**Conewago Project Advisory Team Meeting**

**May 17, 2011, 9:45 am to 12:15 pm
Dauphin County Agriculture and Natural Resources Center**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:**

Matt Royer, PSU
Mark Chegwidden, Leb CCD
Mike Hubler, DCCD
Jeremy Zidek, ZedX
Justin Kauffman, PSU
Steve Taglang, DEP
Mark Dubin, CBP/U Md
Rugh Henderson, S. Londonderry Twp.
Susan Marquart, USDA NRCS
Kelly O’Neill, CBF

1. **Project Coordinator Update**

June 22 event: Sustainable Cropping Systems field day at Ag Progress Days. Conewago Initiative is sponsoring a van for farmers from the watershed who want to attend.

Rick Day is interested in doing a PA One Stop workshop in the Conewago. Matt to work with him on this.

We will be presenting “Anatomy of a Conservation Partnership” (the Conewago Initiative story) at the annual Soil and Water Conservation International Conference in DC on Monday, July 18. Great opportunity to spread the word. Also will have a poster session for Conservation Districts.

TCCCA is sponsoring a landscape architect to speak on native plants at Mt. Gretna Chautauqua on August 4. Matt to work with partners to make this a larger event (i.e. a “watershed expo”)

1. **Work Team Updates**

**BMP Team Report.** BMP Team met on April 29. Discussed RC&D CREP buffer field workshop. Workshop now set for the week of July 25 at Wenger CREP buffer. Discussed forest stewardship—NRCS to offer a workshop this summer. Dairy Discussion Group: discussed how to continue these discussions now that Sarah is gone. Team recommending continuing discussions with milkhouse sessions. Mike Hulber working on compiling list of BMPs installed to date in Conewago.

**Environmental Markets Team Report.** Last meeting was in April, where use of the PEACCE program was discussed. Discussion was had at PAT regarding what it would take for farmers to participate. Comments were made that providing certainty of compliance was key. Need to have legislation to provide that certainty.

**Monitoring Team Report.** Team met May 12 and discussed budget for monitoring plan. Also discussed short term indicators. Fish sampling could be done as a public event. Wildlife habitat could be good indicator (American Bittern seen at Dick Brown property). Question as to whether birds provide a short term response. Need to link the subjective monitoring to the objective monitoring.

1. **Partner Updates**

Mike Hubler (DCCD). District continues planning and BMP implementation work. Most of the funding for BMPs is committed and spent.

Mark Chegwidden (Leb CCD). Working on several BMP implementation projects in watershed. SWAT funding for technicians will allow Leb CCD to hire a new technician. Will be available to work on Farm Bill projects in Conewago.

Jeremy Zidek (ZedX). Working on embedding model systems into a larger network.

Steve Taglang (DEP). Bay grants on agenda at SCC meeting this afternoon. SWAT agreements for all three counties. State budget looms, don’t expect big cuts to Bay program this time around.

Mark Dubin (CBP/U Md). Involved in Phase II outreach; tracking practices; discussion of data management. Non-cost share practices—NACD has subcontractor and is working on this. Set up a protocol for tracking—this is moving forward. Other showcases: Upper Chester (MD) starting to get some good traction. Started with landowner meetings, assessments. Doing farm visits now. Developed some excellent worksheets. Smith Creek (VA) much larger watershed. A lot of beef cattle, large acre farms. SWAT to add more staff. Bay Program will hold some workshops to introduce some of the modeling capabilities at a more local level (MAST, CAST)

Rugh Henderson (S. Lond Twp). EAC is moving along. Planning a historical tour of Colebrook. History of the Conewago intertwined with history of Colebrook.

Susan Marquart, NRCS. Working with Mike Hubler to compile list of BMPs installed to date. NRCS money is obligated for this fiscal year.

Kelly O’Neill, CBF. Lamonte Garber and David Wise conducting a lot of outreach on buffer bonus. CBF has dairy manure analysis vouchers they can provide if needed.