

Minutes from 7-31-2019 Strategy Meeting

Rachel Kester, Eric Rosengrant, Eric Skrivseth and Kelly Williams met at 5:30 pm on Wednesday 7/31 at RJ's in Philipsburg to strategize and make some decisions about how to advance the new watershed group. The issues discussed are listed below along with the conclusions we made.

1. We all agreed that we were ok with the name of the new organization being the Moshannon Creek Watershed Association. This name allows us to use the internet domain that the MCWC used and gave up, moshannoncreek.org, and Eric Skrivseth purchased this internet domain.
2. We discussed how to handle donations to the new organization before we are incorporated. Before we are incorporated, have bylaws and elected officers and get a tax id number, we cannot open a bank account. We decided to handle donations to the MCWA through the Clearfield County Conservation District.
3. Related to #2, we discussed how to solicit members for 2019 when we could not deposit checks for dues. We decided to make memberships free in 2019 and start charging dues after we are incorporated in 2020.
4. After resolving questions 2 and 3, we could proceed with building the website. Eric Skrivseth (initials NES) started the build the website the following weekend and it is now live. Eric Rosengrant (initials EMR) and Rachel Kester both said they probably could send some photos from archival data they have, and have begun to do so, and Justin Kozak sent two photos that he found a few days later.
5. We will tie in the website to social media after the website is built out enough that routing people to it will give them something worthwhile to look at. We are about at that point and will probably start trying to tie the website to a Facebook presence in the next few days (comment written by NES on 8/08).
6. We discussed holding informational meetings this Fall in the watershed. Maybe in October? We might be able to hold one meeting at the PA DEP in Philipsburg. When we start having regular meetings in 2020, we will have to have a different location for them. The MCWC met at the Rush Township offices which are just outside of Philipsburg, and this may be an option when we get to that point, but this question isn't resolved as of 8/08.
7. We discussed press releases and what they should say and whether they should point people to the website or to the informational meeting in October (?). We discussed a lot of possible places to send press releases. EMR subsequently sent an e-mail list of many of the news outlets we discussed, with additional contact information, and added to the list. We don't lack for places to tell that we exist. Press releases will probably be a project for NES after the social media tie in is begun.
8. One frustration that led to the demise of the MCWC was their feeling that they weren't getting a lot accomplished. We have been discussing whether we should adopt some treatment systems to monitor and maintain so that we start the organization with something tangible and helpful to do for the water in MC. EMR created a spreadsheet listing the treatment systems in the watershed that he shared with the four at this meeting and Justin Kozak on 8/08. The Wood Duck Chapter of Trout Unlimited built a string of treatment systems along Cold Stream that were orphaned when that chapter disbanded. They don't seem to have had a lot of maintenance for a while before that. They were evaluated by Trout Unlimited in 2014 and they

need a lot of work and more treatment is necessary to effectively clean the water in the diversion ditch that enters Cold Stream below the dam outside of Philipsburg. Currently this water visibly degrades Cold Stream when it enters it. Much more to discuss on this topic.

9. We also discussed the Emigh Run/Lakeside Watershed Association and whether they are still active. They built a couple of systems in the Emigh Run watershed and on Hubler Run that is outside of the Moshannon Creek watershed. NES did some investigating and this group is still legally in existence. Its long term leader is still in charge of the group, although she may be having some health challenges and is difficult to contact. We are still trying to determine how active the group is in maintaining the systems it has built and whether they need help with that or maybe they could help us get started. More to research here.
10. We discussed using the MCWC signs that were built through grants and donations of various sorts. NES confirmed that the sign outside of Osceola Mills is still standing. NES looked for the sign on Hwy 53 and without really knowing where it is supposed to be and has not found it, so it isn't confirmed that the Hwy 53 sign still is standing. Rachel Kester discussed these signs with Mike Malicki, one of the last members of the MCWC, and he knows that we are interested in using them. NES has communicated with Mike via e-mail and invited him to attend our strategy meeting but, unfortunately, he was unable to do so. Rachel suggested we contact the landowners for the land where the signs are standing and obtain their permission to use them.
11. We discussed that fact that the first business meeting for the MCWA would need to have by-laws and an officer slate to vote on, so we would need to have them ready for this meeting, which would presumably be in January. We will start sharing those on Google Docs although we could probably wait until we have a few more members to do that.
12. We discussed start up fund grant opportunities and most seem to need the group to already be incorporated and a 501C3 before they can apply.
13. We briefly discussed possible attorneys who could help with incorporation and later landowner legal issues but did not get far with that topic. EMR had one idea but they were moving out of the area.
14. We had a brainstorming session where we discussed people and groups to contact and have a list about two pages long from that discussion. Starting to contact them will be a project for the next few weeks. There's a mix of businesses, individuals, and outdoors organizations on this list.
15. We discussed the fact that we should work on more issues than mine water, including protecting the healthy parts of the watershed and on issues like improving recreational access like the boat launching areas that the canoeists and kayakers use.
16. We discussed the need for board member insurance and the Pennsylvania Organization for Water and Rivers has discounted insurance available that we should investigate at some point when we actually have officers and have some money.
17. EMR had to leave for other obligations. NES, Rachel and Kelly spoke for a while about the Cold Stream diversion ditch and the treatment systems and discharges that drain into it. NES asked whether limestone sand had been used to introduce alkalinity into flowing water bodies in this region. Rachel was skeptical since this process involved adding sediment to the stream. We did discuss that the diversion ditch is not an actual stream, it is a man-made diversion of aggregated AMD discharges and it is already dead, so the sediment, if limited to the ditch, would not kill anything. Access to it is easy. This is a topic for further discussion.