**Stewardship Development Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Friday December 7, 2012-10:00 AM**

Matt Royer, PSU

Kristen Kyler, PSU

Jenn Fetter, PSU

Mike Hubler, Dauphin CCD

Rugh Henderson, South Londonderry TWP

**Landowner Survey**

A summary of the landowner survey report has been developed. This will be sent to interested survey participants to inform them of the results of the survey. It can also be utilized as an outreach tool to municipalities and others.

From the full Landowner Survey Report an outreach strategy was developed that identifies what messages still need to be shared with the community, how these messages should be delivered, and what organizations should tackle the outreach efforts. Many of the strategies identified are ones the Initiative has already been working to achieve. But this outreach strategy will help guide the Initiative when making further educational decisions about the watershed.

Both of these documents were discussed and commented on during the meeting

**Winter Farmer’s Meeting**

Based on the Outreach Strategy, a Winter Farmer’s meeting will be held again this year to help communicate with watershed farmers. The team identified this as a way to educate farmers on riparian buffers and no-till. These are two core practices that were identified in the landowner Survey as still needing to be implemented by many farmers in the watershed. A No-Till Survey was also conducted recently and magnified the need to educate the benefits of no-till because the results of this survey showed that far fewer fields are being planted using no-till methods than originally thought.

Additional planning for this meeting will be done during the upcoming BMP team meeting.

**Municipal Toolbox**

An update was given on the status of the Municipal Toolbox. This product breaks down almost 30 conservation practices that can be utilized by municipalities in the watershed into involvement tiers. The lowest tier requires little effort to implement while the 3rd tier takes the practice above and beyond expectations. The toolbox, when complete, can be an easy way to engage the local municipalities and encourage them to take conservation action. The toolbox can be customized for each municipality and a plan developed to guide them in the process. The idea was well received by the group and a goal was established to finish the document this winter. Rugh volunteered to develop a recommended strategy for municipalities to follow when implementing the toolbox.

**Watershed Signs**

The team is working to install watershed boundary signs on the boundary of the watershed along major roadways. Half of the needed municipalities have agreed to help coordinate with Penn Dot to get this accomplished. Kristen will continue to reach out to the municipalities that we have not heard back from yet.

**Additional Outreach Strategies**

Matt and Kristen will aim to do some door-to-door outreach after the holidays to promote the stormwater incentives program and riparian buffers on non-ag lands. It was suggested that a targeted list be developed ahead of time through input from township district managers who might have an idea of which citizens would be willing to participate. Asking landowners who else might be interested and whether any kids would be interested in forming a stream team will be two questions that need to be asked.

The monitoring team is working to establish some citizen monitoring and informational stations along the rail-trail system in the watershed to take advantage of this much used local resource. It was suggested that additional, non-monitoring information stations could also be established. One example of this would be a sign describing the USGS gage station and what it is being used for.

Kristen and the summer interns worked and are continuing to work on developing BMP factsheets and voiceover powerpoint presentations that explain what each BMP is, its benefits, and who landowners can contact to get started implementing it on their own farm. A full webpage will be designated for each BMP and incorporated into the Initiative’s website. The links to these pages can then be distributed to partners for inclusion in their websites as well. Both the factsheets and presentations will be reviewed if not created by experts on each BMP so that these can become a solid resource for area and regional landowners.

**Partner Updates**

Jenn will be hosting 4-H Stream Team training sessions online this winter. She will also be working hard to recruit and create new stream teams in the Conewago Watershed to revamp the local program while expanding the program state wide.

Dauphin County Conservation District has a large project underway on a horse farm in the watershed. This project includes moving the manure storage farther away from the creek, the establishment of a sacrifice area and other stabilized walkways. The District is also putting together a grant to fund a watershed association conference for the county’s watershed associations. These groups historically don’t have much contact with each other but would benefit from the sharing of ideas .

South Londonderry Township has received the final Green Masterplan for the park enrolled in the stormwater incentives program. Rugh will check in with the district manager to get the application for funding underway. The township is in the progress of creating a comprehensive plan for the municipality that will include conservation efforts. Progress is slow because of conflicts with residents and differing opinions about the need for conservation planning.