



Environmental Implementation Partners Meeting Summary
February 21st , 2019
Madeline Olewine Memorial Library

Organizers:

Jerry Duke, Dauphin county Planning Coordinator, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, gduke@tcrpc-pa.org

Alexa Korber, Planner, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, akorber@tcrpc-pa.org

Attendees:

John Balay, Susquehanna River Basin Commission

Gail Brossman, Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club

Jennifer Dunlap, Manada Conservancy

Joe Hebelka, PA DEP

Gary LaBelle, Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club

Betsy Logan, Paxton Creek Watershed and Education Association

Joseph Mattucci, PA DEP

Eric Naguski, Dauphin County Conservation District

Scott Shepler, Capital Area Greenbelt Association

Sally Zaino, Manada Conservancy

Review from Previous Meeting

There was a brief review of the Goals and Key Action Items from the Environmental section of the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan (<https://www.dauphincountycompplan.org/growing-within-our-environment-intro>). In previous sessions group members were asked to rank the Action Items to determine where they thought County focus should be. Some of the highest ranked action items are as follows (for a full list please contact Alexa Korber at the email address above):

- Work with water suppliers to define Source Water protection areas for all public water supplies;
- Develop a countywide strategy for addressing surface and groundwater quality and quantity issues;
- Through education and model ordinance development, promote a variety of techniques to preserve environmentally sensitive lands;
- Ensure that local floodplain ordinances are consistent with the most recent guidelines; support SRBC and other organizations to continue their work with the the online flood model for the Susquehanna River, Swatara Creek, and other streams prone to flooding.

What is the County doing?

Steve Deck, the Executive Director of Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC), gave an overview of the County's current research in to stormwater. Many municipalities are implementing **stormwater fees** as means of meeting MS4 requirements and paying for needed infrastructure repairs. The County has been researching the potential benefits of a regional stormwater program, similar to what has been done in York County.

Steve also shared information on the countywide **Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs)**, a process being promoted by PA DEP to assist counties with looking at required water quality load reductions on a county scale. To assist with this process, DEP is creating custom toolboxes for each county within Pennsylvania. More information can be found here: [https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Pennsylvania%E2%80%99s%20Chesapeake%20Bay%20Program%20Office/WIP3/Pages/Phase-III-WIP-\(Watershed-Implementation-Plans\).aspx](https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Pennsylvania%E2%80%99s%20Chesapeake%20Bay%20Program%20Office/WIP3/Pages/Phase-III-WIP-(Watershed-Implementation-Plans).aspx)

For the past year, TCRPC staff has been working with Manada Conservancy to complete a **Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)** for Dauphin County. The document features a large collection of maps showing important environmental areas. It is currently in the review stage and should be published this year.

A **Return on Environment** report was published for Dauphin County in 2016 and can be accessed here: <https://kittatinnyridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/FINAL-DRAFT-DAUPHIN-COUNTY-April-2.pdf> . The same process was undertaken this past summer for Perry County. The Perry County report is will be published this spring.

What are partner organizations doing?

Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC)

SRBC is currently working with the Baltimore District's Army Corps of Engineers to create flood mapping for the entire Swatara Creek. Maps should be available in 2019 with data covering the headwaters all the way to the Susquehanna River. SRBC hosted their bi-annual Source Water Protection Partnership meeting in March, 2019. They have also completed a screening of water use and availability at a HUC 12 watershed scale.

DC Conservation District

The Conservation District was recently awarded a Growing Greener grant for floodplain restoration along Armstrong Creek. They will also be publishing their 2014-2018 Countywide Stream Assessment report. This report is part of a water quality monitoring initiative that samples all of the county's watersheds on a five year rotating basis. When the new report is printed it will be available to the public and be presented at public meetings.

PA DEP

Rhonda Hakundy-Jones will be the replacement for Craig Ebersol in the Safe Drinking Water Program. PA DEP provides free technical assistance to water system owners for the creation of official source water protection plans.

Manada Conservancy

Manada Conservancy has been steadily working towards their goal to educate landowners about the value of land conservation easements. They are working towards protecting land along the Kittatinny Ridge—a national important bird area—and along the Swatara Greenway. Recently, they have been involved with talks between the Natural Conservancy, Capital Region Water, and the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation about placing a conservation easement on the land surrounding DeHart Reservoir. This easement could be funded through Fort Indiantown Gap's Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program, which seeks to protect and conserve land around military bases.

Paxton Creek Watershed and Education Association (PCWEA)

PCWEA is currently at a transition point where they are trying to establish their audience and develop their goals and mission statement. They want to focus on an education program and on providing more outreach to property owners that live along the Paxton Creek. PCWEA will have a booth at the yearly Wetlands Festival, to be hosted in Wildwood Park on April 27th, 2019.

Capital Area Greenbelt Association (CAGA)

The Greenbelt Association is currently overseeing safety and functional improvements. One of these projects will be improvements to the Paxtang Parkway, a historical trail that was designed

during Harrisburg's original City Beautiful Movement in the 1900s. A DEP grant will help with permitting and construction costs for the improvements.

Focus Areas/Next Steps

Stormwater

Continuing research on Best Management Practices (BMPs) and countywide/regional approach. This includes outreach and educational opportunities to parts of the County that do not operate under an MS4 permit.

Source Water

The group believes that there might be some value in discussing source water issues independently from stormwater. PA DEP has resources to educate municipal and private water systems owners about the value of having a source water protection plan.

Land Protection/Conservation and Recreation

TCRPC would like to do more research in to land conservation and recreation issues. Water quality, the popular topic of the day, goes hand-in-hand with land preservation, but the preservation/protection of valuable habitat areas is valuable on its own. Recreation opportunities are also valuable assets to Dauphin County, both as a means of entertainment but also as economic stimulation. Research about this topic can be found in the Dauphin County Return on Environment report.