



**West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition
Meeting Report
Tuesday, September 13, 2011**

Tour Prior to the regularly scheduled meeting, a tour of the Long Run Diversion well was given by Kelly Williams of the Clearfield County Conservation District. The group was able to see the diversion well and how it improved Long Run.

Opening This meeting of the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition was called to order at 6:45 pm by Becky Dunlap. The meeting was held at the Gray Office Building, Clearfield PA

Present The meeting was attended by: Kelly Williams, Ann Donovan, Becky Dunlap, Rebecca Holler, Aaron Furgiuele, Amy Wolfe, Terry O'Connor, Rodger Thomas, Art Rose, Michele Kittell, Shawn Rummel, Ken Undercoffer, Bill Lawhead, Mick McKay, Joyce McKay, Buddy Thomas, Tom Clark, and Melinda Hughes-Wert.

Information and Discussion Items

- Item 1: Introductions: All meeting participants identified themselves and the group they were representing.
- Item 2: The minutes of the June 14th, 2010 meeting were distributed. It was noted that the amount of water returned to the Susquehanna River was not noted, and should be added to the minutes.
- Item 3: Rebecca Holler, Trout Unlimited spoke to the group about the upcoming 2012 West Branch Restoration Symposium. This year committees for the abstract selection, poster competition, and other planning are going to be formed. Members should look for an email where they can sign up for these positions. Each member is encouraged to take a role in the symposium and its planning.
- Item 4: Michele Kittell, Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education (PICE) then gave a presentation about PICE, and their Wildlife Leadership Academy. Michelle explained that each WLA is a year-long project that is kick started with a week-long intensive camp. This year two camps will be held: one focusing on Brook Trout and the other on White-Tailed Deer. These camps teach conservation, and biology of the organism, as well as leadership and communication skills. The campers then take on a year-long project that includes outreach and education events. WBRSC members have the opportunity to give donations to support students, and also to become mentors to local students. If a group knows of a student who is interested in the outdoors, shows good leadership potential, and may be interested in this opportunity they should have the student contact Michele at mkittell@piceweb.org. Groups can also contact Rebecca Holler or Rachel Kester if they are interested in supporting the field school.
- Item 5: Amy Wolfe, Trout Unlimited, informed the group that there is little to update on Growing Greener. Applications were accepted and once it is known which groups received grants and how much funding has been given, an update will be provided to the group. Amy also spoke about TU's role in advocating for Good Samaritan protection for organizations that are voluntarily undertaking AMD restoration projects. TU submitted a letter to the Good Samaritan hearing for the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources which will go on record. As of now, nothing has been decided. She also updated the group about Title IV funding. At the recent AMR conference it was mentioned that uncertified states may have to enter a competitive grants application for Title IV funding instead of being given the funds based on historic coal production. This could lead to changes for Pennsylvania's funding. Amy has been assured by TU's government affairs department that this is highly unlikely to pass, and funding will most likely remain the same for this year.
- Item 6: Rebecca Holler informed groups to visit the website for upcoming grants and reminded groups of TU's Technical Assistance Grants and AMD/Brook Trout Restoration Mini-Grants program. More information can be found at <http://www.wbsrc.com/amdtech.html>.

- Item 7: Becky Dunlap, Trout Unlimited, urged groups to support Renew Growing Greener. Many groups receive funding from these grants so it is important for this funding to continue. Groups will be receiving an email about this, or can visit <http://renewgrowinggreener.org/> to support this valuable cause.
- Item 8: Rebecca Holler gave the group an update on TU's education initiative, which includes hiring two interns to develop a week long curriculum for middle and high school teachers to use within their classrooms. These interns will then lead a workshop at the 2012 symposium for local teachers.
- Item 9: Becky Dunlap briefly spoke about the West Branch Recovery Benchmark Project. The report is finished and being printed. Hard copies will be available, and it is also available online for download at <http://www.wbsrc.org/benchmarkreport.html>. Becky thanked everyone for their time and input for this report.
- Item 10: Shawn Rummel, Trout Unlimited, spoke to the group about the use of DEP's Index of Biological Integrity (IBI) for acid-impaired streams. During the Benchmark Study it was observed that many streams with low pH readings and high acidity levels supported macroinvertebrates which were listed as pollution intolerant. This shows that the IBI does not appropriately show acid impairment.
- Item 11: "Round-the-table" watershed updates were provided by those present on behalf of the organization(s) that they represent.

The next meeting will be held at in Lock Haven on Tuesday, December 13, 2011.