

SCRIP Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2025 @ 3:00 p.m.

Greenhouse Park

The May 15, 2025 meeting of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project was called to order by President Adam Cotchen at Greenhouse Park in Tire Hill at 3:12 PM. It was also attended by SCRIP Board Members Melissa Reckner, Karlice Makuchan, Len Lichvar, Larry Hutchinson, Dave Leiford, and Joe Gorden.

Other attendees were Dave Wright of Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited, Mike Maurer of Pheasants Forever, John Wenzel of Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, John Rucosky a SCRIP Member, Tom Clark of Kleinfelder, Wendy Noe and Sam Faith of PA Department of Environmental Protection, and WPCAMR volunteer Tom Grote.

Introductions were made.

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

Eckenrode reported via text that SCRIP has a few outstanding bills to pay and has \$4,317.21 in its checking account.

Partner Organizations

Cambria Somerset Authority

This week's rain had the Que running two feet over the spillway, but there was no cause for concern.

Conemaugh Valley Conservancy

Wenzel said the Weaver Run systems aren't working. Phil Wilson showed them how to flush the systems.

Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited

Wright said they had a good banquet and raised lots of money to fund upcoming projects. He said it's been a busy spring with litter cleanups and Trout in the Classroom Release Days.

Pheasants Forever

Maurer elaborated on sedimentation concerns along Laurel Mountain Road and headwater streams. Somerset Conservation District staff reviewed the site.

Western PA Conservancy

Cotchen said he had a bid meeting to show the South Fork Bens Creek "Lucky Chucky's" project and had three contractors attend. The DEP finally approved their permit. The project will begin at the end of June. Cotchen has been helping with TIC Days, too.

Lichvar asked that Bottomlands Conservancy be added to the agenda.

Stonycreek River Progress Report

Lichvar said the Oven Run Trust Fund sits at \$65,298.75.

Lichvar and Gorden explained the mine blow out that Joe Gorden found along Jerome Hill Road and shared photos of the site. DEP is going to use their emergency fund to seal that mine, so that doesn't happen again. Lichvar also said they replanted trees along Higgins Run. Piney Run will be addressed later this year, possibly the week of September 8. Lichvar said Dave Mankamy, who was a SCRIP board member years ago, passed away, and he shared a news article about Mr. Mankamy.

Shade Creek

Hutchinson said Shade had a TIC Day on May 6 and a kid's fish rodeo on May 10. The littlest girl caught the biggest fish! Saint Francis University collected macros, and there was more diversity, although it was late for mayflies. Hutchinson is collecting samples for SRI's treatment system Snapshot. The Watershed Association secured a \$5k grant from the Community Foundation that will help purchase equipment, in part for the big wood projects. Hutchinson helped MLTU with their litter cleanup in the Clear Shade Creek watershed on May 4. Clark added that a rendering is done for the Big 4 project. Kleinfelder sampled composite water from the Big 4 discharges and is awaiting results. Hutchinson said SGL228 is putting out good water, however, the last pond looks white, but it could be aluminum, but more likely it's calcite reforming. Testing will determine which it is.

Little Conemaugh River Progress Report

TetraTech won the bid for design of the L. Conemaugh treatment plant. Wehrum is running at some capacity. Wenzel said a power outage set treatment back, as the mine pool refilled and pushed water out the Three Sisters Discharge for a while.

Public Relations

Makuchan said June 6 is the deadline for the next newsletter, and she reviewed the articles she has to date. **ACTION ITEM:** Please send her upcoming event dates to include.

Lichvar said SCRIP was present at the PA Fish and Boat Commission's education days at the Que. Thanks to SCRIP Members Leiford, Maurer, Crittenden, and Lichvar for participating and educating 140+ students over the two-day event. Gorden said what a fantastic learning experience it was for students, who had the opportunity to canoe, fish, speak with biologists, discuss mine drainage issues, and construct and drop habitat structures in the reservoir. Mostly southern Somerset County schools participate.

Grote said the PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation conference will be held October 14-16 at Toftrees Resort in State College. Register and find details at <https://2025.treatminewater.com/>. Scholarships are available, and they are looking for presentations.

New Business

Lichvar's retiring from the Somerset Conservation District with tomorrow his last day. He received a round of applause, the most chocolatey cake ever, and thanks for all he's done for waterways, especially in Somerset County. He'll still be around and involved with various groups.

Next Meeting

Thursday, July 10, 3:00 PM at Greenhouse Park

Faith is retiring the end of June. Congratulations! Thanks to him for all his help these past few years.

Reckner made a motion to adjourn.

Minutes kept by Melissa Reckner.