

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
French Creek Steering Committee  
Meeting Notes  
May 22, 2001 – 12 P.M.  
Allegheny College, Meadville

Attendees: Todd Sampsell, Charles Bier – WPC; Brian Hill, Alice Sjolander, Zahavo Cheropovich – FCP; Marnee Gormley – USFWS; Sarah Galloway – Erie Co. Conservation District; Brian Pilarcik – Crawford Co. Conservation District; Dave Skellie – Erie Co. Dept. of Planning; Bob Anderson – USGS; Jeff Lang – Conneaut Lake/French Creek Valley Conservancy; John Holden – PA DEP; Cindy Smith – PA DOT; Jim Mondock – Mercer Co. Conservation District; Brian Zimmerman, Hank Lawrence – Edinboro University

Objectives: The purpose of this meeting was to develop specific recommendations to address perceived threats in the watershed. From those specific recommendations, the next step was to define and develop specific management options and action plans for organizations, municipalities, agencies, and others in the watershed to adopt and carry out.

The committee was also asked what else the plan needed to be effective.

Results: An excellent discussion ensued for approximately 3 hours. The committee did not achieve all objectives of the meeting so it was decided that a follow-up meeting was needed to continue these important discussions. A June 6, 2001 meeting was scheduled at Edinboro University.

The following is a summary of the thoughts discussed at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. For each threat, specific recommendations are listed.

#### Nutrients & Organic Wastes

- Address P in the watershed
- Collect nutrient data/nutrient budget
- BMP's with monitoring of results
  - o Ag
  - o Streambank fencing
  - o Riparian Restoration
- Better use of NMP's planning through Conservation Districts/NRCS
  - o Increase public awareness of program
- Public awareness of non-ag NPS
  - o Septic systems
  - o Lawn care
  - o CSO's (point source?)

- Establish program to assist homeowners in septic system evaluation
  - o PennVest
  - o HomeAssist
  - o Cons. Dist. Factsheets
- Rural electric newsletter used as educational outlet
- Franklin Township, Erie Co. model of septic system maintenance agreement
- Research to determine nutrient loads by sub-basin, prioritize
  - o Identify sources
- Education of fertilizer users on appropriate amounts @ point of sale
- Encourage soil tests
- Increase air quality monitoring stations

## Toxins

- Identify sources through sampling
- Look at DEP requirements that say minor discharges (< 100K gal/day) aren't monitored
- Make sure stored toxins are adequately buffered against spills
- Toxins not stored in floodplain
- Increase what toxins are required to be tested for by dischargers
- Determine total loadings for toxins in watershed discharges
- Use toxin info. To increase public awareness
- Promote recycling/proper disposal of toxins (batteries, pesticides, etc.)
- Look @ costs associated with comparing tissue/sediment toxin levels with discharge levels
- Education of public on usage of household hazardous wastes (pesticides)
- Get info. On abandoned well capping
- Determine impacts of abandoned wells
- Determine impacts of salt/brine application on roads (look @ permitting and regulation)
- Determine impacts of releases of toxins and nutrients from hatcheries

## Suspended solids

### (Ag related)

- Determine sources and deposition contributed by sub-basins
- Collect baseline info. On streambed conditions
- Need macro info. From non-riffle areas
- Research to increase understanding of fluvial geomorphology
- Promote stormwater management planning to address erosion/runoff from urban areas
- Promote no-till farming, organic methods

### (Forestry)

- Promote BMP's for timbering
- Promote conservation easements for timbering

- Education for loggers and woodlot owners
- Develop watershed-wide forest owner cooperatives
- State forest practices act
- Clearinghouse of info. On watershed timberers
- Promote forest certification (Sustainable forestry initiative)
- Promote reforestation
  - o Proper locations (soil, waterways)
  - o Consider economics
  - o Tax forgiveness for forested areas
  - o Modify tax code for forest landowners
- landowner education on reputable foresters

#### (Roads & Construction)

- Gain support for stormwater management plans
- Promote urban BMP's in construction
- Promote conservation easements
- Oil grit separators
- Construction BMP's
- Education on proper construction & urban BMP's
- Promote dirt and gravel road program
- Prioritize municipalities based on impacts for dirt & gravel road program
- Increase capacity to monitor E&S from construction projects

#### (Sand & Gravel mining)

- Promote conservation easements
- Promote natural vegetative buffers
- Identify native species and promote for planting (reclamation)
- Increase bond amounts
  
- No more dams
  
- Look at removal of all small dams
- Research impacts of dams on FC communities
  - o Consider alternatives for Union City dam

#### Invasive Species

- Identify initial invasions and address
- Education for landowners on identification
- Support landowners for removal
- Expand current control programs (i.e. Mike Zoeller, hogweed)
- Education for landowners, nurseries
- Organize volunteers for removal
- Annual volunteer inventory of watershed
- Prioritize threats by species, sites, impacts, activities
- Zebra mussel education (Goby & all invasives)

- Increase monitoring for invasives (lakes, streams)
- Work with baitshops on education
- Review PFBC regulations on baitfish sales
- Develop list of acceptable baitfish for watershed (ecotourism)

What else???

- Prioritize projects

- establish timeframes
- establish targeted audience
- agency/organization resource list (including small watershed groups)
- Bib
- Timeframe
- Specific pain for review of plan
- ID key parties for project adoption
- Executive summaries tailored to specific groups (farmers, municipal officials, etc.)