



Spring Creek Watershed Association Meeting

September 16, 2014

7:30 AM to 9:30 AM

Patton Township Municipal Building
100 Patton Plaza, State College PA 16803

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Paul Bartley, Lori Davis, Ann Donovan, Bob Donaldson, Bob Eberhart, Barbara Fisher, Jim Gazza, Mark Garlicki, Jim May, Mike Schmidt, Bill Sharp, Jen Shuey, Judi Sittler, and Bob Vierck.

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. 7:35 AM to 8:30 AM: *Informal Science Learning: engaging the public in climate change education and discussions*

Janet Swim, Ph.D. – Department of Psychology Professor, Penn State University

The majority of Americans have feelings of either concern or cautiousness when it comes to climate change. However, regardless of these feelings people are still not talking about climate change. Collectively the group discussed reason why they feel people aren't talking and why people remain silent on the issue. Common reasons why people don't discuss the issue are because they are afraid of the audience's response and afraid of feeling stupid, or of audience disinterest.

Janet referred to this problem as the spiral of silence. The current "song" or reference to climate change is that it is either a crisis or a hoax, but there is a need to re-write the "song". The key is to start first with what people agree on, perhaps by connecting people to what they value like nature and getting people to feel they are a part of nature. Then there is a need to move forward by using metaphors that people understand. For example, a change from using the term greenhouse gases which people generally view greenhouses as good, to heat trapping gases. Lastly, there needs to be a change in the way people end the "song", emphasizing that individuals do have a role in climate change, and a need to get people to think at the community level.

Janet shared results from her research at informal science learning centers. Her results indicated that people who attended programs that educate individuals on how to engage others in climate change discussion were more likely to discuss climate change with others in comparison to individuals who did not attend these programs. Individuals who attended these programs discussed climate change with their colleagues and friends. However, there doesn't appear to be much discussion from the colleagues and friends to others in the community. The ultimate goal of the programs is to get those colleagues and friends to start spreading the word about climate change so discussions continue and the spiral of silence can be reversed.



3. 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM: Association Business

a. Spring Creek Family Festival discussion

Jen Shuey - The Spring Creek Festival in its previous iterations no longer exists because the volunteer planning committee is looking for alternatives to this event. Main reason for this being that the committee felt that they weren't seeing their return on personal investment.

Bob Donaldson – There has been a decline in attendance over the last several years. However, the festival has served as a way to disseminate information and for groups and individuals to pull together their commonalities.

Barb Fisher – Suggested whether a change in location would help the event, perhaps to Spring Creek Canyon.

Bob Donaldson – Commented that the past set up at the education center at Millbrook Marsh made it difficult to connect with everyone there.

Bill Sharp – Commented that the festival has been great in the past and that we would lose a piece of our roots by not doing it any longer. Suggested whether an committee should be formed to discuss whether there is still interest in having the festival.

Bob Donaldson – Suggested that an invitation be sent to the core groups: TU, ClearWater Conservancy, Spring Creek Watershed Commission, and Spring Creek Watershed Association to hold a meeting on the topic and discuss whether there is any interest in resurrecting the festival.

Judi Sittler – Agreed that she and Jen Shuey would work on the invitation.

b. College Township, Hilltop Rezoning discussion

Judi Sittler – College Township has rezoned the Hilltop Trailer Park off College Avenue to Gateway Commercial. There is concern on how development of that area will affect or have a role in the current stormwater issues along College Avenue. Proposed whether there was interest in developing a working group of individuals on the issue who could ultimately provide insight to a developer and the township.

Jim May – Proposed that it may be good for the Association to start out with a letter expressing their concerns, why they feel that it's critical that development of the area is handled the correct way, and their interest in being involved in the process.

Kevin Abbey - Sees this as an opportunity to reframe the conversation on how stormwater plans are developed. Once a land development plan is submitted, townships have a set time in which to respond. This would be an opportunity for the Association to get out ahead of the issue and make an offer to be involved in the conversation. The group should be able to talk about the science.

Jim May – Discussed the COG learning lunch that is being held in October title "What has stormwater done for you lately?" and one of the goals of the workshop being working on those silos that exist in stormwater management so that conversations can be reframed.



Jim Gazza – Asked what PADEP’s involvement was in this process. Aren’t there current regulations in place?

Bob Donaldson – Addressed the question by stating that the first plans prepared by the developer must meet Erosion and Sediment Control Plans for construction. Afterwards stormwater plans are submitted.

c. Partner Updates

Ann Donovan – CCCD just finished project in Penns Valley with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

Bob Vierck – Spring Creek TU has completed a planting and instream work at Fisherman’s Paradise, and are working on interpretive sign for the project. Spring Creek TU began work on parking lot at Rock Road. Ms. Judi Sittler was awarded the Doc Fritchey Award for Outstanding Coldwater Conservationist, Trout Unlimited Member. This award is given to the PA TU member that exemplifies the mission of TU. The Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited was also honored with the Edward Urbas Best Chapter Award given to the PA chapter that best exemplifies the work of Trout Unlimited.

Jen Shuey – George Harvey Spring Creek Heritage Award is being awarded to Jim McClure. The official announcement will be made by Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited and ClearWater Conservancy at the Spring Creek Watershed Commission meeting held on September 17th. On Sunday September 14th a bench at Fisherman’s Paradise was dedicated in memory of Tony Gerace. A group of 50+ people gathered in memory of Tony. ClearWater Conservancy has received a grant from the R.K. Mellon Foundation in support of its Riparian Buffer Program.

Barb Fisher – Shared an interesting piece she discovered while vacation out west. It is known as the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer Atlas. Barbara asked that everyone take a look at it <http://www.spokanecounty.org/WQMP/content.aspx?c=1811> and generate some ideas for the October meeting. The Spokane Valley Rathdrum Aquifer has a sole source aquifer designation given to it by the EPA.

Bill Sharp – An updated draft of the Centre County Sustainability Master Plan has been completed. Bill is currently working to coordinate PSU resources to develop a broader plan. Bill shared two documents on Penn Valley completed by Lyle Sherwin, with the PSU Center for Watershed Stewardship <http://water.psu.edu/cws/projects.htm>. The documents are aimed at enhancing the knowledge base for local watersheds. Bill announced that he has been appointed the College Township Parks and Recreation Committee and is in charge of overseeing both Thompson Woods and Millbrook Marsh.

Jim May – The CRPA is holding a peer to peer event on October 2nd. Six Planning Commissions are invited and a goal of the event is to get municipal planning commissions involved in discussing issues and why it’s important to think regionally. The COG Public Services and Environmental Committee will be hiring for an Energy



Resource Coordinator, a position in the Regional Planning Agency, to work on energy issues and planning.

Jim Gazza – Coca-Cola will be holding its Annual Sustainability meeting.

Mark Garlicki – Gannett Fleming will be working on its riparian site as part of the ClearWater Conservancy's Riparian Site Stewards Program.

4. Remaining Meetings

Judi moved to forgo having an educational speaker in October in order to devote the entire agenda to business. The group agreed with the suggestion. Please email Lori with any items you would like on the agenda.

John Lichman, Executive Director of the State College Borough Water Authority will be speaking at the November 18th meeting.

There is no meeting scheduled for December due to the holiday season.