

SCRIP Updates
April 2, 2020

Due to Covid-19, the SCRIP meeting scheduled for March was canceled, and board members were asked to provide updates to share.

Melissa Reckner reported that SCRIP received six membership renewals in January and February, which generated \$200. Membership with SCRIP is one year from the date a person joined, so more will come throughout the year.

Stonycreek River

Len Lichvar said reconstruction of Oven Run Site F, Hawk View, is continuing. The completion date is April 17. Final design continues on Sites A and D. No funding has been confirmed for reconstruction of either site yet.

He said, “The Somerset Conservation District has received the \$1,700.00 from Coal Tubin for the Oven Run Trust Fund generated from the Facebook Fundraiser. In addition, the Somerset County Conservancy has committed \$1,000.00 as a challenge grant to the Fund. I have also been informed in person by the Somerset County Commissioners that they will contribute \$25,000.00 to the Fund as a challenge grant as well.”

Reckner said MLTU’s litter cleanup along Bens Creek, planned for April 5, has been canceled. Incidentally, MLTU’s annual fundraising banquet has been rescheduled for September 12.

Paint Creek

Tom Clark learned that Robindale Energy Service (RES) does have a permit on the Mine 37 pile. It was originally permitted by Ebensburg Power, but was purchased by RES in 2017. This included the remaining Mine 40 pile previously permitted by Greenley Energy. It’ll probably be at least 5 years until removal from Mine 37 begins, if the coal market holds. Clark feels this is a problem where SCRIP can assist, as he foresees a time where the economics aren’t going to work on these piles, and there will need to be subsidies especially dealing with transportation of the fuel to the plant. He thinks this is something SCRIP should be getting ahead of with DEP and local legislators.

Reckner said the annual litter cleanup in the Little Paint Creek watershed, planned for April 11, is postponed.

Proposed Shade Active Treatment Plant

Clark corresponded with Dave Leiford of DEP, who said Shade is on hold until DMO works through Corsa's appeal. Corsa filed a Right-to-Know to access DEP files concerning the Dark

Shade project. The project has been removed from BAMR's website until the situation has been resolved.

Lichvar said he did contact Sam Faith and request that he submit a report on the Corsa situation. If and when Lichvar receives it, he will forward it.

Little Conemaugh River

Dave Leiford told Clark that development of the active treatment plant has largely been completed, although they are still working to finalize purchase of the future plant location and some easements associated with that. DEP is preparing the scope of work for the Task Implementation Plan in preparation for seeking bids on the design of the plant. DEP hopes to have that out in the summer. Branden Diehl with the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds said, "We've negotiated a tentative 10 year easement to access the test wells we drilled and monitoring wells that existed for the pools. These will help us understand the drawl down as we start pumping and treating. This agreement was to be executed by month's end, but that is now a bit uncertain due to Covid. The final properties have been selected. An appraiser was contracted to evaluate the properties. We anticipate receipt of the appraisal reports within four weeks. At that time we should be able to start property purchasing."

Reckner said a friend had reported concerns about a logging operation's impact on a Class A UNT to Trout Run near Portage. He was grateful and thankful that the Cambria County Conservation District communicated with the operator, who readily cleaned up the site.

Education Committee

Karlice Makuchan said June 5 is the submission deadline for the next newsletter, which will be SCRIP's 2nd all-electronic one. Send news to Makuchan at karlice@atlanticbb.net. Reckner said only three people/organizations have requested a hard copy be mailed to them and paid the \$5 to do so.

Reckner said about 30 people attended the Green Drinks held March 5 at The Phoenix Tavern, and \$178 were raised for NatureWorks/Bottle Works.

Reckner said NatureWorks, held March 7 at the Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center, was a huge success. At least 434 attendees were counted at the door, so plus the 80 volunteers, staff, and exhibitors, a record 514 people participated in this event. Reckner thanks SCRIP for sponsoring the event. SCRIP's donation helped cover the cost of printing and mailing postcards about the event and artists. Reckner thanks Karlice Makuchan, Larry Hutchinson, and Linda Yunke for staffing SCRIP's display and iron-oxide chalk making activity. They were busy all day! Also, thanks to Cliff Denholm at Stream Restoration, Inc. for donating some products that were glazed with oxides recovered from AMD, which were used in SCRIP's display.

Because of Covid-19 and the statewide lock down, most Trout in the Classroom Release Days

have been canceled. Some in May are still possible, but, in truth, unlikely. Reckner said, per her encouragement, several teachers released their trout before schools shuttered.

Fundraiser / Event Committee

Joe Gorden suspects this planned event is on hold, but it's too early to say.

Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team

Reckner noted an email from Chris Garbark indicated that Stream Team monitoring is suspended since the DEP lab is closed because of Covid-19.

Web Page

Clark created a new Twitter page for SCRIP. SCRIP does have a Facebook page. Everyone is welcomed to post to these pages.

Old Business

Clark said PEC's planned reforestation project in the headwaters of the South Fork of Little Conemaugh has been postponed until Spring 2021.

On Valentine's Day, Johnstown Vision 2025 and the Army Corps of Engineers led a meeting that discussed the sediment removal project that should have begun by now behind Johnstown High School. The Corps made clear that flood risk mitigation is their primary goal, but listened to concerns and alternatives or modifications suggested by those in attendance. It seems many things, like low flow channels, have not been researched and are unlikely to occur at this time; however, the Corps wants briefed on Johnstown's desires and projects. See the SCRIP newsletter for more on this meeting.