

QUITTAPAHILLA WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom in consequence of the global pandemic
November 16, 2021

Present: Michael Schroeder, Karen Feather, Kent Crawford, Russ Collins, Bryan Hoffman, Joseph Connor

The meeting opened at 7:02 p.m.

- 1. Meeting Minutes.** The minutes of the Oct. 19 meeting were approved by consensus. Mike reported that he has posted five sets of meeting minutes over the past month after soliciting corrections from those who attended the regular monthly meetings of May, June, July, September, and October (the August meeting was canceled). He further reported that in the coming weeks he will attempt to complete the eight sets of outstanding minutes that remain (Sept.—Dec. 2020 and January—April 2021).

- 2. Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Update.** Mike reported that the Education & Outreach Action Team met on Mon. Nov. 15, attended by Julie Cheyney, Executive Director of the Lebanon County Planning Dept., Stephanie Harmon of the Lebanon County Conservation District, and himself. The meeting focused mainly on the PA-DEP Environmental Education Grant and developing ideas for an application. The ideas focused on removable signage for projects-in-progress, of a type similar to political yard signs that appear around election time each year. The fact sheet for the EE grant program is here:
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/EnvironmentalEducation/Grants/Pages/EE-Grants-Program-Fact-Sheet.aspx>. As noted on the EE Grants Program Manual linked from the above webpage (direct link:
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/EnvironmentalEducation/Grants/Pages/2022-EE-Grants-Program-Manual.aspx>), the deadline for grant applications is December 10. Julie agreed to begin developing a grant proposal for such signage. This was the only substantive update on the CAP.

- 3. Project Updates.** Russ provided updates on the following ongoing projects:
 - A. Hammer Creek.** Russ reported that the proposal for stream restoration on two properties in the Hammer Creek is moving forward, and that the US Fish & Wildlife Service will prepare and write the grant proposal.
 - B. Snitz Creek Projects 2, 3, and 4.** No updates.
 - C. Killinger Creek Project 5.** Russ reported that he has sent a letter to the Conservation Fund asking for the release of the approximately \$130,000 to Doc Fritchey Trout Unlimited (DFTU) for the permitting and design of the project. Rocky Powell of Clear Creeks Consulting (CCC) is the project manager.
 - D. Bachman Run.** Russ reported that the paperwork for this project was completed last week and that DFTU is waiting for the planning and permitting to be completed, in a project also being managed by CCC President Rocky Powell.

- E. Quittapahilla Mainstem downstream of Spruce St. in Annville.** Russ reported that the property owners on the south side of Quittie Creek just downstream of Spruce St. are interested in the installation of a riparian buffer as well as stream restoration along this approximately 700-linear-foot section, bordered on the north side by Quittie Creek Nature Park, and that conversations are ongoing with the property owners and Annville Township for stream restoration in this section of the Quittie mainstem.
- 4. Statewide Conference for Watershed Organizations.** Russ reported that he attended and made some good contacts at the Statewide Conference for Watershed Organizations at Penn State University in State College on November 7-8, where the focus was on watersheds and climate change, at which world renowned Penn State climatologist Michael Mann delivered the keynote address. Russ also reported that PennFuture held a webinar earlier in the day on COP26 and climate change, as reported on the PennFuture blog, at <https://www.pennfuture.org/Blog-Item-Connecting-Pennsylvania-with-COP26>. Russ was thanked for all his excellent work.
- 5. Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium Update.** Bryan reported that he was unable to attend the meeting of the Consortium earlier in the day and had no major updates. He did report on an item of considerable ongoing discussion among Consortium members: that the Consortium does not exist as a legal entity and has no legal authority or existence under PA law. This in turn raises a host of thorny legal issues and questions, including the question of what entity will accept bids, sign contracts, assume liability, and be responsible for the projects that the Consortium undertakes. This question of the Consortium's legal authority, or lack thereof, is among the biggest issues the Consortium is currently grappling with, and expects to be grappling with in 2022, with no consensus yet reached on a clear path forward on these issues.
- 6. Upcoming Watershed-Related Events.** In addition to the upcoming events noted in
- A. November 19-20.** Lancaster-Lebanon Watershed Forum and Science Symposium, Susquehanna and Swatara Rooms, Elizabethtown College. Partners conducting research, advancing science, and working to improve our local watersheds are invited to gather and share their work at this free two-day symposium at Elizabethtown College on November 19-20, 2021. This gathering seeks to foster collaboration among watershed scientists and practitioners working and interested in this high priority region for addressing impacts to watersheds. Day one will be a full day focus on science and research. Day two will be a half day focus on actions to enhance and support the watershed work of local watershed practitioners, volunteers, local governments, and community organizations. Registration is here: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=RY30fNs9iUOpwcEVUm61LofwYmL5KQNBg7expkr-VxpUMDZSQ1FESUIzRDdWT1RFQzI2OTFCU0NKSC4u>. Russ noted that he plans to attend this symposium.
- B. February 25-26, 2022.** Joint Meeting of the Keystone Coldwater Conference & the PA Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, on the theme, "Learning from the Past, Adapting for the Future," Feb. 25-26, 2022, at the Ramada Inn Conference Center in State College, PA, as described on the conference website, here:

<https://www.coldwaterconference.org/>. Russ noted that he plans to attend this conference as well.

7. Monitoring Program.

- A. Macroinvertebrate Sampling, Oct. 28 and Nov. 4.** Kent reported that he was very pleased with the success of the macroinvertebrate sampling efforts of the past two weeks at all six Quittapahilla Watershed sampling locations. On Thurs. Oct. 28, volunteers collected samples from Quittapahilla Creek at Palmyra-Bellegrove Rd. and from Killinger Creek on Killinger Rd. On Thurs. Nov. 4, samples were collected from Quittapahilla Creek at Garfield St.; Snitz Creek at Walnut St.; Beck Creek at Bricker Lane; and Bachman Run at Louser Rd. Volunteers followed written protocols almost to the letter, with six individual kick samples at each sampling site, and one-minute kicks for each sub-sample. Volunteers made an effort to sample all the microhabitats available. There was one notable deviation from the protocols: instead of the typical “kick” sample, volunteers used a garden rake and a potato hoe to disturb the bottom material at the four sites sampled on November 4. Kent felt that these instruments added to the team’s efficiency and allowed them to go deeper into the substrate for their collections. At one of the locations, they found an abundance of *Corbicula fluminea* shells (and a few live ones as well). Kent added the shells to the collection bottle. He reported that in retrospect he probably should not have done this. But, this sample (likely from Snitz Creek) may need to have the alcohol refreshed in order to make sure it is properly preserved. As in the past, the samples were notably poor in diversity and abundance. That was the case for the first 35 subsamples we collected. Their 36th and last subsample provided quite a surprise. They sampled a riffle on Bachman Run and came up with a multitude of organisms that seemed to be dominated by amphipods, presumably *Gammarus*. The volunteer team was great and consisted of Howard (Willie) Bixler, Stephan Vegoe, Gary Zelinske, Cindy Camp, Greg Silva, Sophia Rosenberg, Chad Weber, and Kent Crawford. Most of these individuals are members of the Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited and this activity continues a long tradition of TU support for environmental causes. Willie and Steve were there for all the sites and Willie transported the equipment and coordinated with you. They deserve extra thanks for their efforts. DFTU and QWA also express their thanks to LVC Biology professor Becky Urban and her students for supporting this exploration into the status of the Quittapahilla Creek and its tributaries. Their continuing support is greatly appreciated.
- B. Classroom Training on Water Quality Monitoring.** On Nov. 2, 2021, Kent delivered a nearly hour-long remote instructional seminar on Zoom to five attendees on the physics & hydrodynamics of streamflow and water quality monitoring. The seminar was recorded on Zoom and the recording is linked from the Monitoring page of the QWA website; the direct link and passcode are here: <https://lvc-edu.zoom.us/rec/share/VNQhT59OUyxqEwe5kxypk1eRd0LvsD4qMT9PXMj2UQJ-4GZWvk7CzNoTI Mgmzrj.dhi 09zMOTjMwFoL> Passcode: m!6+#EwR Kent reported that the next instructional seminar in the sequence will concern preparation of water samples, and that PA-DEP will help to coordinate that seminar, and will probably take place in January or February 2022.

8. Website updates. Mike reported that he is in the process of updating the Studies & Documents page of the website for ongoing projects in the watershed. The most complete example is Snitz Creek Project 2, which now includes links to 19 PDF documents on the project, from the summer 2016 fieldwork undertaken by field intern Sam Soliday up to the third quarter quarterly report of 2021. See <http://www.quittiecreek.org/documents.html>. Mike indicated that he will be doing the same for all ongoing projects, including Snitz Creek Projects 3 and 4; Beck Creek Project 6; Killinger Creek Project 5; the Bachman Run Bachman & Horst Properties Project; and others. He informed Russ and others that he would be in touch to make sure all relevant documents are properly archived on the QWA website.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Schroeder, Secretary Pro Tem