

SCRIP Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2026 @ 3:30 p.m.

The Windber Hotel

The January 8, 2026 meeting of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project was called to order by Chairman Adam Cotchen at The Windber Hotel at 3:38 PM. It was also attended by SCRIP Board Members Melissa Reckner, Karlice Makuchan, Len Lichvar, Jackie Ritko, Larry Hutchinson, Jim Eckenrode, Joe Gorden, Jeff Sarver, and Dave Leiford.

Other attendees were Dave Wright and Butch Kerchenske of Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited, WPCAMR volunteer Tom Grote, John Wenzel of Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Tyler Crooks and Dina Cable of PA Fish and Boat Commission, Dave Thomas, and Tom Piscitella of The Windber Hotel.

Introductions were made.

Sarver/Makuchan made a **MOTION** to approve the November meeting minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.

Reckner reported that in 2025, SCRIP had 40 dues pay members, which was down a bit from 44 in 2024, and membership generated \$1,600. She sends a postcard renewal reminder to members near their anniversary date. Contact her if you are unsure of your membership status.

Eckenrode reported that SCRIP has \$3,401.63 in its checking account.

Election of Officers

The floor was opened for nominations for Treasurer. Reckner nominated Robb Piper for Treasurer since he said he would do it. Hearing no other nominations, Cotchen closed the nominations. Cotchen opened nominations for Chairman, Vice-chairman, and Secretary. Hearing none, Cotchen suggested that we retain the people in these positions since they are willing to continue in those roles. Reckner/Leiford made a **MOTION** to retain Cotchen as Chairman, Lichvar as Vice-chairman, and Reckner as Secretary. All in favor. Motion carried. Eckenrode/Thomas made a **MOTION** to accept Piper as Treasurer. All in favor. Motion carried.

Who would the check signatories be moving forward? Right now, it's Eckenrode and Lichvar. It was decided to remove Eckenrode, retain Lichvar, and add Piper. Eckenrode will work with Piper and the bank for the transition.

Partner Organizations

Bottomlands Conservancy

Lichvar reminded that eight benches were added to Mallard's Rest AMD treatment system courtesy Alan Berkey. He said Bottomlands is still trying to get an agreement with the railroad by the Hawk View treatment system.

Center for Watershed Research and Service

Eckenrode said, by May, they'll have an Agri-Drain design alternative that focuses on flow.

Conemaugh Valley Conservancy

Wenzel said they submitted a Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape mini grant to create a website like DEP's to house macroinvertebrate data.

Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited

Wright said fly tying starts this Saturday and that a total of 20 people signed up. Wright reminded that MLTU's spring banquet will be at the Sunnehanna Country Club on March 28. Trout in the Classroom eggs arrive next week.

Paint Creek Regional Watershed Association

No report.

PA Fish and Boat Commission

Cable said she worked with fisheries and extended the trout stocked section on Stonycreek by Glessner Covered Bridge. Posted property has been an issue.

Crooks said there is potential for turning Stonycreek at Greenhouse Park into a trout stocked fishery.

Pheasants Forever

No report. They have a banquet coming up.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Cotchen said he is working to secure permits for the large wood additions on SGL 228. The PA Game Commission did the PNDI. He is also working on a permit for Stewarts Run, and WPC is doing a lot of aquatic organism passage work.

Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Grote shared a written report focused on the statewide AMR Conference. They need space for 200+ people and might move the conference away from State College.

Grote said EPCAMR and WPCAMR do a blog every Friday. Tune in or view past podcasts here: www.youtube.com/@epcamr/streams

Grote indicated that Senate Bill #2431 proposes to redirect 6.4% of AML funds to wildland fire suppression, which would amount to \$175 million. Leiford/Grote made a **MOTION** for SCRIP to send a letter ASAP to senators regarding this matter. All in favor. Motion carried. Cotchen will work with WPCAMR to craft that letter.

Stonycreek River Progress Report

Lichvar is no longer directly involved with the Oven Run Trust Fund, but said, in September, it had \$74,735.

Lichvar shared a draft of a letter he wrote on behalf of SCRIP to PFBC Commissioner Don Anderson requesting an update on the redistribution of fish in the Stonycreek River. Copies were distributed to review.

Shade Creek

Sarver said the Research and Development grant work is 90% done. They are securing landowner right of entry forms.

Sarver asked when the large wood project might start. Cotchen said it depends on permits and will share some potential dates.

Little Conemaugh River Progress Report

Ritko said they are waiting on DEP feedback about the Krayn project.

The design of the Little Conemaugh plant is 30% done.

Public Relations

Makuchan said the latest newsletter went out in December. **ACTION ITEM:** Please send articles and upcoming events to her for the next one by March 13.

Makuchan said she and Hutchinson will be at NatureWorks on March 14 and welcomed more help. **ACTION ITEM:** If you can help SCRIP at NatureWorks, please contact Makuchan. Reckner shared a NatureWorks poster for people to hang up in public spaces.

Old Business

Lichvar said the Boswell Historical Society event that commemorates Washington's crossing of Quemahoning Creek is slated for Sunday, June 28. He outlined some of the day's activities, including a concert that evening, and invited SCRIP to participate.

Grote said a pocket park is planned for a property next to the old Turillo's restaurant that was acquired by Jennerstown Area Recreation and Community Association. Dennison Road was Forbes Road.

Cotchen said, as discussed at a previous meeting, that he signed SCRIP up with the Healthy Waters Coalition.

New Business

Grote/Hutchinson made a **MOTION** to send the aforementioned drafted letter to Commissioner Don Anderson requesting an update on the status of the Stonycreek as a trout stocked fishery. All in favor. Motion carried.

John Gustkey, who works for the Greater Johnstown Water Authority, reached out to SCRIP as the Authority wants to improve waters that feed their reservoirs, specifically Dalton Run. Cotchen and Greg Shustrick have been in touch with Gustkey regarding projects that would benefit that work.

Reckner reviewed the Pennsylvania Master Naturalist program and said there are training opportunities in both Indiana and Somerset Counties this spring, while Cambria will host a training this fall. Reach out to her or Ritko for more details or visit www.pamasternaturalist.org.

Next Meeting

March 12, 2026 at Windber Hotel at 3:30 p.m.

Hutchinson made a motion to adjourn at 4:43 p.m.

Minutes kept by Reckner.