**Conewago Creek Initiative
Non-Ag Program Meeting**

**November 23, 2010**

**Hershey Public Library**

 **Minutes**

**Attending:**

Matt Royer, PSU
Shirley Clark, PSU Hbg
Harry Campbell, CBF
Shelly Dehoff, Lanc CCD
Sallie Gregory, Lanc CCD
Stephanie Harmon, Leb CCD
Jeremy Zidek, ZedX
Mary Gattis, LCPC
Matt Kofroth, Lanc CCD
Karl Kerchner, Leb CCD
Rugh Henderson, S Lond Twp
Casey Kraus, Mt Joy Twp
Dick Brown, S Lond Twp EAC
Jennifer Fetter, PSU
Mike Hubler, PSU
Kelleann Foster, PSU
Kristen Saacke Blunk, PSU
Kathy Brasier, PSU
Diane Espy, WPSU

The first meeting of interested partners to discuss the development of a nonag program in the Conewago to accompany the existing agricultural program was held. Matt, with input from many, had developed a 3-page scope of project for folks to consider, and used this to kick start the discussion.

Focus of meeting was largely education and outreach, and a brainstorm of many good ideas for the program, as follows:

**Perception of Public, Messages and Tools**

We will need to change the perception with the homeowner/nonfarming resident that the problem is agriculture. Everyone must play a role, and we have offerings/services for everyone and are interested in working with everyone. Message must be everyone has a piece of this, everyone must do their fair share. Is there an educational piece that sends this message?

Economics is a big part of the message. How can green infrastructure save you money? Drinking water costs, lawn fertilizer savings, water bills (rain barrels) etc. Consider partnering with Water Authority to get the word out there via bill inserts.

Municipal newsletters are another good outreach tool. Press releases to municipalities, newspapers.

Do a series of stories in advance of program. A website can provide further information and allow for community input. Community input will also be coming when landowner surveys are sent out.

Passive community members without regulatory obligations, without “kids” hook: need something to get them engaged and enthused. Work with Council of Churches, service organizations like Lions Club, Rotary, Scouts, Fire Companies (work with them to develop a plan for water sources from farms). One active church council is the Interfaith Council of Harrisburg.

Powerful visual: Raining in Lititz Run=clear water. Raining on other local stream=muddy water. Capture on video as a powerful messaging tool.

We are doing outreach, but are we reaching everyone? Be deliberate in your message and strategy for getting it out.

**Replicability**

There are 13 municipalities in the heart of Lancaster County interested in doing a stormwater collaborative. Development of MS4 protocols is also part of Consortium grant proposal. So there is municipal interest in working together out there.

How do you replicate this, particularly as you work on only one watershed and with individual landowners. The process is very key in terms of replicability. Also, keep eye on the long term goals and successes.

**Regulatory Issues**

Need to outreach to developers too. State regs are not staying up with the federal regs on stormwater. Need to be on top of changes in the state and federal regs, BMP Manual etc.

Need to set realistic goals (can’t commit to removing stream from impaired waters list in 3 years).

**Ideas for Program Offerings**

Need to concentrate on practices that work, and look to replicate effective practices. (Rain gardens)

Need to develop tools for municipalities so they can handle growth and changes to stormwater management regulations.

Consider development of a watershed stewardship curriculum in schools that would be watershed specific.

Many guides, tools out there. Pull existing guides together and tweak to customize. Perhaps develop a SC PA template to which you can add photos, maps etc. to make watershed/community specific. Adapt pieces that are already there and package them so they work locally.

Nutrient trading could create opportunity for offsets in sw context. Proposed new development in Lond. Twp. as a pilot? To make trading work, need aggregator. Other self funding mechanisms include authorities concept. Potential for sustained funding adds to replicability.

Implementing pilots: Work with landowners where you will have successful pilots, then open it up to community to see where these projects should go.

Consider discount to local tree nursery as incentive for completing landowner survey. Ask in survey, what would you be willing to do? Offer incentives/discounts to those who are willing to implement practices.

ID some sites for BMP designs—work with Kelleann and Shirley and their students. Consider conservation planning for homeowners in a workshop setting.

**Next Meeting**

Matt will send doodle out to everyone to schedule next meeting. Focus of next meeting will be the what, who, and how (what we will do, who will take the lead, how do we make it happen).