



**West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition
Meeting Report
Tuesday, March 8, 2011**

- Opening** This meeting of the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition was called to order at 6:40 pm by Rachel Kester. The meeting was held in the conference room at the Gray Office Building in Clearfield, PA.
- Present** The meeting was attended by: Tom Clark, John Potts, Murray Kohan, Bernie Barrett, Terry O'Connor, Ken Undercoffer, Kelly Williams, Rebecca Holler, Rachel Kester, Rebecca Dunlap, and Shawn Rummel.

Information and Discussion Items

- Item 1: Introductions: All meeting participants identified themselves and the group they were representing.
- Item 2: The minutes of the December 14th, 2010 meeting were distributed. No changes were needed.
- Item 3: Rebecca Holler, Trout Unlimited, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation about the future of the Growing Greener program and efforts by the Renew Growing Greener Coalition to suggest solutions that would ensure continued funding of important projects, including watershed restoration and AMD cleanup. Those seeking more information were encouraged to visit www.renewgrowinggreener.org and to consider signing a statement of support for the coalition.
- Item 4: Rebecca Dunlap, Trout Unlimited, gave a brief update on the progress of Amy's efforts to pursue federal Good Samaritan protection for abandoned coal mine cleanup. Amy has been working with TU national to set up a meeting with EPA headquarters in DC to discuss their take on the 4th Circuit Court of WV's ruling on the NPDES issue and try to come up with an administrative solution. There is a *slight* chance that a Good Sam amendment could be made to SMCRA through a bill that is making its way back into congress (bill focuses on allowing Title IV AML funds to be spent on non-coal, abandoned hard rock mine cleanup in uncertified states). The Nat'l Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs appears to be pursuing this solution. Some headway has been made in discussions with staff from Senator Mark Udall's (CO) office (lead legislative champion for federal Good Sam, although for abandoned hard rock mine cleanup) to "join forces" with the eastern coalfields and add abandoned coal to the definition of abandoned mines in future proposed Good Sam bills. Contact Amy at awolfe@tu.org with any questions.
- Item 5: Rachel Kester, Trout Unlimited, updated the group about upcoming grant deadlines. The group is reminded that all funding opportunities are posted on the WBSRC website at www.wbsrc.com/amdtech.html. Anyone wishing to submit a grant opportunity for the website should contact Rachel at rkester@tu.org.
- Item 6: Rachel Kester went over the list of Growing Greener grants that were awarded in January, noting that of the \$14.1 million awarded throughout the state, almost \$3 million (21%) was awarded for AMD projects in the West Branch. Several WBSRC members were awarded grants that will be used to cleanup mine drainage in the Clearfield Creek, Hartshorn Run, Kettle Creek, Montgomery Creek, Alder Run, Sterling Run and Moshannon Creek watersheds.
- Item 7: Shawn Rummel, Trout Unlimited, shared TU's summer field schedule with the group and explained the various projects that will be going on around the watershed. Becky Dunlap explained TU's involvement in PA Fish and Boat Commission's Unassessed Waters Program and encouraged members to submit TAG requests for streams that they would like to see surveyed for brook trout. Shawn also informed the group that TU is seeking a summer intern to assist with these efforts and asked them to forward the job description to interested students.

- Item 8: Rachel Kester spoke to the group about the development of a land protection program in the West Branch and asked members to contact her with ideas for properties that are important to brook trout conservation in AMD-impacted watersheds. She also spoke about the land protection work that Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is planning in Kettle Creek and Moshannon Creek and the first successful land protection project on the Burgwin Property in the Buck Run watershed. Anyone with land protection ideas should contact Rachel at rkester@tu.org.
- Item 9: Becky Dunlap gave an update on the status of the West Branch Recovery Benchmark project and told the group that she was having difficulties quantifying the effects of passive treatment on the recovery of the river. She encouraged member organizations to upload their passive treatment system data to Datashed at www.datashed.org.
- Item 10: "Round-the-watershed" updates were provided by those present on behalf of the organization(s) that they represent.

The next meeting will be held on June 14, 2011 in Lock Haven.