



## **DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

March 10, 2020, 10:00am - noon

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

### **Attendees**

Shane Morgan	Ed O'Donnell	Don Peters	Jason Fischel
April Schmitt	Jenny Egan	John Goodall	Matt Fischel
Rick MicKowski	Sarah Bursky	Aileen Parish	Cori Trice

Introductions/ Welcome Sarah Bursky NPS

Approval of December Minutes

### Presentation:

Dam Busters, Dr. Jason Fischel and Dr. Matt Fischel, Postdoctoral Researchers, University of Delaware College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Jason and Matt reviewed where they are with Dam#2 (Red Mill Dam, DE). There are working on getting the needed permits, putting the project out to bid this summer, and tentatively removing it late summer/early fall. After speaking with the state agencies and the City of Newark, they are also applying for another NFWF grant to look into the feasibility of removing Dam #4 (at Timothy's). Removing Dam #4 simultaneously with the installation of the new pedestrian bridge could be more cost effective for the City of Newark. With the dam currently in place the bridge will need to be set at a higher elevation than originally sought to accommodate the floodplain. This will increase construction costs to the City. Coupling the bridge installation with the dam removal may effectively lower the floodplain and therefore the costs of dam removal may offset the costs of the modified bridge construction by allowing it to be installed at a lower elevation. USGS has also been included in the talks and is open to moving their current stream gaging station. The dam is currently being undermined and water is moving beneath the dam falsely lowering USGS gage readings. Jason and Matt are scheduled to present to City Council this month.

### New Business

Shane reviewed the following development projects: the 137-acre Saint Anthony's parcel (owned by the township and being developed as a park with a conservation easement already in place) and the proposed adjacent JP Morgan/PRIET housing and retail development project both in New Garden Township. The City of Newark Parks and Recreation is also in the planning process of developing the Old Papermill Park across from the Reservoir.

Shane also noted that the White Clay Creek bistate Preserve along with the Fair Hill Natural Area and newly acquired land in the Elk Creek watershed will be the largest contiguous protected open space in the metropolitan (NY to DC) area. There may be some increased traffic and usage with this highly publicized acquisition of new land. She also noted that the Friends groups have requested quarterly meetings of all three park superintendents to ensure there is good

communication among the parks (MD, DE, & PA) and their events which could impact the adjacent parks. Shane attended the first meeting in January.

### NPS River Manager Report

Sarah introduced herself to the committee, noted she is working with the Delaware agencies on the Newark Pedestrian Bridge project. Shane is planning 2 watershed tours (March 18 & 24) for Sarah with the Chester County Conservation District to introduce her to the mushroom industry and with Brandywine Conservancy to tour agriculture projects in the upper watershed.

### Statement of Financials

Shane shared the status of the NPS Budget, outside funding, the White Clay Restoration Fund and the FY20 Contract Agreement and reviewed two new initiatives added to the agreement (the new report card project to be led by University of Delaware and the return of a historical budget line meant to provide seed funding for historical and cultural activities).

### Wild & Scenic River Program Updates

#### Catch the Rain Program Overview

- Franklin Tree Planting - Shane briefly reviewed the volunteer planting schedule for May 2 with Brandywine Conservancy. Franklin Township included this project in their permit application and will be able to obtain MS4 credit.
- West Grove Borough GSI/Dockstader - On March 4 Rutgers gave a presentation to the West Grove Borough Council on the green infra structure plans they developed for the borough. The next step is the final approval and implementation of a rain garden outside the Avon Grove Library/municipal building. This will be a public volunteer event schedule for this spring. \$4500 of water quality funds are set aside for this project. \$7500 from the grant, and \$3500 from the borough plus in-kind staff and equipment to install the garden.
- Papermill Park Rain Garden- a contractor was hired by the county to install the garden this spring. The contractor will also install the plants and there will be a public workshop late spring/summer. The Wild and Scenic program will purchase the plants and help with signage for the garden.

#### Water Quality Monitoring Program

- Shane mentioned she has been sharing the White Clay water quality data with interested agencies. She met with Dave Wolanski (water science specialist at DNREC) in January and our data will be included in the DNREC 305b draft integrated report. She also noted that two streams delisted by DNREC for nutrients in 2012 still show impairments based on our data.
- Adam Griggs (science manager at River Network) is also interested in our data. He was specifically interested in how we were curating it and wants to help get the data online to share with the public using Google Data Studio integration with R. Rob Tuttle is going to support the integration of R with Google Data Studio and Adam is planning to do a case study on Rob Tuttle, who created the R software that we are using to curate all of our data.
- Rob Tuttle will be attending a Citizen Scientist workshop at Stroud this April on behalf of White Clay. He will learn how to build and program a sensor station from scratch that we

can keep and deploy in the watershed. Stroud is waiving the \$475 workshop fee for us so we would only have to cover the material costs (@\$1000).

- Shane worked with Joe Duris (USGS) and Drew Reif (USGS) to submit a National Park Service/USGS Water Quality Partnership Grant entitled, 'Synthesis and analysis of existing water quality and stream flow data sets from scientific agencies and volunteer monitoring programs in White Clay Creek, a National Wild and Scenic River.' Funding will be used to cover their time assisting with data analysis of existing water quality data and development of a scientifically rigorous methodology to determine water quality grades based on this data for the new White Clay report card (submitted February 20, 2020).

#### Christina Watersheds Municipal Partnership (CWMP) -

- The White Clay subgroup of municipalities met on March 5 to update where they are with their PA DEP stormwater permits (to date none approved), discuss current and upcoming projects and potential workshops (pilot HOA Workshop--late spring/summer and a public works rain garden workshop fall 2020). We discussed the upcoming grant resubmission we are planning to NFWF (Delaware River Conservation Fund) to help fund water quality improvement planning and project implementation in the urbanized areas of White Clay watershed. Shane reviewed the potential strategies she is outlining in the grant to the committee.

#### Land Stewardship

- The committee voted on releasing an additional \$1500 stewardship funds to Brandywine Conservancy for the Hutchinson Farm buffer.
- Steve Cottrell Discussion - It was decided that Steve should get the needed approvals from DCNR and DNREC which may involve additional training to do the invasive management he is proposing on state lands. Once he gets these approvals the Wild and Scenic Committee would support his efforts as we have no authority to grant approval.
- Franklin Preserve. Work is still ongoing and we are headed into year five with the next contract. Shane proposed cutting the FY20 funding in half to spread over two years versus using it all in one year. We will revisit after this year's contract ends.
- New Garden Trails and Park. Shane mentioned that the township is paying for invasive species management on their public lands utilizing the allowable portion (20%) of their open space funds. The riparian buffer in the township park is being managed by a professional contractor using township park and recreation funds.
- We still have SUEZ funding for this year of Hoopes Farm stewardship.
- Middle Run Stewardship is occurring this year using White Clay Restoration Funds.

#### Land Preservation & Trails

- Kate Raman (Natural Lands) will present on projects she is working on at our June meeting.

#### Other Community Outreach

- Creek Fest is scheduled for May 2, the live bird show will be there again along with Unity Reggae and some new exhibitors.
- Annual Reports were mailed out to legislators last month, posted on our website, and a limited amount of printed copies are available.

Other White Clay Related Updates/Announcements

Next Meeting Tuesday, June 9, 10AM- Noon

Shane will send out a new poll at a later date regarding availability for the September meeting currently scheduled for September 17 to see if there are any conflicts with people wanting to attend the Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum moved to September 17 &18 in Philadelphia.