

**QUITTAPAHILLA WATERSHED ASSOCIATION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Annville Town Hall and Remotely Via Zoom (Hybrid Meeting)**  
**Tuesday, August 20, 2024**

Present: Michael Schroeder (President), Joseph Beidler, Alexis Biondi, Joseph Connor, Kent Crawford, Karen Feather, Bryan Hoffman (Leb Co Stormwater Consortium), Katie Hollen (LCCD), Kara Lubold (LCCD)

The meeting opened at 7:01 p.m.

1. **Minutes.** The minutes of the July 16 meeting were circulated electronically before the meeting and approved by consensus.
2. **Introductions.** Mike offered a warm welcome to LVC student intern Joseph Beidler, who will be undertaking a 3-credit internship (145 hours) with the QWA this fall semester, and to local resident Alexis Biondi, who has expressed interest in our work.

**3. Monitoring Program Updates**

- A. **August fieldwork.** In emails sent on Aug. 12 and Aug. 19, Katie reported: “Thank you to all our volunteers who helped with the August water-quality monitoring in the Quittapahilla Watershed! We collected samples to be analyzed by the DEP laboratory at each of our six sites, took streamflow measurements, and completed our quality assurance/quality control samples. We also tested out a new flow probe which was kindly donated (along with other equipment) by the Tobyhanna Creek/Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Association. To compare the new Global Water Flow Probe with our existing pygmy current meter, let's plan to test the two meters at Q2 (Quittie mainstem at Palmyra-Bellegrave Rd, where there is a USGS discharge gage). We will take readings with both meters and compare them to the readings from the USGS gage to get an idea of how reliable our meters and procedures are.” (sent Aug. 12)

“We will do streamflow testing on **Tuesday, August 27th at 12pm**. We should be done by 3pm. If you are interested in helping out, meet at Q2 - Quittie Creek mainstem at Palmyra Bellegrave Road - at 12pm. There is a pull-off along the creek on Syner Rd on the east side of the Palmyra-Bellegrave Bridge (GPS coordinates are 40.342483, -76.560968). If that parking is full, there is another pull-off just on the other side of the bridge. We'll be testing our two different streamflow meters: the

pygmy velocity meter and the new Global Water flow probe. There is a USGS station at the Q2 site that takes continuous discharge readings, so we can compare our measurements with the USGS measurements. This will give us an idea of which meter is more accurate. We will also do replicate measurements with the new flow probe.” (sent Aug. 19).

**B. Auto-samplers.** Kara reported in emails sent before the meeting that Bryan Hoffman graciously picked up the two ISCO automatic samplers from the Tobyhanna Creek/ Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Association (<http://www.tctcwa.org>) and delivered them to her garage. In an email of July 26, she reported: “Hi All, The eagle has landed and like Kent said, ‘It's Christmas in July’! A huge thank you to Bryan for equipment transportation and delivery!! I'm sure there are items I have yet to identify, but upon first look, along with the 2 automatic samplers (2 different model #s), contents of boxes contain:

- A Colorimeter (in case)
- Global water flow probe (in case)
- Work gloves
- 20+ nylon safety vests
- Pocket pro testers
- Vials and bottles
- Different types of tubing, which I assume are for the Samplers
- Equipment user manuals
- Sampler batteries (hopefully still working)
- Several nice pelican style cases (see above)

Here is a link to the google drive containing various pictures of the box contents:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nGcYoluhyV06OHtc9x2IX0ktD7eagT2Z?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nGcYoluhyV06OHtc9x2IX0ktD7eagT2Z?usp=share_link)

On Sat. Aug. 3, Kara, Kent, and Bob inspected and inventoried the equipment, which is being temporarily stored in Kara’s garage. Discussion was held on the next steps, but no firm plans were made.

**C. Hobo data loggers.** In an email sent the day before the meeting, Bob Connell reported: “I don't have any updates on the Hobo loggers yet. I will try to have that for the September meeting. All are working other than Beck Creek. I have downloaded the

most recent data from the working loggers and will load that into our data portal by this time next week.”

- D. Multiparameter sonde.** Following an email exchange with other QWA members before the meeting on the malfunction of the hand-unit of our multiparameter sonde (a blank screen), Katie reported that she has sent the hand-unit, which is still under warranty, to the manufacturer for servicing.
- E. Fieldwork app.** In an email of Aug. 19, Bob Connell reported that he has “developed an app for the phone or tablet to handle our field measurements from the sonde. Katie tried it earlier this month and I think it worked well for her. Using the same software, I made a similar app to handle our flow measurements in the field. I just sent Katie a message about it. We can try it out next week when we're in the field. Both apps save the data to Google Drive as we enter it. I'm hopeful that this will help us to streamline our field work.” Bob was commended for his excellent work.
- 4. Summer Internship Program.** Mike reported that on Wed. Aug. 7 he received a text from student intern Hannah Horengic letting him know that she and fellow intern Ben Mitchell have completed their summer internship. She also said that Rocky Powell wanted to look over their report binders before they are submitted to the QWA. Mike will receive and store the equipment used by the interns (measuring tapes and waders).
- 5. Projects update.** See the Watershed Action Team meeting minutes of August 1, which appear below in **Appendix 1** to these minutes.
- 6. Grant opportunity.** Mike reported that he and Courtney Reimann, Land Protection Director at The Lebanon Valley Conservancy (TLVC) have been in conversation about the Stream & Watershed Enhancement Grant Program offered by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC), which closes Oct. 31: <https://www.srbc.gov/our-work/grants/stream-watershed-enhancement-grant.html>. He reported that they expect to focus on signage for the watershed; one example of interpretive signage is here: <https://www.gallatinwatershedcouncil.org/watershedsignage> Joseph volunteered to help with designing signage.
- 7. First strategizing meeting.** Mike reported that the first strategizing meeting of local actors in the watershed is slated for **9-11 am Friday Sept. 6** at the LCDC office on Cornwall Rd. The list of invited participants and preliminary agenda appear below in **Appendix 2**. The goal of the meeting is to reach consensus on watershed restoration work moving forward. Mike

noted that an envisioned second meeting will cast a wider net to include representatives of neighboring watershed associations (Swatara, Conewago, and others) and funding agencies like PA-DEP, the Fish & Boat Commission, and others.

- 8. Public outreach & education update.** Mike reported that the tour of the big floodplain restoration upstream of the 22<sup>nd</sup> St. bridge in Lebanon offered to members of the Tree & Environment Committee at Cornwall Manor on Wed. Aug. 7 went very well. Bryan Hoffman graciously agreed to lead the tour and did an excellent job presenting the project. Mike was in touch with LebTown reporter Chris Coyle, who wasn't able to make the tour but published this piece on Aug. 13: <https://lebtown.com/2024/08/13/quittapahilla-creek-tour-highlights-dramatic-changes-in-less-than-a-year/> Mike also reported that his Facebook post on the "Lebanon PA Happenings" page garnered 38 "likes" and 15 comments. The post and comments are reproduced below in **Appendix 3**. Also, Kara reported that the previously-discussed possibility of a QWA presentation before the Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council in Harrisburg on Sept. 12 doesn't really fit into their agenda, so we will not be offering the presentation.
- 9. Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium.** Bryan reported that at its meeting today, the Consortium members discussed amending their existing agreement to say that the six municipal entities will stay together until the new Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) requirements are issued by PA-DEP for the next NPDES cycle, which begins on Jan. 1, 2025. Those five municipal entities are the City of Lebanon, North Cornwall Township, South Lebanon Township, North Lebanon Township, Annville Township, and the Cleona Borough Authority. Great uncertainty exists because PA-DEP has not yet issued those requirements. Bryan reported that while DEP's current five-year permit cycle (2020-2024) emphasized sediment reduction, it is anticipated that the next five-year permit cycle (2025-2029) will emphasize "volume reduction," i.e., reducing the volume of water that flows downstream. Exactly how a municipality is supposed to reduce the volume of water flowing in its waterways remains an open question.
- 10. Planning a Meeting with the Lebanon County Planning Dept.** Discussion was held on holding a meeting with Julie Cheyney and Cherie Prentice-Brown in the Leb Co Planning Dept regarding their recently unveiled LCCWA Storymap Project (see <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/670c2a0363f74862abbb14d52b0f31fa>); the possibility of integrating our monitoring data into the county's publicly available databases; and regarding our potential role in the process of developing an updated comprehensive plan (last updated in 2007; see

<https://www.lebanoncountypa.gov/departments/planning/comprehensive-plan>) Mike agreed to follow up.

**11. Upcoming Special Events. Saturday, Nov. 16.** Katie reported that the Lancaster-Lebanon Watershed Forum is scheduled for Saturday, November 16, at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.

**12. QWA Website.** Mike reported that the QWA website and its two domains (quittiecreek.org and quittiecreek.com) is now hosted through GoDaddy and also now has a security certificate (https:// instead of http://). When Bob Connell was told about the switch to GoDaddy, he wrote to Mike in an email of Aug. 19, with respect to our data management efforts: “GoDaddy has the ability to host a MySQL database, so that raises the potential of putting our data portal on the same server as the web page. It would be good to have it all in one place. Maybe we can meet over the next few weeks and see if we can make that happen.”

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Schroeder, Secretary Pro Tem

## Appendix 1. Watershed Action Team Meeting Minutes of August 1, 2024



### Lebanon CAP Watershed Action Team

August 1, 2024 - Minutes

Members Present: Bethany Canner, Katie Hollen, Kara Lubold, Rocky Powell & Mike Schroeder

#### 1. In-Process Projects

- Hammer Creek Estates: \$250,000 of CAP funding for construction-related expenses. Likely won't use CAP funding because of estimated construction in 2025.
- Gerald Horst bridge replacement: \$23,600 of ACAP funding for design and permitting. Bridge is in design.
- Syner Rd. Phase II: \$213,950.00 of CAP funding.

#### 2. Partner Updates

- Clear Creeks Consulting, Rocky Powell
  - o Snitz 2 & 3: Revising DCED budgets to eliminate match for in-kind services (in-kind match is ineligible, but the projects will still meet match requirements).
  - o Killinger: Finished construction quantities and working on specifications. Will be meeting with landowner soon to make sure they are still on the same page.
  - o Beck 6: Still waiting to hear about 319 funding. Received a verbal confirmation in January but EPA has until this fall to make a final decision.
  - o Snitz 4: In preliminary design. Cornwall Borough has agreed to be the permit applicant when the time comes.
- Lebanon Consortium/MS4, Darren Heisey (*see Appendix 1*)
- The Lebanon Valley Conservancy, Kara reported updates from Abigail Harvey
  - o Watershed subcommittee fizzled out, but there are conversations about projects for next summer involving the Swatara and Union Canal.
- Quittapahilla Watershed Association, Mike Schroeder
  - o Monitoring program received new equipment, including two ISCO autosamplers to sample during high flow events. Two sampling dates are scheduled for next week. An LVC student expressed interested in an internship to assist with a GIS storymap.
  - o On August 7, Mike is leading a walking tour of SQ1 with Cornwall Manor residents, Bryan Hoffman of the Consortium, an SESI representative, and a LebTown reporter.
  - o Planning a meeting in late August or early September with partners in the Quittie about the long-term strategy for funding restoration projects.
- Swatara Watershed Association, Bethany Canner
  - o Outreach event on August 6 for National Night Out in Dauphin County.
  - o Signage project is underway. Signs will feature QR codes directing readers to more information on SWA's website in English and Spanish.

#### 3. Next Meeting

- Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.



## **Lebanon CAP Watershed Action Team**

**Appendix 1. Darren Heisey updates, Lebanon Consortium, provided via email 7/29/2024**

### Project SQ1 (Floodplain Restoration)

Vegetation is to be reassessed in the Fall – summer was hot / droughty which did not help with the late spring seeding done by the landscaping subcontractor. The site has improved, but is not at the 90% vegetative cover required for contract closeout. LandStudies continues their invasive species maintenance of the site.

### Project SQ6 (Planned Floodplain Restoration)

We currently need a design agreement from only one farm property before DEP will allow reimbursement for design under our Growing Greener Grant. The Consortium got an appraisal report for the property to aid in any negotiations necessary to convince the property owner to agree to design access.

### Lions Lake Park Improvements

We've received all permits necessary for construction and plan to bid the work (park improvements and the MS4-oriented lake shore stabilization) once we receive a go-ahead from the grant department, as we want their approval before bidding.

Again, we'll be having planning hardship going forward due to DEP again extending the MS4 permit (this time beyond March 2025) unless DEP announces their credit calculation methodology/requirements soon.

The Consortium's intergovernmental agreement (in terms of funding for this permit cycle) is winding up, and there was discussion on amending or creating a new intergovernmental agreement for the next permit cycle, when that happens, in order to allow new consortium members, etc. due to the likely changing credit requirements.

## **Appendix 2. Developing A Strategy for Quittapahilla Watershed Partners Stream Restoration Work Moving Forward**

**Updated August 19, 2024**

**Meeting Time & Date: 9:00-11:00 a.m., Friday, Sept. 6, LCCD Conference Room, 2120  
Cornwall Rd, Lebanon, PA 17042**

### **Invited Participants**

- Mike Schroeder, QWA
- Bob Connell, QWA
- Russ Collins, DFTU & QWA
- Kent Crawford, DFTU & QWA
- Katie Doster, LCCD
- Katie Hollen, LCCD
- Kara Lubold, LCCD & QWA
- Abigail Harvey, TLVC
- Ron Birch, TLVC
- Mike Sherman, TLVC
- Ned Gible, TLVC
- Rocky Powell, Clear Creeks Consulting
- Rich Starr, Ecosystem Planning & Restoration
- Bryan Seipp, Ecosystem Planning & Restoration

### **Draft Agenda**

1. Watershed Plans
  - a. Quittapahilla Creek Restoration and Management Plan (2006)
    - 1) Identified, Prioritized and Scheduled Projects by Subwatershed
  - b. Quittapahilla Creek Watershed Implementation Plan (2021)
    - 1) Identified, Prioritized and Scheduled Projects by Subwatershed
    - 2) Current Schedule and Funding
  - c. Hammer Creek Headwaters Alternate Restoration Plan (2021)
    - 1) Identified, Prioritized and Scheduled Projects?
    - 2) Current Schedule and Funding
2. Projects Status
  - a. Quittapahilla Watershed
  - b. Hammer Creek Watershed
  - c. Spring Creek Watershed

3. Future Scheduling and Funding of Projects
  - a. Scheduling Priorities
  - b. Funding Sources

### **Appendix 3. Mike's Facebook Aug. 8, 2024 post to the "Lebanon PA Happenings" page, with comments & responses**

#### **Original post, with two photos:**

On behalf of the Quittapahilla Watershed Association, a big thank-you to Daphne Messersmith and the Tree & Environment Committee at Cornwall Manor for suggesting a tour of the Quittapahilla Creek Floodplain Restoration Project -- aka "SQ1" -- upstream of the 22nd St bridge, along Chestnut St. up to the end of the Hazel Dike. And another big thank-you to Bryan Hoffman of the Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium for offering such an informed, insightful, and helpful summary and interpretation of the project for our guests.

You know the project -- the one that's garnered so many negative comments in past months from people who don't understand it and don't want to take the time to learn about it, but who criticize it anyway because so many trees were taken down or because it looked like a wasteland (which for a time it did) or because it would be a breeding ground for mosquitoes (which it won't be thanks to mosquito control measures) or . . . you name it.

Fact is, this is a good & useful project that promises to bring many benefits in the project area itself and points downstream -- e.g. see these two detailed & informative articles in LebTown from last year:

- Tom Knapp, "Where did the trees go along the Quittapahilla Creek in North Cornwall? LebTown answers reader's question about ongoing creekside project." August 1, 2023, at <https://lebtown.com/.../where-did-the-trees-go-along-the.../>
- Chris Coyle, "Quittie restoration at 22nd Street is complete, but won't look ugly for long. 400 years of sediment build-up and stream bank erosion can't be fixed overnight," Nov. 29, 2023, at <https://lebtown.com/.../quittie-restoration-at-22nd.../>

In short: the creek & floodplain in the project area have been assaulted & injured & impaired & mismanaged by human beings for most of the past 3-4 centuries. It took a lot of time to mess it up, and it will take time to fix it. Patience.

For more on the project, scroll down to Sept 2021 on the "Studies & Documents" page of our QWA website, at <http://www.quittiecreek.org/documents.html>



*Caption: "Bryan Hoffman of the Cleona Borough Authority and the Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium describing & explaining this major stream restoration project to interested visitors from Cornwall Manor."*



Caption: *"Heartening when ordinary citizens are curious & care about the well-being of the natural world around them."*

### **Comments & Replies:**

COMMENT: John Cikovic III: "Wasn't it trees growing naturally? What was miss managed? To me cutting Down the trees is miss management"

REPLY: Jeremy Mullins: "the whole plan was to lower the area and have it turn into a flood basin. Fill it with bushes to "naturally" collect trash at this site and to prevent as much as possible from traveling downstream where the author of the post lives."

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "Jeremy Mullins: Thank you for bringing up the whole issue of garbage, which is a huge problem in Quittie Creek, since all the trash in every street & alley & parking lot in the City of Lebanon drains directly into the creek when it rains. Fact is, the same

amount of plastic garbage is flowing out of the Hazel Dike today as before the project started -- it's just that now you can see it. Before it was hidden by brush & undergrowth and no one saw it unless they ventured into the floodplain. So yes, the accumulation of garbage in this floodplain is a big problem. Which is why we're organizing monthly cleanups with volunteers to go in and pick up the accumulating trash --DM me if you'd like to join us! Here's a pic from our spring 2023 cleanup, right before the restoration project started. This is only part of the trash we picked up that day."



REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "John Cikovic III: Yes, the trees & shrubs that were in that section were "growing naturally," but most were either weed trees like box elder & mulberry & tree of heaven (ailanthus) or invasive shrubs like buckthorn & honeysuckle-- there were also a lot of dead ash trees killed by emerald ash borer. I stomped through that area a lot before the project hunting for museum-quality garbage artifacts for my Quittapahilla Creek Garbage Museum and it had the feel of a sick and injured floodplain, with lots of dead & dying trees. The trees & shrubs & flowering plants that have been planted in the restoration project are native and thrive in floodplains.

COMMENT: John Cikovic III: "You mean the muddy swamp?"

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "John Cikovic III: more a marsh than a swamp but more aptly called a floodplain. Yes, it is muddy, as floodplains often are."

COMMENT: Jeremy Mullins: "Garbage pit. In the engineering plans it was even discussed that it would be used to collect trash from going further downstream."

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "Yes, it was discussed that one of the consequences of the project would likely be that more plastic trash from the City of Lebanon would get caught in the floodplain instead of being flushed downstream. This accumulation of locally-generated creek garbage was seen as a likely byproduct of the project, not as one of its goals."

COMMENT: John Loye: "It "looked" like a wasteland? He is speaking in past tense. It still does look like a wasteland. When was this tour publicized? I live in Lebanon and I didn't know anything about it. Was it only for a few special people?"

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "John Loye thanks for your interest. No, this tour was not publicized ahead of time, it was a private tour organized by Cornwall Manor in collaboration with the Quittapahilla Watershed Association. We in the QWA would be happy to offer additional private or public tours to whomever is interested in learning more about the project -- drop us a line!"

REPLY: Sierra Tomlinson: "Michael Schroeder I feel like this would be a great learning opportunity for my cub scouts! Thanks for the information!"

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "Sierra Tomlinson we hope you'll be in touch, we'd love to offer a tour to your cub scouts."

COMMENT: Bri Hartman: "Shocking. With the amount of rain that we just received, 22nd street usually would be flooded and closed. Not the case today."

### **Comments & Replies on Accompanying Photos:**

COMMENT ON PHOTO #1 (featuring Bryan Hoffman): John Loye: "So this tour was only made available to residents of Cornwall Manor who live nowhere near this, but people who live nearby were not invited? Interesting."

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "yes, it was a private tour organized at the request of residents of Cornwall Manor, most of whom have lived in Lebanon County for many decades and have dense & intimate ties to the local community. We in the QWA would be happy to organize another such tour if another group asks. If you'd like to work with us to help organize a public tour that we can advertise ahead of time, please be in touch!"

COMMENT ON PHOTO #2 (with selfie of Mike): John Loye: "Again, why was this tour only made available to residents of Cornwall Manor who live nowhere near this? I live in Lebanon and I knew nothing of this."

REPLY: Michael Schroeder: "John Loye: please see my response to your other comment on the other photo: Yes, it was a private tour organized at the request of residents of Cornwall Manor, most of whom have lived in Lebanon County for many decades and have dense & intimate ties to the local community. We in the QWA would be happy to organize another such private tour if another group asks. Or, if you'd like to work with us to help organize a public tour that we can advertise ahead of time, please be in touch!"

Note: At the current writing, none of the people offering comments have been in touch.