



**West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition  
Meeting Report  
Tuesday, December 13, 2016**

**Opening** This meeting of the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition was called to order at 6:27 pm by Rachel Kester. The meeting was held in the upstairs conference room at the Clinton County Conservation District and was preceded by a holiday party.

**Present** The meeting was attended by: Rachel Kester, Amy Wolfe, Terry O'Connor, Art Rose, Kelly Williams, Mary Ann Bower, Joyce McKay, and Mick McKay.

**Information and Discussion Items**

- Item 1: Introductions: Those present introduced themselves and stated the group(s) they represent.
- Item 2: The minutes of the September 13, 2016 meeting were distributed and reviewed. No changes were noted.
- Item 3: Kelly Williams, Clearfield County Conservation District Watershed Specialist, gave a comprehensive update of the District's AMD restoration work in the Montgomery Run and Morgan Run watersheds.
- Item 4: Amy Wolfe, Trout Unlimited, gave a policy/legislative update. She shared a letter from the Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, stating that they are seeking input on project ideas to improve habitat below the Joseph Foster Sayers Dam. Amy will distribute the letter to WBSRC members who would like to provide input. It was suggested by several members that perhaps this could be used to get funding for work on Beech Creek. Amy will try to find out more specific information about what types of projects they are seeking. Amy also mentioned that SRBC is proposing updates to their application requirements for consumptive water use and surface water withdrawals that could potentially affect passive treatment systems. The language is very unclear and SRBC has indicated that they will try to clarify some of the language before the proposed rulemaking comes up for a vote in June. Public comments are due on January 8<sup>th</sup>, so Amy will try to schedule a conference call for the first week of January for anyone interested in providing comment. Amy also mentioned that although it has bipartisan support in the House, the RECLAIM Act was not passed as part of the continuing resolution, but it should be a topic of more discussion next year. Federal Good Samaritan language was added to the legislation at the last minute, and overall it looked good and would be modeled after PA's program. Amy also mentioned that the DEP has begun implementing projects with their pilot AMLER funding that was appropriated to the state last year. They haven't been very transparent with how they chose projects or how much the projects cost, etc., but PA is slated to get another \$17M next year. It remains to be seen how it will be spent. Finally, Amy noted that the AMD Set-Aside Guidelines were finalized on September 17. There was very little public input and overall there are some major issues with the guidelines including the way the treatability matrix ranks passive treatment systems based on concentrations and not loadings, as well as, asking engineering firms to put up performance bonds for passive treatment systems that are over \$400,000 and in the high risk category. However, the insurance industry doesn't even offer this type of coverage at this time.
- Item 5: Rachel Kester, Trout Unlimited, reminded the group of various upcoming grant opportunities. Anyone with grant information they would like to share can always send it to Rachel for inclusion on the WBSRC website. Also, the group was reminded that technical assistance grants are available year-round for AMD-related projects by contacting Rachel or Amy and completing a one page application. Amy also mentioned that TU is hoping to start a similar technical assistance program for habitat projects in the near future.
- Item 6: Watershed updates were provided by those present on behalf of the organization(s) that they represent.

The next meeting will be held on March 14, 2016 in Clinton County.