**PAT Meeting**

**Minutes**

**January 16, 2013**

Matt Royer

Kristen Kyler

K.R. Young

Rugh Henderson

Dawn Hintz

Mike Hubler

Jenn Fetter

Susan Marquart

Matt Kofroth

Bob Ensor

Steve Taglang

Dana York

Dan Dostie

Mike Langland

Jeremy Zidek

Chuck Wertz

**How to verify and track voluntary BMP practices?**

 Dana York, Green Earth Connection

 Bob Ensor, Howard County Soil Conservation District

Dana and Bob’s presentation on the program they developed to track voluntary ag BMPs led to a lengthy discussion among the group on whether the Initiative should begin a program like this within the watershed. No conclusions were made and the conversation will be picked up again during the next BMP work team meeting.

**Coordinator’s Report**

Equine Environmental Stewardship Workshop- This workshop is being led by Penn State Extension and will be held at the Londonderry Township Building. Saturday February 9 will be a day long workshop followed by February 12’s evening workshop for writing manure management plans. Watershed residents who attend both sessions will be reimbursed the event fee.

Fish Survey- The final fish survey report from the 2012 surveys is available on the Initiative’s website. Macroinvertebrate sampling will be done this year (2013).

Like the Conewago Creek Initiative on Facebook.

The Initiative’s NFWF grant has been officially extended to November 30, 2013.

A stream restoration project was completed this fall just below the Old Hershey Rd Bridge on the mainstem Conewago. A riparian buffer will be planted there this spring. The design and installation was done by FWS.

**Projects**

F.I.S.H- This short- term monitoring program has been developed by the Monitoring team to be used with landowners who install riparian buffers, stream bank fencing, or stream restoration. The data sheet is available both in printed version and through a Chesapeake Commons app and was designed to capture the small changes that occur in a stream when one of these projects is installed. This program will be tested this spring with a few landowners.

Rail Trail Monitoring- Both the Stewardship Development Team and the Monitoring Team have been brainstorming on the idea of having signage on the rail trail that runs through the watershed. These signs would help engage trail users in the Initiative, citizen monitoring, and inform them of some watershed facts. Work will continue on this concept during upcoming team meetings. A draft of the idea was shared during this PAT meeting.

**Work Team Updates** (Please refer to the December 2012 work team minutes for full updates. The below information is only the newest information)

BMP Team- A Winter Farmers Meeting will be held on **February 22** at the Hoss’s in Elizabethtown. It will start at 9:30 and end after a free lunch is served. Presentations will include soil health and no-till, riparian buffers, environmental compliance, and updates on the Initiative. Registration is required-please contact Kristen. Spread the word to watershed farmers.

Environmental Markets- There was not an Environmental Markets December meeting but there was an On-farm Ecosystem Services Workshop held on November 12 which brought together experts on the different ecosystem services provided by a farm. The process to create a tool that a farmer can use to learn what benefits his farm is providing is started.

Non-Ag Team- A boost on advertising the Stormwater Incentives program is needed this winter. There are still plenty of funds left to supply more Green Masterplans and to fund projects.

**Partner Updates**

K.R. Young, EPA Region 3 Source Water Protection Program- He is looking to build a working partnership between drinking water partners and other clean water related partners beginning in impaired watersheds. The Conewago will be a good location to begin this work.

Rugh Henderson, South Londonderry Township – alerted partnership of citizen movement against municipal planning and other perceived threats to private property rights.

Dawn Hintz, SRBC- SRBC is wrapping up the source water protection plan for Elizabethtown.

Mike Hubler, DCCD - Conservation plans are being written this winter. Dauphin CCD will lead several manure management plan workshops. A letter is being sent out to residents of the county to inform them of funding opportunities, the Initiative, and regulatory compliance.

Jenn Fetter, Penn State Extension - Stream Team Leader Training is coming up and has a good turnout signed up so far. Work to begin building the Greening the Lower Susquehanna volunteer corps will begin soon.

Susan Marquart, USDA NRCS - NRCS programs are in continuing resolution and an extension of the Farm Bill. There is the possibility that they will be awarded more Chesapeake Bay Money and if this comes through the money will need to be used quickly.

Matt Kofroth, Lancaster County Conservation District - Lancaster CCD will be having manure management plan workshops as well. STEM calendars, Healthy Horse Calendars, and E&S publications are all finished and available to interested partners.

Chuck Wertz, Lebanon County Conservation District - Stephanie Butler has left the Lebanon CCD and her position will need to be filled. 3 farm preservations were finalized in 2012 in the Conewago. The district will not be having their seedling sale this spring.

Steve Taglang, PA DEP - DEP is getting close to announcing grants.

Mike Langland, USGS - USGS will be conducting intensive sediment studies on the Conewago this spring that will evaluate erosion rates, floodplain storage capacity, bank stability, bank ratio, and sediment age.

Jeremy Zidek, ZedX, Inc. - The Conewago Tool is making progress and may be ready to demo at the March PAT meeting.