

## SCRIP Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2023 @ 4pm

Windber Hotel

A SCRIP meeting was held on January 19, 2023 at the Windber Hotel and called to order at 4:15 pm. The meeting was attended by SCRIP Board Members Tom Clark, Len Lichvar, Melissa Reckner, Joe Gorden, Dave Leiford, Malcolm Crittenden, and Karlice Makuchan. Adam Cotchen joined the meeting in progress.

The meeting was also attended by Jackie Ritko of the Cambria Co. Conservation District; Aaron Capouellez of PA Woods and Forests; Sam Faith and Dave Thomas from DEP District Mining Office; John Wenzel and Thad Pajak of Conemaugh Valley Conservancy; and Dave Wright of Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited.

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

### Secretary's Report

Reckner said SCRIP had 35 dues paying members in 2022 which generated \$1,365. Membership is down from previous years. Over the last 12 years, SCRIP has averaged 49 members a year. Membership is good for one year from the month a person joins. Reckner sends out renewal reminder postcards each quarter. She recently sent out 38 postcards to members from the last four years.

### Treasurer's Report

Via a text, Eckenrode reported that SCRIP has \$3,560.26 in its checking account and that he has no new info on SCRIP's SAC/CFA accounts. Reckner/Leiford made a **MOTION** to accept the report. All in favor. Motion carried.

### Election of Officers / Board

Clark announced that he is stepping down as chairman and from the board due to a new job that requires he not serve on any boards.

Reckner/Makuchan made a **MOTION** to accept Clark's resignation and to elect Cotchen as chairman and retain all other officers for another year. Cotchen grew up in the Stonycreek River watershed and lives in the area. He currently works for the Western PA Conservancy and is experienced and willing to take the role. All in favor. Motion carried.

Reckner/Gorden made a **MOTION** to bring Jeff Sarver of the Shade Creek Watershed Association onto the board. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Volunteer Opp:** SCRIP still has one vacancy to fill for the board.

## **Partner Organizations**

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

Gorden shared news that CSA received a grant from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies to install a handicap accessible kayak launch. SCWA also received a CFA grant for field equipment. Lichvar said Somerset Conservation District staff will be attending the next CSA meeting to discuss a couple projects.

### ***DEP***

Faith reported that iron in the Reitz #4 Firehall discharge is still trending down, but it's still not down to pre-affected levels, and it's hard to predict when that might happen. Faith and Thomas suggest SCWA or another appropriate entity applies for a development grant, then one for design, and then one for construction. A development grant can be used to hire a firm to determine what properties could be available for the system, pipeline ROWs, mine pools, etc., and it could be an incentive for DEP to continue funding this project.

Thomas said fine monies can't be put in trust funds as Crittenden suggested at the last meeting. Harrisburg wants the money. An appropriation from Harrisburg or the company is necessary to put money in a trust.

Capouellez said he has licenses and permits for drone work and herp surveys.

Faith said PBS acquired a centrifuge and is trying to use it to dry their treatment system sludge at Job 12 so they can dispose of it with the refuse. Thomas said DEP investigated, and the coal fines are coming from the railroad (Norfolk Southern), at least from what they saw. Coal cars can lose up to 1 ton of coal per car – and a car can hold about 130 tons – if it is not covered or crusted, and they are not required by law to cover them. Railroads are grandfathered on a lot and are not very cooperative businesses. Maybe the fines could be considered a Clean Streams violation.

Faith explained the Kimberly Run remediation plan and sulfate limitations, which vary from water supply to water supply. DEP would share info with WCWA if they asked; however, they've not been invited to a WCWA meeting. **Action item:** Reckner will relay this to WCWA.

## **Stonycreek River Progress Report**

Lichvar said the Oven Run trust fund is still under \$50K due to poor markets. MLTU gave a donation of \$1K. He said the Concert for Conservation funds haven't been received yet. **Action item:** Wenzel will follow up with Brad Clemenson.

Lichvar shared sampling data from Oven Run and Stonycreek sites by InnoH2O and showed that a significant positive improvement has occurred from the systems' restoration. **Action item:** Lichvar to email the results.

Lichvar submitted a video of the Oven Run rededication ceremony for a PACD video award. Waiting to hear.

Lichvar said Oven Run Site F has an overflow problem that the District is working to resolve. The District is working to abate the last discharge on Lambert's Run.

Gorden asked and DEP said the coal refuse pile in Tire Hill is being removed by Robindale Energy.

### **Paint Creek**

Clark elaborated on the Babcock Creek project, which is now complete except for water quality sampling.

Clark noted that the "Browns" – the first large impact to Paint Creek – is not currently listed as a Problem Area (P.A.) in the DEP's system, and so, until it is identified as an AMD feature site, it's not eligible for funding, so check your sites before you start an application. He said there is a process to get a site registered as a P.A. He is working with Mike Timcik on the Paint Creek site.

Ridge Energy removed Mine 42 refuse and is now looking at the Mine 35/36 refuse pile along Railroad Street. Some Title IV-V funds might be available for the Mine 37 pile.

**VOLUNTEER OPP:** Reckner said the annual litter cleanup in the L. Paint Creek watershed is slated for Saturday, April 29. Volunteers should meet at 8 AM along Berwick Road.

### **Little Conemaugh**

Ritko said the Cambria County Conservation District is working with FPW to get something going on Sulfur Creek and also remove refuse piles in headwaters of the South Fork L. Conemaugh. A discussion followed.

### **Public Relations**

**Action Item:** Makuchan reminded attendees that deadline for the next newsletter is March 9.

**VOLUNTEER OPP:** NatureWorks will be held Saturday, March 11 from 10 am – 2 pm at the

BottleWorks Ethnic Arts Center in Johnstown. This SCRIP-sponsored, free, family-oriented event is open to the public. Pre-pandemic, about 400 people attended. Makuchan and Larry Hutchinson will be leading SCRIP's activity of using iron oxide to make chalk while talking about AMD. Volunteers are welcomed to assist. Contact Makuchan to help that day.

Crittenden announced the formation of another non-profit organization focused on environmental education: PA Woods and Forests. Crittenden is on the board.

Crittenden said there is an informal coalition in Johnstown focused on outdoor recreation.

### **Shade Creek Progress Report**

BAMR has a list of entities they'll send projects to and there aren't many around here. One project is a reclaim near Seanor along Spruce Run and would include 1900 ft of stream channel replacement/coal refuse removal.

Cotchen said SCWA is working on a large application for some projects in the watershed.

### **Old Business**

In early November, Reckner mailed Senator Toomey a letter asking for his support of the STREAM Act on behalf of SCRIP as directed at the September meeting. SCRIP did not receive a response, but Reckner shared the generic response she received from her personal letter sent in September. It did not address the STREAM Act in any way. Wenzel said since Toomey didn't support the infrastructure bill itself, it would look weird if he supported the amendment. It's water under the bridge since the bill passed. Lichvar/Cotchen made a **MOTION** to write a letter to Casey saying thanks for getting the STREAM Act passed. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Action item:** Reckner will write this letter and send it to Lichvar to get it to Casey.

### **New Business**

Cotchen took over as Chairman of SCRIP and everyone thanked him for stepping up.

Lichvar said SCRIP sponsored a showing of the movie "Gasland" many years ago and noted that Cabot Oil and Gas is going to replace the residents of Dimock's water supply.

Cotchen said he will be presenting the Bens Creek Coldwater Heritage Plan results at the MLTU meeting on February 2 at 7 PM at the Richland Municipal Building.

Leiford thought it would be good to ask someone from BAMR to the next SCRIP meeting to discuss the Stonycreek and Little Conemaugh, STREAM Act, set-aside funds, etc. **Action item:**

Leiford will ask someone to attend. SCRIP could talk to Jon Smoyer about development funds for Shade and L. Conemaugh. The online application is hard to complete because it's not set up for development, but rather construction projects, and DEP is aware of these limitations.

**Next Meeting Date**

March 9 at 3 PM at Windber Hotel. **Action item:** Reckner will reserve the room.

Makuchan/Reckner made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 5:44 pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes by Reckner.