



Schuylkill Action Network Stormwater Workgroup Virtual Meeting Minutes

Thursday, Jan 26 | 10 - 11:30am

1. Welcome - Stormwater Workgroup Chairs Transition (10:05 - 10:10)

Thank you to Alex Cupo for joining as co-chair last spring and to Zach Nemec, PA Sea Grant and Amanda Obosnenko for joining us as co-chairs for this workgroup.

2. Introductions (10:10 - 10:20)

- Kaitie Evers, PDE
- Kristen Cooney, PDE
- Meghan Rogalus, PDE
- Zach Nemec, PA Sea Grant
- Alex Cupo, GSI Partners Manager, SBN
- Patrick Starr, PEC
- Ryan Beltz, PWC
- Ayashe Ramey, SRG
- Julie Schneider, CWP
- Diana Maher, PEC
- Paul Racette PEC
- Beth Yount, Penn State Master Watershed Steward Coordinator Philadelphia
- Chesa Blom, PDE
- Ryan Lamberti, Montgomery County PC
- Janet Serfass, Upper Merion Twp
- Nathan Walker, Gannett Fleming
- Maria Sadler, Upper Providence EAC
- Drew Gilchrist, PA DCNR
- Alyssa Keiser, PA DCNR
- Liz Feinberg, NFWF
- Michele Adams, Meliora Design
- Tara Dougherty, Meliora Design
- Will Brogan, EQR
- Kate Hutelmyer, CCWRA
- Chris Anderson, EPA Region 3
- Beth Mahoney, PADEP SERO MS4 Section Chief
- Erick Ammon, PADEP Southcentral Regional office
- Geoff Hickman, Upper Merion Twp
- Scott Bachman, City of Reading MS4 Coordinator
- Tom Forsythe Berks County Conservation District
- Natalie Marioni, Penn State Extension MWS Program Coordinator Berks and Schuylkill
- Emma Hinkle, LaBelle Associates

3. SAN Admin Update (10:20 - 10:25)

- a. **2023 Workgroup Workplan** - please add comments to share your accomplishments with the group!

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1R6sNIgm8dmfl5BesNerivZm_MuEiUpYkndi6HP24goc/edit#gid=0

- b. **Workplan Fish Bowl - Alex**

- i. Action 2a. Urge planners and other workgroup members to consider a *triple bottom line framework* when addressing stormwater

- c. **Project Wish List** - Please contact Meghan or Kaitie if you have any priority projects to add to the SAN "Wish List" or need to request letters of support.

4. Guest Partner Updates (10:25 - 11:00)

- a. **CBLP - Chesapeake Bay Landscape Program - Liz Feinberg**

- i. March 14 - 15 at Mt. Cuba Center - day 1 at the center and day 2 in the field
 - ii. Opportunities for professional development and capacity building for green practices. Although it's hosted by the Chesapeake Bay, this program is open to others outside of the Bay geography.
 - iii. For more information, including other classes later in the year focused on parks and rec staff - Visit <https://cblpro.org/get-certified/>
 - iv. Beth Yount shared in chat that Penn State Extension riparian buffer webinars and field days offer CEUs for those with CBLP certification (or PLNA or ISA)

- b. **CWP Webinar Series Highlight - Julie Schneider** (10 mins)

- i. Virtual training series, 1-3pm on Tuesdays
 1. Thursdays from 1-2pm will be "virtual office hours" to provide extra support to supplement training
 2. Contact jas@cwp.org with questions
 3. CEUs are available for webinar attendees

- c. Julie also shared on the upcoming NFWF application round

- i. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Delaware Program will release two RFPs in February 2023 for funding in the Delaware River Watershed. The Delaware River Restoration Fund (DRRF) is in its last year of funding with a smaller pool of funding than in previous years, approximately \$750,000.
 - 1. The DRRF grant is for restoration projects within the Delaware River Watershed Initiative “clusters” that align with focus area priorities. The 2023 DRRF program will not solicit new grants, but instead offer extensions to existing NFWF grants to support project delays due to the pandemic, support cost increases on existing projects, and build on existing project efforts.
 - 2. The RFP is expected to be released in February, 2023 and grant work is to be completed by November 2024.
- ii. Another NFWF grant, The Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF) RFP is expected to be released in early February and is open to organizations throughout the Delaware River Watershed to fund projects aimed to conserve, restore and protect habitats on public and private land that contribute to the overall health of the Delaware River watershed—as well as benefit the quality of life and economic vitality of the communities in the Delaware River watershed. For more information on either grant opportunity visit NFWF Delaware Program website <https://www.nfwf.org/programs/delaware-river-program>.”

d. Discussion of court ruling re: West Chester stormwater fee:

<https://www.mankogold.com/publications-Borough-Stormwater-Tax-Fees-West-Chester-School.html>

- i. The court ruled not ‘fee for service’ b/c not provided to an individual instead ‘impact fees’
- ii. Anticipate appeal but this ruling could have pretty broad implications

e. SBN's GSI Operations & Maintenance Workshops - Alex Cupo (10 mins)

- i. [This immersive and experiential two-day course](#) (Feb 16th, 2pm - 5:30pm and Feb 17th, 10am - 2pm) provides landscape and maintenance professionals with basic and regulatory frameworks and the tools needed to expand their portfolio, advance their skillset, and build knowledge of GSI and sustainable stormwater management practices to increase their business’s bottom line and support the longevity of these projects.
 - 1. Ideal for engineers, architects, and related professionals

2. Contact Alex Cupo with any questions, alex@sbnphiladelphia.org

f. Storm Drain Marking - Chesa Blom (10 mins)

- i. [Philly and Schuylkill Storm Drain Marker Program](#)
- ii. Chesa leads the marking program with PWD stormdrain medallions branded with different animals by subwatershed
- iii. Outside of the Philadelphia city limits, there are
 1. Schuylkill/SAN branded medallions with bass imagery for printing with municipal contact info (for reporting dumping) - SAN admin team coordinate and provide at cost for printing and shipping
 2. Or generic 'Drains to Creek' medallions, cheaper through PDE than they are elsewhere
 3. Stormdrain marking is a great project for kids and volunteers to participate in
 4. Natalie shared via chat that she would love to bring this to the Master Watershed Steward program in Berks & Schuylkill Counties

g. [Pennsylvania Stormwater Summit 2023 - Nathan Walker, Pennsylvania Water Environment Association \(PWEA\) Stormwater Committee](#) (10 mins)

- i. "Challenges to Managing Stormwater in Pennsylvania" - **March 30, 2023**, 8:30am to 4:00pm, Hilton Garden Inn - Pittsburgh Cranberry
- ii. https://www.pwea.org/continuing_education_opportuni.php
 1. Nathan walked through some agenda highlights with the group
 - a. Dr. Traver from Villanova presenting
 - b. Engineering professor from Pitt will present on uncertainty in engineering
 - c. Beth Uhler, CWP - importance, and benefits of regional collaboration
 - d. Design-build opportunities for stream restoration
 - e. GSI maintenance
 - f. Panel discussion from municipalities with stormwater utilities and their experience to date

5. Presentation on Suburban Philadelphia stream/stormwater management attitude survey polling - Professor Chris Borick and David Masur - (11:00 - 11:30)

- a. 2022 SEPA Surface Water Survey Overview

- i. Effort to get the public's perception in suburban Philadelphia ('collar' counties): polled Montgomery, Bucks, Delaware, and Chester Counties
- ii. Surveyed on the following topics: familiarity with local waterways, how important they are to people, why it is important to them, how people engage/interact with the waterways, waterway health, threat to waterways, climate change, water policy, and stormwater management
 - 1. Examined by partisanship, region (county), age
- iii. **96%** combined total of people in agreement on importance of local waterways (labeled either very important or somewhat important)
- iv. The most important benefit of these creeks and streams? People said habitat for fish and wildlife (35%), source of drinking water (20%), open space (14%)
- v. Engaging with waterways in Montgomery County: hiking/walking (75%), swimming/wading (36%), boat-related activities (35%) fishing (24%)
- vi. Waterway threats: pesticides, untreated sewage, chemicals, oil and gas, flooding, soil washed into water, salt spread, were a few of the top concerns:
 - 1. Some discussion in the chat about the desire to see salt higher on the list of concerns (<50% identified as a concern)
- vii. Conclusion: Residents in the Greater Philadelphia area recognize some level of value in their local streams and the issues surrounding them and important to take these results into consideration for outreach around stormwater and environmental issues

SAN updates - Looking forward to working with Meliora design on GSI projects at the Kimberton Waldorf school. This project involves a tributary stream crossing for the students and an educational space to responsibly explore. We are also in the process of working on a NFWF project at the Pickering Farm and Feed Complex.

6. News/Events/ Funding

- i. [Tree Tenders Training](#)
- ii. [Green Infrastructure Funding Microsite](#) - new funding and technical assistance resource for communities from National Wildlife Federation
- iii. [CWP SIMPLE Tool](#)

Save the Dates

- iv. **PDE Science Summit in Atlantic City, NJ - Jan 30 - Feb 1** - Hope to see you there!
- v. **SBN Annual Members Meeting - Th. Feb 2**
- vi. **Scrub and Pub - March 31st, 3pm-5pm, happy hour 5-6pm**
The Schuylkill Scrub is starting Mar 1!! We're hosting a clean-up with Upper Merion Twp. and SRG in March. After the clean-up, we will cheers to SAN's 20 years during a Happy Hour.