

SCRIP Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2021

A SCRIP meeting was held on March 18, 2021 via Zoom. The meeting was attended by SCRIP Board Members Tom Clark, Len Lichvar, Melissa Reckner, Joe Gordon, Karlice Makuchan, Pam Milavec, Robb Piper, Adam Cotchen, and Larry Hutchinson.

The meeting was also attended by Sam Faith, Mike Timcik, Dave Thomas, and Jon Smoyer of the PA DEP; Earl Waddell of the Cambria Somerset Authority; Doug Beri, Jr. of the Indiana County Conservation District; Vinny Paczek with the EADS Group; Chris Garbark of Conemaugh Valley Conservancy; and Greg Shustrick of the Somerset Conservation District. William Brogan of DEP joined the end of the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 PM by Clark.

Makuchan/Gorden made a **MOTION** to approve the January meeting minutes as submitted. All in favor. Motion carried.

Guests

Smoyer said he started his new position in January. He shared that the AMD set-aside has about \$38 million and that around \$21 million is committed and needs to sit, more or less, as an O&M trust to take care of systems already built. More commitments are on the horizon with the Little Conemaugh and Blacklick plants. Smoyer explained the state of those funds. Robert Hughes of EPCAMR was actually testifying right now about the need to reauthorize SMCRA. **ACTION ITEM:** Clark or Reckner will request a SMCRA update from Hughes.

Follow-up: EPCAMR and WPCAMR staff feel good about reauthorization, but acknowledge that it will still be challenging.

Timcik said the contractor mobilized at Oven Run B last week.

Smoyer said the L. Conemaugh plant is entering the design phase. DEP is considering channeling Hughes into Sonman E, from which polluted water will be drawn for the treatment plant. This could clean up a nice section of the L. Conemaugh, but it's complicated. Construction funds are budgeted.

Shade Creek Active Treatment Plant

Clark explained that an Environmental Hearing Board heard testimony earlier this month from Corsa Coal and DEP to determine if a supersedeas should be granted. Hearing briefs and other documents may be viewed at the following website:

https://ehb.courtapps.com/public/document_show/pub.php?csNameID=5959. SCRIP's technical committee may need to meet in early April, after the ruling is made.

BAMR is waiting to see how this plays out as it might affect #4's eligibility for Title IV funds.

Smoyer said a QHUP for the Shade Creek watershed was in progress, but it is not official yet. A Cost Benefit Analysis will be needed.

Reckner questioned the status of Corsa's permit renewal. **ACTION ITEM:** Faith will provide information.

Stream Team

Garbark said additional plantings at Stineman will occur. Their river otter monitoring will continue. The group received a Growing Greener grant to support monitoring work.

Cambria Somerset Authority

Waddell elaborated on the expansion of the Que's public recreation area. He noted that SQI is still building trails around the Que. Whitewater releases commence April 10-11.

Western PA Conservancy

Cotchen reported that he submitted a Coldwater Heritage grant application for Bens Creek. MLTU and he will be hosting a training on how to use TU's RIVERS app – a visual assessment tool to GPS concerns on April 7 at 7 PM. Contact him to receive the Zoom link. WPC, SCD, and CSA met at the Que yesterday and are considering a large woody debris addition to Higgins Run. Once final approval is received from CSA, they will proceed. **ACTION ITEM:** Clark will post the training info on SCRIP's Twitter.

Stonycreek River Progress Report

Stonycreek Trust Fund

Lichvar reminded that the Somerset Conservation District has a trust fund set up at the Community Foundation for the for the operation and maintenance of the four Oven Run AMD treatment systems. Donate via this link: https://cfalleghenies.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create?funit_id=3178. CVC has a match challenge in place for this. **ACTION ITEM:** Clark will tweet about the challenge.

Oven Run

Lichvar said contracts are now in place with the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds to use Pilot funds and complete work at Oven Run A&D.

Incline Plane Discharge

Timcik said OSM authorization was received, and Pilot funds are helping with a partial design project. Reckner said the Friends of the Inclined Plane video highlights work along this hillside. View it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VlkdsenGd0&t=6s>.

Wells Creek Discharges

Lichvar read an update that was in this month's WCWA newsletter. Faith said their hydro finished the report and it's out for peer review. They might have it back by the end of the month, but it will need reviewed by legal.

Fallen Timber Run Discharge

Clark said he'd like to take a look at this discharge and will do so with Reckner soon. A viable solution is not forthcoming given its location. Could it be co-treated with sewage? Hooversville does have its own sewage treatment facility.

Quemahoning Creek

Lichvar said PFBC's new Aquatic Invasive Species specialist is Sean Hartzell. Shustrick said Hedin is putting together a report using the Mass Balance completed by SFU to see, if Gondar can't be captured, what other discharge could. Clark said he looked at historical data and seems very steady and alkaline, but maybe the ferrous iron is changing to ferric when it hits Que Creek, adding acidity.

Lichvar said Pilot Funding is allowing for Phase 3 of a habitat project in the Que Tailwater.

Lamberts Run

Shustrick said Hedin is completing a design that's going through permitting. There are lots of wetland disturbances.

Dave Thomas and Sam Faith had to drop off the call. Mutual thanks were given for attending.

Clark said the Flight 93 reforestation will continue this April and should be open to the public. Keep an eye on the Flight 93 Friends webpage.

Paint Creek

Babcock Creek

Clark said they'll be sampling next week. Limestone sanding reflects positive results, including macroinvertebrates in Babcock. Clark is working on the DCNR permit to mitigate the red eyes discharge.

Mine 37 Refuse Pile

Clark said he learned that it is on the list. Dave Wright told Reckner that equipment has been moved in.

Other

Clark said John Stefanko's dad owns land off Old Bedford Pike that locals call "the Browns." He might approach him to do a reforestation and AMD remediation project here that would mitigate the first impacts to Paint Creek.

Reckner said PCRWA & MLTU's annual litter cleanup will be Saturday, April 10, with volunteers to meet "in the dip" about halfway down Berwick Road at 8:30 AM.

Shade Creek Progress Report

Treatment Systems

Hutchinson said both the Swallow and Cottagetown systems were flushed recently.

Paczek said EADS is completing a study on the Shade-Central City Joint Authority's sewer treatment system. It's looking like they'll rehab the existing facility, but design hasn't started.

Public Relations Reports

Education Committee

Makuchan recapped NatureWorks and her activity where she made pH indicator from red cabbage. Reckner said it was a great presentation. It and several other NatureWorks videos may be viewed at the Bottle Works' You Tube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBFU5Nty2m1f0R_i9nrB8_A/videos.

Makuchan said the latest newsletter will be emailed this week and the next newsletter deadline is Thursday, May 27. **ACTION ITEM:** Send news to her at karlice@atlanticbb.net.

Jon Smoyer and Mike Timcik had to hop off. SCRIP appreciates them attending.

Lichvar said there's a video coming out about projects along the Inclined Plane trail.

Event Planning

Gorden said he touched base with Mandy Smith (PFBC) to verify that things aren't opened up yet. Maybe we could do a Family Fishing Program at the Que this summer.

New Business

Reckner said SCRIP makes an annual donation to the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy for processing some checks that come to SCRIP through SAC. This will be tabled until SCRIP's Treasurer may weigh in on previous donation amounts. **ACTION ITEM:** Eckenrode to review past donations for recommendation.

Brogan joined the call. He said there might be a Growing Greener round opening most likely by April.

It was noted, with sadness, that Dave Sewak passed away yesterday.

Beri said he and Brogan have been serving on a work group to create an Ohio River Watershed network, similar to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, to give a stronger, unified voice for the watershed and bring more revenue to it. There is a series of stakeholder meetings coming up. For more information and to register, go to <https://upenn.us18.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1f017360e6afaa5b1264ac4b0&id=69558899f4&e=ecab15d590>. Beri said, once you register, you'll be sent a short video that will bring you up to speed.

Clark said Aaron Capouellez wanted to lead a frog presentation, but to avoid a longer meeting, it has morphed into an educational outing. Stay tuned for information.

Next Meeting

Thursday, May 13 at 3 PM at Greenhouse Park, where we may be socially distanced. In the event of inclement weather, Zoom will be our back up.

Adjourn 2:58 PM

Minutes by Reckner.