

The **November 16, 2016** meeting of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project was called to order at 3:10 PM at Gander Mountain by Len Lichvar, with Karlice Makuchan, Melissa Reckner, James Eckenrode, Jr., Adam Cotchen, Joe Gorden, John Vataavuk, and Larry Hutchinson present.

The meeting was also attended by Nicole Waligora of the Johnstown Visitor's Bureau, John Dryzal of the Cambria County Conservation District, Justin Goodlin of Shade Creek Watershed Association, Matt Hughes, and Jim Weaver.

Makuchan/Eckenrode made a motion to accept the September meeting minutes as submitted. All in favor. Motion carried.

Eckenrode said SCRIP paid \$452.34 to host the Green Drinks. He said SCRIP has \$423.63 in its checking account, \$9,647.61 in its CFA account, and \$8,553.08 in its PA Invest for a grand total of \$18,624.32. Reckner presented a bill for postage and envelopes totaling \$39.63. Hutchinson/Makuchan made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills. All in favor. Motion carried.

### **Stonycreek River**

Lichvar said Oven Run site E is having major flow problems. There is a break in a pipe that carries the discharge down to the treatment system. They'll be sending a camera down the pipe.

The Jenners treatment system was built in 1997 and rehabilitated in the early 2000s, but it could use some TLC. Lichvar said, in cooperation with DEP, Rosebud will be enhancing the Jenners treatment system to work off a penalty.

Lichvar shared a picture of Oven Run site F (Hawk View) as it looked before the treatment system was built. Soil from SCWA's project in Gahagen will be moved to Oven Run F to further reclaim the site. The District may pursue a Growing Greener grant to enhance the wildlife habitat at this site.

Lichvar spoke of excessive iron in Shade Creek and Stonycreek this summer. He hypothesized that it was result of iron built up in low flow. Reckner said her inquiries suggest it came from the Cairnbrook drinking water treatment plant flushing their holding tanks.

Lichvar said a memorial was placed at the base of the fly-fishing only section along Clear Shade Creek to honor those who worked to protect this area.

### **Shade Creek**

Hutchinson introduced Justin Goodlin as VP of SCWA. Hutchinson said, on November 10, a Saint Francis University professor and student did macroinvertebrate surveys at 5 sites in the watershed. The Stream Team trained 7 Benscreek Canoe Club members as Stream Stewards

who will begin monitoring 21 sites throughout the Shade Creek Watershed, including 3 AMD systems. He accompanied DEP on a walk along Shade looking for discharges. He said volunteers are measuring the weirs on the Big 4 weekly. Hutchinson said the Coal Run / SGL 228 project will divert a portion of the stream into a treatment system. Reckner elaborated on an October sampling event that had teams acquiring flow and chemistry from about 4 dozen sites throughout the Dark Shade, Shade and Stonycreek River Watersheds. DEP will use the data for modeling purposes, similar to what they did on the Little Conemaugh, to justify spending money in this watershed.

### **Cambria Somerset Authority**

Vatavuk said the new boat launch at the Que Reservoir is just about done. He said CSA isn't going to fill up the reservoir just yet.

### **Little Conemaugh River**

Dryzal said the Saltlick Reservoir AMD treatment system isn't working, but DEP is investigating. An active system is still planned for the Portage area discharges. Trout Run Watershed Association is working with Saint Francis University to enhance the Puritan Discharge AMD Treatment System.

Gorden shared a Tribune-Democrat news article about Sandy Bottom Sportsmen's Club. The Conemaugh isn't a trout fishery, but that doesn't mean it's bad water.

### **Education Committee**

Makuchan said December 1 is the deadline for the next newsletter. SCRIP's \$500 student scholarship info will be in it.

Lichvar spoke of SCRIP's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary / Green Drinks and shared media coverage. It was a well-attended, nice event.

### **Events**

Gorden said he thought a lot of organizations are now offering kayaking instruction, so he thinks we shouldn't pursue it anymore. If anything, we should go with a Fishing Program. Lichvar said Amidea Daniel is now the PFBC's Youth and Women Fishing Program Coordinator.

Eckenrode pointed out that the Cambria County Conservation District recently secured funds to purchase kayaks. He thought maybe SCRIP could pay for a day of registration for a person to participate SKC Sojourn as an intro to the sport. SCRIP could partner with CCCD to do a float from Sandyvale to the West End. Gorden will contact PFBC about doing a Fishing Program. Eckenrode suggested expanding on an existing program. Maybe PFBC could share a map of the fish habitat structures and speak about them or perhaps MLTU could lead a fly-tying

workshop. An advanced fishing or fly fishing session could be offered. Reckner commented that MLTU hosts a free fly-fishing program in January and February. Eckenrode will pursue a float trip possibly in partnership with CVC or CCCD.

### **Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team**

Reckner said she is overseeing 9 Trout in the Classroom projects, 8 of which are in Cambria and Somerset Counties. Eggs were delivered 2 weeks ago. She commented that the DEP EE program changed its grant guidelines and funding for salaries has been cut to 35% of the grant request, so additional education grant opportunities must be sought for the 2017-2018 school year.

She said the Stream Team is currently monitoring 45 AMD treatment systems, 20 discharges that may soon be treated, and over 100 stream/river sites for a total of 261 monitoring points throughout the Kiski Basin.

Natural Biodiversity is now a program of Nature Abounds.

Loyalhanna Creek is up for River of the Year - please vote at [www.pariveroftheyear.org](http://www.pariveroftheyear.org).

Reckner has been assisting Sue Konvolinka with NatureWorks, the reincarnation of Wildlife Days. It will be held Saturday, March 4 from 10-2 at the Bottleworks. Conservation groups are invited to participate by setting up a display and engaging activity, particularly for youth. Reckner presented a sponsor letter for the event. Makuchan/Cotchen made a motion to sponsor NatureWorks at \$100. Reckner abstained. All in favor. Motion carried.

### **Website**

Gorden shared that SCRIP's website was most popular in March.

### **New Business**

Waligora gave a background on Geocaching and the Greater Johnstown / Cambria County GeoTrail. Geocaching is meant to draw people to an area of significance. The Visitor's Bureau has done little to no advertising (~\$500) and already they've distributed 300 passports and had 34-38 people complete the trail, which is not very easy. She noted that creating a trail is more labor intensive than just creating a few caches. Gorden said this would be a low-cost way to educate and engage citizens in conservation topics. There is a Johnstown/Altoona Geocache Club. Waligora said the costs lie in the coin (\$400 for 100 coins), though you don't have to distribute a coin, so the project could be done for under \$500. There is a small cost for containers and some manpower in upkeep. Sites need registered on Geocaching.com and must be at least 500' away from another geocache. Gorden will send his list to the board, which will add/subtract potential sites, and then he'll send it to Waligora for review and consideration for inclusion on their new trail, which should be unveiled in May.

Lichvar spoke of the Reclaim Act and suggested SCRIP write a letter in support of the Act to our representatives. Cotchen and Eckenrode spoke of their concerns. Since there was no consensus, no action was taken.

Eckenrode said the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies is apparently attaching profiles to accounts and inadvertently put money in another account by very easily changing the name on the account. He cautioned everyone to check their accounts closely.

**Next meeting**

Next meeting: January 11 at 9:30 AM at Gander Mountain

Meeting adjourned at 5:19 PM.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Minutes by Reckner.