



Meeting Minutes
**White Clay Creek Watershed
Management Committee**

April 8, 2008 10:00 a.m.
Judge Morris Estate
Newark, DE 19711

Attendees

Chuck Barszcz	David Bartoo	Jessie Benjamin	Martha Corrozi
William Dennis	Marilyn Flannery	Scott Gantt	Phil Geoghegan
Doug Janiec	Marjorie Kraus	Pat Kraus	Rob Line
Robert Lonsdorf	Rick Mickowski	Dorothy P. Miller	Nate Nazdrowicz
Aileen Parrish	Roy Simonson	Chris Strohman	Linda Stapleford
Jack Stefferud	Derek Stoner		

Martha Corrozi, Delaware Co-chair convened the meeting at 10:10 a.m. with a welcome and introductions.

MINUTES Sept. 11, 2007

- The minutes of the September 11 meeting were read and approved by members present.

NEXT MEETING

- Sept. 9 in Pennsylvania. Details will be announced closer to the date.

2008 BUDGET

- L. Stapleford presented the draft 2008 budget, based on an expected National Park Service funding of \$150,000. Rob Line outlined some potential DNREC restoration projects in the watershed including the reintroduction of a plant species, and expansion of infra-red deer survey. R. Lonsdorf and J. Stefferud noted some key potential open space preservation projects that might need extra funding. The 2008 draft budget allocated funding for subcommittee requested projects; in addition \$35,000 was allocated for open space transaction/acquisition and \$8000 for a DNREC restoration project. The budget was accepted as presented.

BIRD SURVEY RESULTS

Derek Stoner, Anas Assoc.

Derek presented a slide presentation of the extensive bird species found on 2 properties in Franklin Township. The 82 a. D'Andrea property on the West Branch includes a high quality wetland and the 28 a. Howard property on the Middle Branch includes a large forested section. Both supported a wide variety of birds (108 and 68 respectively) and high breeding populations (69 and 45 respectively). Surveys like this are important for land preservation support, management decisions, potential future education outreach, and documentation for potential Important Bird Area designation. It was also noted that the smaller Howard property rates so highly because it has a large contiguous forest buffer. The buffer provides protection from invasive plant species, resulting in the high quality plant population necessary to support a wide range of bird species. So preservation of buffers, not as ecologically robust themselves but buffering more ecologically sensitive lands, is important to consider.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Education

R. Mickowski noted that the 2nd informational tackboard poster featuring the watershed's cultural/historic resources has been completed and is now available in 18x18 inch format for distribution to teachers and public venues (contact the River Administrator for a copy). D. Bartoo announced that the kiosk at Wedgewood Road in White Clay Creek State Park will be erected soon for the 30x30 inch versions of this poster and its companion on natural resources. The subcommittee also hopes to begin work on an introductory brochure this year.

Fish and Wildlife

Nate Nazdrowicz reported that White Clay Preserve is too large of an area for the previously discussed herp survey. Instead he will begin work compiling herp records utilizing data from the herp atlas and the Preserve list.

Historical and Cultural Resources

No report.

Recreational Trails

D. Bartoo reported the regional visitor brochure and trail map might be ready for printing by the end of spring. Planning for the multimunicipal trail project connecting London Britain, London Grove, New Garden, and Franklin Townships as well as Avondale and Avon Grove, is moving forward. The individual townships are at various points in their own trail plans so it is timely to be looking at the connections. This effort is consistent with Chester County's Linking Landscapes.

Open Space

Robert Lonsdorf reported that J. Ebert is presenting on the Franklin Township botanical survey at the Township Building this coming Wed at 7 p.m. It includes 2 dozen areas in White Clay and Elk Creek watersheds. The survey, partially funded by the White Clay Wild & Scenic program, found rare and notable species. Of the 20 or so special areas documented, 14 are in the process of being preserved.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPORT

Charles Barscz

C. Barscz reminded everyone that ALL reports receiving any funding through the Wild and Scenic Program need to state "funded by the National Park Service".

Section 7 Reviews completed: 1) a 1 lane bridge is being replaced in London Britain Twp; 2) Rt 7 Delaware, east of Delaware Park, a transmission line is being upgraded by Delmarva Power and will require heavy equipment in the area for a directional boring.

Chuck cautioned that we should watch to see that the agreement reached with New Garden Township for the Landenberg Bridge is followed. He noted there is a court battle over a historic bridge truss replacement on the Lower Delaware.

In answer to a question, Chuck explained that the section 7 review powers can be extended beyond the designated tributaries if it appears a project would impact a designated section.

RIVER ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Linda Stapleford

L. Stapleford reported a successful turnout of 66 persons attending the two Feb. Dockstader Foundation-funded native landscaping workshops cosponsored by London Grove, London Britain, Franklin, and New Garden Townships. Field training events on invasive plant identification and management are scheduled for April 19th and May 3rd. Registration is required.

White Clay hosted a 2 day Partner Wild and Scenic Rivers/National Park Service Conference at the UD Marriott. This annual event allows the National Park Service the opportunity to update the various rivers on issues and the partner rivers to share information regarding their programs and funding needs. The White Clay Watershed Association provided a well-received guest bag for the attendees from the other rivers representing 11 rivers from 7 states. The White Clay program was showcased and the National Park Service discussed some possible changes in the program coordination at the national level.

The White Clay Wild and Scenic program is also working with a coalition of partners to sponsor a May breakfast meeting with University of Delaware President Harker and Delaware federal, state, and local legislators. The goal is to inform the President of the resource values of the White Clay to the state, community, and the university and to highlight the conservation value of the UD owned Laird Tract.

An update was provided on the status of the review of the City of Newark ordinances to determine consistency with the White Clay Creek and Its Tributaries Management Plan. J. Gaadt was contracted

and will provide a detailed written review, supplemented with model ordinances, to the city as they work through the adoption of a new 5 year Comprehensive Plan.

Our updated website, www.whiteclay.org, has been up since January and has some added features. A few bugs had to be worked out during the first month or so, but it is functioning well now. The addition of more resources are planned.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

D. Janiec informed the committee that the Army Corps of Engineers has new regulations on the hierarchy of compensation for permitting. Historically the regulation directed compensation for impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands, to be on-site in-kind mitigation, off-site mitigation, restoration, enhancement, then banking and in-lieu fee respectively. The new regulations directs the hierarchy to be banking, in-lieu fee, then site mitigation, restoration, and enhancement respectively, with banking and in-lieu fee being almost equivalent in priority. Implementation of this new regulation could be a boon or a travesty to environmental protection. The establishment of the fee system needs to go through a public notice process so people have the opportunity to comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.