

## **SAN Watershed Land Collaborative Workgroup Meeting Agenda**

Tuesday, January 23, 2025

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Schuylkill River Greenways

140 College Drive

Pottstown, PA

1. **Welcome & Introductions** (10:00 -10:10) - All
  - a. Karl Russek- French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust
  - b. Ryan Brett- Berks Nature
  - c. John Harrod- PDE
  - d. Brooke Leister- Berks Nature
  - e. Marguerite DiGiorgio- PDE
  - f. Tim Fenchel- SRG
  - g. Jack Stefferud- Natural Lands
  - h. Andrew Fetterman- Berks Nature
  
2. **SAN Updates** (10:10 - 10:15)
  - a. Events
    - i. Schuylkill Scrub March 1 through May 31
      1. Upper Merion Scrub & Pub March 27 at 2-7pm
  - b. [New website](#) is live!
  
3. **Aligning Conservation Interests in the Schuylkill watershed** (10:15 - 10:45) - All
  - a. How is the Watershed Land Collaborative unique and different from existing land conservation groups
    - i. It is watershed-wide, though it needs more participation from partners in different areas of the Schuylkill watershed. SAN brings a network approach that models the value of group collaboration that this group is looking to incorporate, particularly with federal, state and local agencies
    - ii. This group was brought together to support and discuss landowner outreach which is an essential first step to landscape protection.
    - iii. This group is founded on the basis that land preservation is an integral component of protection for water quality, esp. drinking water
  - b. The core interests of the land collaborative workgroup partners are:
    - i. Identify data-sharing opportunities and challenges
    - ii. The group was interested in emulate g the Kittatiny Risge program approach involving a shared smart sheet that could track accomplishments, challenges and instances of contact with landowners in areas where Trust geographies overlap
    - iii. Addressing the major challenge of need for pre-transaction funding

1. Pre-transaction funding is a critical first step for land preservation projects
2. Funding for this step of the process is difficult to secure
- c. Reasons collaboration is important to this workgroup
  1. Sharing methodologies and best practices
  2. Level/acceleration of land preservation
- d. Partners began to generate a list of groups to invite
  1. Heritage Conservancy
  2. Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
- e. The group considered “how do we use existing tools and what are the benefits of alignment?”
  - i. Each organization presents its own prioritization score card for land acquisitions
    1. There could be an upcoming workgroup meeting where they align/compare them

**4. Upcoming Funding Opportunities to Support Collaboration (10:45 - 11:15) - All**

- a. PA DCNR C2P2
  - i. Participants strongly encourage PDE to apply for the benefit of the WLC. PDE is reviewing the RFP in anticipation of a submission
  - ii. Opened on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and closes on April 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - iii. Things to consider when writing the grant
    1. Public access and recreation are key components
      - a. Viewshed possibility a talking point can be framed as a collaborative program that helps accelerate the pace of watershed protection
- b. PA DEP Growing Greener previously submitted
  - i. PDE is waiting to hear back
- c. **Partner Shares (11:15 - 11:45) - All**
- d. Project Updates
  - i. French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust
    1. Innabah project is closing
    2. Permitting for South Branch of French Creek in underway
  - ii. Berks Nature
    1. Hawk Mountain project closed
    2. Angelica Creek Trail project is looking to bring in some property that will allow for the trail to be connect
  - iii. Natural Lands
    1. Reading material fully funded
- e. Upcoming Events
  - i. [2025 French Creek Iron Tour](#)- Sunday, June 8, 2025
    1. Registration opened Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - ii. [Watershed Congress](#)- March 29, 2025

1. At Alvernia University
  - f. Other
    - i. Natural Lands is looking for a [Director of Land Protection](#)
5. **Closing** (11:45 - 12:00) - All
  - a. Debrief on meeting accomplishments
  - b. Review of action items
  - c. Set Next Meeting Date
    - i. Bring in your score card for comparison