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*Meeting Minutes*

**White Clay Creek Watershed  
Management Committee**

January 13, 2004  
Judge Morris Estate  
Polly Drummond Road  
Newark, DE

**Attendees:**

Chuck Barscz	David Bartoo	Jessie Benjamin
Sally Cheyne	Charlie Emerson	Janet Comly Kalb
Jerry Kauffman	Robert Lonsdorf	Jake Michael
Dorothy P. Miller	Fred Muller	Ed O'Donnell
Heather Rose	Jack Stefferud	Linda Stapleford
Kelly Stringham	Grant Troop	Andy Urquhart
Martin Wells	W. Lawrence Wilkinson	Leon H. Wilkinson

**MINUTES September 9, 2003**

- *The minutes of the September 9, 2003 meeting were read and approved by members present.*

**FY '04 BUDGET INCREASE**

Linda Stapleford presented a first draft FY '04 budget of \$110,000 from National Park Service (NPS). This is a \$50,000 increase from NPS '03 funding and a \$40,500 increase above the total FY '03 budget. (That budget included a one-time \$9500 contribution from a reallocation of previous study funds not yet expended.) Based on discussion with Chuck Barscz, she proposed increasing her position to half-time to allow more time for contributing to subcommittee work and for municipal outreach, designating \$10,000 to assist municipality work towards the management plan's resource protection objectives, allocating almost \$11,000 for a special project to be identified by the Management Committee, and dividing the remaining amount to the various subcommittees for on-going, expanded, or new projects.

Discussion focused on potential special projects such as funding technical assistance grants to municipalities. Everyone was encouraged to consider the special project category and subcommittees were asked to react to the draft budget and be prepared with their ideas at the March Exec. Subcommittee meeting.

**BOB CHEYNE MEMORIALS**

L. Stapleford summarized some ideas to commemorate the valuable contribution that Bob Cheyne made to conserving the White Clay watershed and his key role in the Wild and Scenic designation. A page is being developed for our website in his memory and discussion revolved around a memorial plaque for the family and/or for public display at an appropriate site and presenting the plaque at some public event.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### *Education Subcommittee*

In the absence of Kristen Travers and Rick Mickowski, L. Stapleford will report later under the Fish and Wildlife Subcommittee and the Dockstader grant report on two projects, school outreach and **SMARTYARDS**, that Education is helping to fund. It was noted that there are 35,000 tax parcels within our bi-state 69,000-acre watershed so the task to effectively transmit a watershed stewardship message to all those homeowners cannot be realistically accomplished by duplicating this **SMARTYARDS** project. In reply it was pointed out that this is a pilot project to gauge homeowner response. Some type of expansion to a wider audience based on a **SMARTYARDS** theme might be feasible; perhaps a homeowner landscaping competition and/or web-based public relations campaign could be conducted.

### *Fish & Wildlife*

Ed O'Donnell asked L. Stapleford to report on progress of the joint school watershed education outreach effort with the Education subcommittee. She has met with staff at middle schools in Avon Grove District, Pennsylvania and Christina District, Delaware, to coordinate classroom presentations and field trips to Stroud Water Research Center for 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Some of the field trips are funded by a Stroud scholarship grant. Nine classes will be reached and the program will also be integrated with a watershed stewardship message to the broader school population through a **SMARTYARDS** site at both schools.

Fish and Wildlife funds are also being used to provide phased flora and fauna studies, conducted by Jim White and Janet Ebert, at upper watershed sites selected by the Open Space subcommittee. Surveys have begun on two Franklin Township sites, actively being considered for open space. The Township passed an open space referendum in 2002.

### *Open Space*

Robert Lonsdorf reported that he was meeting with interested Franklin Township landowners. Jack Stefferud added that he was working with New Garden Township to do landowner contact and assistance with an open space bond issue.

### *Recreational Trails*

David Bartoo reported that they are putting together the Request For Proposal for the trail brochure.

## **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPORT**

### *Section 7 Reviews*

#### *DNREC Wedgewood Trail Extension*

C. Barscz summarized DNREC plans for the extension of the current trail in White Clay Creek State

Park along the old railway right-of-way on the east side of the creek from the pedestrian bridge at Wedgewood Road, crossing the creek at the site of the old railroad bridge abutments, continuing on the railroad right-of-way running on the west side of the creek, and coming out on Creek Road a little north of Newark. He reported that he, Andy Urquhart, Dorothy Miller, L. Stapleford, D. Bartoo, the Park construction engineer, and the engineering consultant met on site to view the trail alignment. Although the 10' width is more than might be desirable in a few spots, the habitat loss will be minimal and that width is required by the federal program funding the project. The project's construction is conditioned on no heavy construction occurring during neotropical bird breeding season, April 15 – July 1.

It was also noted that Creek Road is being severely undercut by the creek and will require some action in the near future and that the heavy pedestrian and bike traffic is at risk. D. Miller agreed to represent WCCWMC on the park's future trail planning committee and Jerry Kauffman will do the same for the Newark bike committee. D. Bartoo agreed to notify L. Stapleford of future public meetings on park issues and she will pass it along to the Committee's listserve and post on our website. We will also ask someone from the park to do a presentation for the Management Committee on the future park plans.

### *Pike Creek Restoration Project*

The state, building on the success of the Mill Creek restoration project, is initiating a similar project for 3000 linear feet of Pike Creek with the same restoration firm, Biohabitats Inc. The creek's meanders and floodplains will be reengineered to decrease stream bank erosion, increase floodplain storage, increase fish habitat, and establish a forested riparian buffer. C. Barscz concerns for the project lie with problems associated with the forested buffer: scraping the soils and opening the area to invasive plants. Jessie Farrel agreed to look at the plans and asked if a management plan had been developed. C. Barscz will look into that.

## **ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

### *Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship Conference*

The Partner Wild and Scenic Rivers panel in which L. Stapleford participated and the Delaware River Basin Commission panel discussion in which C. Barscz participated were well received at this national conference. It was an excellent opportunity to network with our other Wild and Scenic partner rivers. L. Stapleford especially benefited from a presentation on marketing and learned the distinction between a logo and other branding tools. This should be helpful as we move forward in the design of our logo.

### *SMARTYARDS Project*

Linda Stapleford passed out the postcards and letter that went to residents of the targeted neighborhood, Hills of Sullivan in London Grove. Fourteen of 120 homeowners (or homeowners couples) registered for the workshop and 11 of the 14 attended as well as the coordinating teacher from Avon Grove Middle School. Workshop presentations were made by C. Barscz, L. Stapleford, and Jen Gochenaur (Delaware Nature Society) and were well received. Participants are selecting their plants and will receive them in early April.

### *Logo*

J. Kauffman will give the logo theme responses to the graphic artist at Water Resources Agency at University of Delaware and request 3 or 4 renderings varying from very simplistic to more pictorial. L. Stapleford, E. O'Donnell, and D. Miller will first meet with the artist to discuss the ideas.

#### *Proposed Bread and Cheese Island Project*

L. Stapleford summarized the presentation on this project by Duffield Associates and RK&K at the October Exec. Subcommittee. The proposed project would address wetlands mitigation, stormwater management, potable water supply, brownsfield reuse, and open space as a part of mitigation for a proposed I-95 upgrade at Rt. 1 and 141. It is only at the preliminary stage of talks with the relevant state agencies.

#### *14 White Clay Creek Drive update*

The Management Committee received a written response from the City of Newark that they would be willing to consider a second appraisal paid for by the Coalition for Natural Stream Valleys with the understanding they would be under no obligation to purchase the property. This ½ acre property is next to existing parkland that provides passive recreation and floodplain protection. The Committee approved L. Stapleford to solicit an appraiser.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### *National Historic District Proposal*

Martin Wells suggested some of the increase in FY04 funds be used to revive the National Historic District proposal for archaeological sites and some buildings in Landenberg Village and surrounding areas including the Pomeroy-Newark railway artifacts, old lime kilns and cemeteries, and Native American digs. The cost could be \$10,000 - \$15,000 to create the necessary documentation. Martin will continue to do research but would need professional assistance. It was suggested that it might be possible to match WCCWMC funds with County funds and that he also work with New Garden Township. Martin will attend the March 4 Executive Subcommittee meeting to discuss this further.

#### *Bi-state Preserve Buildings*

Jan Kalb raised concerns about the Sexton's House and the Old Mill House at Yeatman Station being left in disrepair. The latter would probably require \$500,000 of improvements. The parking lot at the Preserve also is experiencing severe flooding. Some of these issues could be addressed by the Bi-state Preserve Council, but it has not met recently. Perhaps pursuing a historic district would help create interest at the Preserve Council. She also expressed concern that the London Britain Penn Green property, 44 a. with steep slopes and fully-wooded and across from the preserve parking lot, is threatened by development. She would like to see that land preserved. R. Lonsdorf will inquire again if the landowner is willing to sell for open space.

### **THE NEXT WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING IS TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR:**

***Monday April 19 or Wednesday April 21 at 7 p.m.***

#### *Franklin Township Building*

*20 Municipal Lane*

*Kemblesville, PA*

The meeting was adjourned at **3:15 PM.**