCHD, CCWRA and USGS have been working on to predict bacteria levels in the Brandywine Creek, Followed by Shane Morgan's presentation on the Bacteria Study in White Clay Creek.

White Clay Creek Fest, May 6th, 2017 Carpenter Recreation Area, White Clay Creek State Park, noon-4pm

April Schmitt announced that she is organizing an invasive plant cleanup at the London Britain Greenway Park, again this year. Although a part of the "Christina River Watershed Cleanup", it will take place a week later: on April 15th, from 9 AM to Noon.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.