



**WHITE CLAY CREEK**  
**National Wild & Scenic River**  
*Ours to Enjoy. Ours to Protect.*

## Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2018, 10:00am - noon

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

### Attendees:

Shane Morgan	Don Peters	Ed O'Donnell	Rick Mickowski
Tom Coleman	Joe Spadafino	Doug Janiec	Robert Calehuff
Erin McCormick	Martha Narvaez	Michael Harris	Sara Esposito
Kristen Travers	Ellen Kohler	Aileen Parrish	Vincent Porcellini
Kim Glinkin	David Duszak	Jennifer Egan	Andrea Withers
Jillian Young	Jerry Kauffman	John Jackson	

Don Peters chaired meeting.

Doug Janiec made a motion to approve the March Minutes. Kristen Travers seconded the motion.

### Presentations

**Sara Esposito (DeIDOT lead engineer) gave presentation on the Middle Run Restoration/Paper Mill Road Culvert Work followed by questions from the Committee.**

Doug J. asked if a mill dam has been tied directly to the site, noting that beaver activity can also cause the same phenomena. Sara couldn't say definitely that there was a dam there, but Larry Trout believes the evidence is there. Doug indicated that he would feel better about the project if the cause of the sedimentation and erosion was determined, rather than it being assume to be legacy sediments, to make sure the design addresses the cause optimally.

Doug disagreed with Sara's description of Rosgen techniques as "band-aide" approaches. He indicated that Rosgen techniques, similar to many other, are band-aides if improperly applied. It was also noted that while the forest may not be considered old growth, it is very likely a mid-successional forest (1937 aerial shows no trees) and that removing that would take more than our generation to replace. He asked if a quantitative loss-gain analysis (balance sheet) of ecological functions and habitats was performed to really understand the true value of the restoration. (This was not done – or not presented at least)

Other comments include the suggestion of a step pool system as another option for consideration, which is a natural occurrence in Piedmont Plateau areas, for stream realignment that could be as effective. The total carbon footprint of the project should also take into consideration the loss of forest for a long period of time.

Sara was asked what the restoration goals were for this project. She noted that wetland creation is one of the goals of the park system. It was suggested that this be included in the statement of need.

John J. asked about the total cost of the project. DelDOT is still working these figures out, but it is expected to be around \$700,000.

Ellen K. asked about the primary goal of the bridge project (since the restoration was coupled with it later). The initial goal was to replace or strengthen the metal corrugated culvert as part of DelDOT's general maintenance program and that the restoration project was part of that work. It was suggested that long-term bridge replacement despite the inconvenience to travelers, may cost less than fixing the culvert.

John J. asked whether the stream was impaired since this is an MS4 project. Sara deferred to Shane. Shane indicated that the stream was listed as impaired and confirmed (post meeting) that the western headwaters to the confluence with Middle Run are currently impaired for habitat and bacteria (it was delisted for nutrient impairments in 2012). It should also be noted that while sediment may be an impairment, Delaware doesn't currently have a set TMDL for sediment.

John J. also asked what the primary goal of the restoration project is and whether they looked into all potential sources of sediment. Sara explained that the primary goal was to allow for sediment to settle out (long-term storage of legacy sediment) and wetland habitat creation.

It was also pointed out that while DelDOT and the County may be meeting their MS4 obligations with this project, it is unclear whether this would truly be a benefit to the White Clay. It was unclear what the problem is and if this solution would address it. Short-term it fits the MS4 program, but long-term it may be more detrimental than beneficial to the stream/watershed. Jenny E. pointed out that the USACE should do a quantified analysis of costs and benefits when they review the permit. John J. pointed out that buffers on upstream farm fields may yield better results.

John J. also asked whether the newly created wetlands would be permanent wetlands or just temporary wetness and if temporary, then there may be a need for a mosquito abatement program for them. This was not fully explored by DelDOT.

Due to time constraints we needed to move on, but Sara noted that she did not want this project to hold up the bridge project and was concerned that if this project needed to be redesigned it would be abandoned. Shane noted that National Park Service was coming out with their Stream Restoration Specialist (Jim MacCartney) tomorrow to take a firsthand look at the project.

**Joe Spadafino (City of Newark Parks and Recreation Department) gave a presentation on the Charlie Emerson Pedestrian Bridge.**

The total costs of this project are projected to be \$1.75 million, most of it coming from grants and support from other partners, with a City of Newark match of \$200,000. They are expecting to conclude the design process in 2018 and begin construction in 2020.

The pedestrian bridge should not impact future (road) bridge repairs, or the potential for a future dam removal. The new pedestrian bridge should not impact the current USGS gage,

but it is also believed that the current location of the USGS gage is not collecting accurate readings (due to its proximity to the dam) and so when and if the dam is removed (or part of it removed due to its historic nature) the City will coordinate with USGS on a new location if needed and coupled with the dam removal. It was unclear whether the current road/bridge crossing would remain open to the public, but it was noted that in severe winter conditions (lots of snowfall, ice, freezing weather) that the crosswalk is unsafe and inaccessible due to either snow pack from plowing, and or melting and refreezing of water causing icy conditions. It was also acknowledged that this would complete a trail loop with the Pomeroy trail and connect both sides of Newark in a safer manor, but that the Cleveland Road Crossing is still a safety issue (further south of the pedestrian bridge).

Joe S. also gave a quick update on the all-inclusive Preston's Playground by the City of Newark Reservoir. The playground should be complete in the next 2-3 weeks. The restroom which is phase 2, should be completed in early 2019. The water fountain and signage that the WCWS committee supported will also be part of phase 2.

#### New Business

Shane indicated that she applied for the Wild and Scenic River Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Grant through NPS. She should hear back by June 15.

Shane noted that the White Clay Creek State Park Master Plan Open Houses are scheduled for 4 to 7 p.m. at Deerfield, 507 Thompson Station Road, on the following dates:

- June 25: To highlight natural resources and interpretation; designed for public input on topics such as habitat, farming, ponds/streams, historical and natural programming
- July 10: To highlight buildings and infrastructure; to seek public input on topics including the nature center, the park office, use of buildings, and current and future concessionaires
- Aug. 1: To highlight roads and trails; for public input on topics including roads, trails and connectivity
- Aug. 20: To highlight recreation use; for input on topics such as golfing, fishing, visiting historic sites and events

Shane will be out of town on the June 25, and August 1 dates and will need someone from the Committee to attend in her place. Please notify her if you are planning on going.

#### NPS River Manager Report

NPS received full funding amount appropriated by congress from DOI last late May.

In terms of personnel, NPS has recently been approved to hire a second NPS staff person to be located in Philadelphia to help with White Clay and Lower Delaware.

#### Old Business

Shane noted that the following grant proposals were not awarded: NPS/USGS Water Quality Partnership Grant pre-proposal, NPS/Rivers50 Grant Submission (to support the stream restoration and Catch the Rain Program efforts in West Grove), and the River Network Grant Submission (to support the Wild and Scenic Anniversary at the WCWA Annual Meeting).

Shane also noted that the scheduled New Garden Cell Tower Zoning Hearings have all been postponed and that the next one is scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup>. If we want a presence at this

hearing she will need someone to attend in her place as she will be out of town. They are potentially looking into Preserve tower to use for commercial purposes.

## June 2018 Statement of Financials and WCRF Update

### Subcommittee Reports

#### Land Preservation

Natural Lands Trust Project Updates: Erin noted that we were billed for the Green Valley Farms easement, and that the Christie project should close before September 30, but she is concerned that the St. Anthony's project will not close in time. That leaves us with an additional \$5000 to spend elsewhere. Shane will see if John Goodall could use the funds on one of his projects in White Clay.

Brandywine Conservancy Project Updates: The agricultural BMPs on the Hutchinson farm were installed in the spring and the work for the tree planting maintenance was contracted out. John will be meeting in the coming weeks with London Grove Township to further discuss the Shaw project.

Land Stewardship Projects Update: Shane noted that she did a site inspection with Greg Gagliano at the Franklin Preserve. The land is filling in nicely with native herbaceous plants, the trees in tubes are taking a bit long to pop out of the tubes, but the trees in the deer exclosures (no tubes) are looking good. The perimeter is also being managed appropriately for invasive vines and shrubs, with spot treatments of larger areas of invasive herbaceous species. This is an alternative approach then suggested by Dave Wise at the last Christina Basin Task Force Meeting in which 'clean culture' was suggested for the best survival ship of trees (i.e. herbicide treatment and mowing around each tree tube). Jerry K. suggested that the WCWS Committee discuss further the use of glyphosate herbicide use in land stewardship based on peer reviewed research on the pesticide.

#### Research and Restoration

The Restoration Subcommittee met in April and reviewed and offered feedback on a draft water quality monitoring plan that Shane put together. The updates were made and Shane will be sending out an updated draft for review to the Subcommittee in the next month. The plan focuses in on fixed sites for trends, and temporary sites for areas of interest. A new continuous sensor was installed at an unnamed tributary to Middle Run, bacteria sampling interns were hired at both Delaware Nature Society and Stroud to help with White Clay work, and the software program used to analyze the data collected from all sampling efforts is progressing. Shane also noted that four new sampling sites were located in Newark with the help of Kelley Dinsmore.

Shane provided an update on Catch the Rain progress. She issued one rebate for conservation landscaping, and two rain barrel rebates since the last meeting. She also spoke with 3 new potential program applicants a London Croft HOA board member, and a Landenberg Hunt HOA member both interested in riparian buffers on HOA public lands, and one residential property owner in London Grove Township. She also met with the London Grove Open Space Committee to discuss the program and how to present it to a larger group of HOA's in the township. She is meeting with them again in the coming week to plan

a September/October workshop. Finally, Shane indicated that she revised the rebate structure after reviewing it with Restoration Subcommittee to 50% of total costs up to \$2500 to make administering the rebates easier.

Shane and Ellen noted that none of the White Clay municipalities (besides West Grove) have received feedback from DEP regarding their submitted plans. In the meant time we have been working with the Christina Watershed Municipal Partnership to potential funding opportunities to formalize our structure and set the groundwork for the next round of permits so we can be proactive in receiving funding to continue this work. Shane also noted that Ellen is now employed by the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center and will continue to work with the White Clay in her new role.

#### Education/Outreach

Shane noted that a class of 27 students from Newark H.S. attended a field trip to Stroud this spring.

Shane also noted that this year's Creek Fest was our largest ever attended on record with 1600 attendees estimated by the State Park. She also noted that SUEZ increased their support to \$4000 for the event.

Jerry K. suggested we do a Wild and Scenic 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Symposium with the Biden Institute in October. University of Delaware will handle the logistics and line up presenters.

#### Announcements

Next quarterly meeting will be in September  
Christina Basin BMP Bus Tour (September 8)