

**SCRIP Meeting Minutes**  
**March 5, 2024 @ 3:00 p.m.**  
**The Fifth Alehouse, Johnstown, PA**

A SCRIP meeting, held on March 5, 2024 at The Fifth, was called to order at 3:12 p.m. The meeting was attended by SCRIP Board Members Adam Cotchen, Len Lichvar, Melissa Reckner, Jim Eckenrode, Joe Gorden, Larry Hutchinson, John Dryzal, Karlice Makuchan, and Dave Leiford. Malcolm Crittenden joined the meeting in progress.

The meeting was also attended by Sam Faith of the PA Department of Environmental Protection, Dina Cable, Nate Yingling, and Tyler Crooks of the PA Fish and Boat Commission, Dave Wright of Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited, Diana and Joe Baca of Oak Haven Farm, Pete Mishko a resident of Lake Stonycreek, John Wenzel of Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Henry Warner a student at St. Francis University, and Tom Varner. Pat Buchanan of Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited joined the meeting in progress.

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

**Treasurer's Report**

Eckenrode reminded that CCCD will be overseeing our SCRIP PA Invest account now. He said SCRIP has \$4,138.19 in its checking account.

**Guests**

D. Baca said she has a small, gourmet and functional mushroom farm near Blairsville and is developing ecologically sound practices for her waste. The mushrooms are still viable after she's used them, and the spent blocks could be used in AMD, e. coli, manure, hydrocarbon, etc. remediation. For example, strains of blue oysters "eat" black plastic bags. She is participating in a riparian buffer project using local fungi at an outdoor school, and she is looking for additional riparian buffer projects on which pre & post data could be collected to demonstrate how it works.

Mishko asked a question about funding and grants and who would be the most appropriate applicant. A brief discussion followed. He was advised to avoid creating a 501(c)3 and to instead find an established entity to serve as the pass-through.

**Partner Organizations**

***Center for Watershed Research and Service***

Eckenrode said their measurements class used the Conemaugh recently and might do some work in the L. Conemaugh this summer. He elaborated on work in watersheds outside of SCRIP's

area. They are doing some research with BioMost and Rare Earth Elements. He wants to look at effluents from batch style treatment systems.

### ***Conemaugh Valley Conservancy***

Wenzel said that they received a grant to build a bird viewing platform at Somerset Lake.

### ***Cambria Somerset Authority***

Lichvar reminded of an event on May 8-9, 2024 at Quemahoning Reservoir. Students from several schools will go through various educational stations. SCRIP is welcomed to set up a display table. Lichvar, Crittenden, Varner, and Leiford volunteered. **Anyone representing SCRIP at events at which children will be present need to have their clearances**, which may be obtained here: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Clearances/Pages/default.aspx>. There is no fee for either the child abuse or criminal history clearances for volunteers.

### ***Western PA Conservancy***

Cotchen said the South Fork Bens Creek Chuck and Chuckies project is funded with construction slated for 2025. They will do a large wood project in the Clear Shade Wild Area in September 2024. MLTU is fundraising for large wood projects in the North Fork Bens Creek and planning some Aquatic Organism Passages next year.

### ***Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited***

Wright said their banquet is March 23 at The Willow. Contact Gary Cooper at 266-4763 for tickets.

### **Stonycreek River Progress Report**

Lichvar said the Oven Run Trust Fund is up to \$55,488. They will be applying for bill monies to replace the Site E pipeline that carries the discharge to the treatment site.

The District may have an opportunity to talk with the owners of the Gondar discharge to discuss potential treatment of this discharge. They are exploring the possibility of removing coal refuse at Rock Tunnel with Ridge Energy. Greg Shustrick is looking at waste coal along Miller Run, too. Coal refuse will be removed near Oven Run Site F this year.

Lichvar shared that Wells Creek Watershed Association is still experiencing frustration with DEP as they seek help on the Cider Mill discharge. Faith said he spoke with WCWA's president and will start attending those meetings. The problem is that the Kimberly Run mine shut down, flooded, and started discharging in multiple places. Corsa submitted their first treatment plan, and DEP is reviewing it. They would like to see treatment construction this year.

Yingling said mandatory cold weather wear (PFD) is in effect from Nov 1 till April 30. PFBC said a Notice of Stocking is required now if you're stocking in any body of water. It's one form per year, and the form is available online. Cable said the form can be completed the day of the

stocking. She echoed the need for PFDs and said there was a boating fatality on February 16 on the Susquehanna.

### **Paint Creek**

Reckner said the annual litter cleanup along Berwick Road and Little Paint Creek should be Saturday, March 30, with volunteers meeting at 8:30 a.m. along Berwick. This and other local litter cleanup dates will be finalized at the MLTU meeting on Thursday. She anticipates getting another load of limestone sand delivered for Babcock this spring.

### **Shade Creek**

Hutchinson said the Cottagetown system is still working and that limestone sand was moved in on Shingle and Panther Runs. The SGL228 intake was cleaned and, after many years, SCWA received approval to install the new intake.

Hutchinson shared that Shade-Central City's TIC Release Day will be on May 9 and a kid's fish rodeo will be on May 11 adjacent the Reitz #1 system. An open house and tour to celebrate SCWA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary is planned for August 3.

He said SCWA received an R&D grant to study mine pools and their connectivity for the Big 5 discharges. Faith said MD31 data shows water quality trending in the right direction, but DEP wants a year's worth of data to ensure the chemistry stays below levels. Faith suggests speaking with OSM while John Stefanko is there before he retires (most likely this summer) as Stefanko was very involved with this issue.

### **Little Conemaugh Progress Report**

Dryzal said FPW received a grant from BAMR to complete a design for the L. Conemaugh active treatment plant, which will be a 18-24 month process. They are currently working to develop the RFP over the next month or two. FPW doesn't have a contract from BAMR yet. Leiford said that project has been 12+ years in the making.

Potential treatment of the Sulfur Creek discharge stalled. FPW was talking with Rosebud to see if they would take that ahead of schedule, but now Rosebud is pumping a little more to mine more and say they don't have the capacity. The District is talking with DEP about the Beaverdale discharges, which could be treated at the L. Conemaugh plant, but Dryzal said we need to remain mindful of stream flows in the South Fork Little Conemaugh.

### **Public Relations**

Makuchan said March 8 is the deadline for the next newsletter, and she invited submissions and save-the-dates. She reviewed what she has so far. **Action Item:** Send items to [knmak1019@gmail.com](mailto:knmak1019@gmail.com). She said June 7 is the deadline for next issue.

NatureWorks is this Saturday, March 9 from 10-2 at the Bottle Works. SCRIP (Makuchan and Hutchinson) will be making chalk colored with iron oxide. **Additional help from SCRIP**

directors and members is welcomed. Reckner said there will be twenty-five groups present and Smokey Bear!

### **New Business**

Reckner shared that Makuchan was chosen by the YWCA to receive their STEM award this year. Congratulations Karlice! Reckner/Eckenrode made a **MOTION** for SCRIP to sponsor two scholarship tickets at \$50 each and a ¼ page ad at \$100. All in favor. Motion carried.

Lichvar said the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies started an RJ Dawes Clean Water Fund and that Deb Nardone is the new Executive Director. SCRIP will invite her to a future meeting.

Lichvar shared a picture of John Dawes receiving an award at the Coldwater Heritage Conference.

Cotchen said he appreciated a presentation by Dave Anderson of the Connoquenessing Watershed Alliance who presented about a project on Thorn Creek where they are purchasing tagged adult trout, doing outreach, and asking fishermen to report catches to track fish movement. Cotchen pitched the idea to buy some tagged adult fish to put into the Stonycreek at WWP. Attendees were intrigued by the idea, but there was a debate over where in the Stonycreek these fish should go and how to get the word out to anglers. Signage could accompany the SCD's proposed Oven Run Trust Fund sign at WWP. Reckner said perhaps a graduate research project could be done using telemetry to track fish movement similar to the one Tom Clark and the Little Juniata Watershed was involved with through Juniata College.

Dryzal said local representatives are hosting open houses. Rigby is having one on March 7 from 10-11:30 a.m. in Windber. He said it's good to stop by and express how important conservation districts and conservation work are.

Mishko asked how to find engineers for a project on Stonycreek Lake. PACD is swamped. PA Trout Unlimited has technical assistance grants (TAG) that might help.

### **Next Meeting Date**

May 15, 2024 at 3 p.m. at Windber Hotel

Dryzak/Reckner made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 4:56 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes by Reckner.