**Conewago Project Advisory Team Meeting**

**February 21, 2012 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

**Penn State Harrisburg
Room 203, Educational Activities Building
777 West Harrisburg Pike
Middletown, PA 17057**

**Minutes**

**Attending:**

Jeremy Zidek (ZedX)
Kristen Saacke Blunk (Penn State)
Dawn Hintz (SRBC)
Stephanie Butler (Leb CCD)
Chuck Wertz (Leb CCD)
Rugh Henderson (S Lond Twp)
Jineen Boyle (DEP)
Mike Skelly (Etown Water Authority)
Tony Buda (USDA ARS)
Lamonte Garber (CBF)
Carl Rohr (DEP)

**Via Adobe Connect:**

Kathy Brasier (Penn State)
Tom McCarty (Penn State)
Susan Marquart (NRCS)
Kathleen Wood (Penn State)

1. **“From the Conewago” Webinar Presentation (12:00 to 12:50)**

Conewago Wet Soils Survey

*Patrick Drohan, Penn State University*

*Tony Buda, USDA-ARS*

1. **PAT Business Meeting (1:00 to 3:00)**

	1. **Coordinator’s Update**

We have received a one year no cost extension on the NFWF grant. New deadline is 4/30/13. We will be using the Project Incentives money (total of $108,300) to fund priority BMPs in watershed where existing program/funding gaps exist. These include stormwater BMPs, equine BMPs, manure analysis and soil testing where needed to develop MMPs.

Kathy Brasier and her graduate student, Kathleen Wood, will be looking to conduct some interviews of Initiative partners, in order to assess the successes and challenges of the partnership approach. This work will seek to determine where we need to go next with the partnership, what has worked well, what needs to be done better etc. This can inform our approach as we look beyond the NFWF grant.

Conewago newsletter will be going out by the end of the week. Please email Matt with article ideas/submissions.

Matt will be advertising for an assistant project coordinator position and has been conducting summer intern interviews.

Nate Straw and Lia Schmittel, Penn State Extension interns, will be organizing a spring planting volunteer event in the watershed.

Spring outreach schedule includes the annual Earth Day Celebration in April at Aberdeen Mills.

* 1. **Winter Farmers Meeting Debrief**

Held at Hoss’s in Etown. Over 50 attended, over 30 of them Conewago farmers. Presentations were given on manure incorporation (Pete Kleinman), pasture management (Jerry Martin), buffers (Dave Wise), Nitrogen Management for Crops (Doug Beegle, Barry Frantz, Jim Baird). The Subsurfer was parked in the lot for farmers to check out. Event provided a great venue for conservation professionals to mingle and talk with farmers.

* 1. **Work Team Updates**

**BMP Team.** Winter farmers meeting planned and held. Team also discussed and began planning Manure Management Manual sessions and workshops and Equine BMP workshop.

**Monitoring Team.** Team discussed 2012 planned monitoring. Macros will be sampled this spring. Fish survey also planned for June. Team also continued discussions of short term monitoring plan—essentially a habitat assessment protocol for landowners.

**Stewardship Development Team.** The team discussed us of the landowner survey and the report being prepared. Agreed we are looking for the survey to guide targeted outreach and hone our message, as well as identifying top barriers and how to overcome them.

**Environmental Markets Team.** Did not meet, but Kristen Saacke Blunk reported that she has some generic ecosystem services materials that she is working to customize for the Conewago. She will provide them at the next team meeting for comment and to move forward a plan of action.

* 1. **Partner Updates**

Penn State (Kristen Saacke Blunk). Today’s webinar broadcast was attempt to get word out on innovative practices and tools we are using in the Conewago. PAT feedback is that this is a good idea.

ZedX (Jeremy Zidek). Hopes to demo the tool in April. Ready to go with the model, it has been integrated into tool. Still gathering data on management practices, especially urban is still needed. Matt to provide Tetra Tech data.

SRBC (Dawn Hintz). Working with Etown Regional Water Authority to develop Source Water Protection Plan. Should be completed in June.

Leb CCD (Stephanie Butler, Chuck Wertz). Working with several landowners to update conservation plans and implement BMPs. Two Conewago farmers going through farmland preservation program. Sustainable landscapes tour will include a Conewago farm.

DEP (Carl Rohr). Working with TCCCA on 319 grants—finish Hershey Meadows work; assessing Hoffer Creek work. Awarded new grant to DCCD for ag BMPs.

NRCS (Mike Snyder) $500,000 available in Conewago. 12 applications working through right now.

S Lond Twp (Rugh Henderson). Need to continue to meet the challenge of communicating all of this exciting stuff (ex. Stormwater BMP program—can we get the word out, can we get it going?)

DEP (Jineen Boyle). Working with Dauphin County on some possible Growing Greener dollars to do restoration on Lynch Run.

CBF (Lamonte Garber). Ashley Spotts met with a Conewago landowner interested in CREP. Several Stroud trainings and events with Bern Sweeney coming up, including meetings in Lancaster County on 2/28 and 2/29 and a Stroud training on 3/28.

USDA ARS (Tony Buda). The “Upper Chesapeake” chosen as a Long Term Research Network. Includes Conewago as representative of the Piedmont (Spring Creek, Anderson Run also included). This will mean more funding toward partnership, research, infrastructure toward monitoring etc.