**SPRING CREEK WATERSHED COMMISSION**

**Regular Member Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 19, 2025,** A green map with blue text

Description automatically generated

**6:30 PM to 8:30 pm**

1481 E. College Ave, State College, Pa. 16801

**Zoom Link:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89272152245?pwd=fUevNZ5Tg0y0frnPbDx2A74ffIyG7j.1>

Meeting ID: 892 7215 2245

Passcode: 117650

1. **Call to Order: Chair Brachbill will call the meeting to order**

Note that our Member Meetings will start at 6:30pm ending at 7:30pm followed by Educational Presentation starting at 7:30pm ending at 8:30pm.

1. **Roll Call and Introductions:** Establish which Municipalities are present and recognize their representatives (Elected/Alternate).
2. **Public Comment & Written Correspondence:**

The public is invited to address Commission items not listed on the agenda. (Limit 5 min. per person). Electronic copies of comments may be submitted to SCWC and will be added to the meeting minutes. none

1. **Review & Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

Meeting Minutes from January 15th, 2025. Call for a motion and a 2nd to discuss the minutes as needed, followed by a vote of the Member Meeting. (Motion to approve by Josh Portney and seconded Bob Igo)

1. **New Agenda Items:** At this time any members wishing to add items to the agenda are requested to do so. Josh Portney requested two agenda items for our May meeting**:** Discussion on F&W Service StatusandStatus of Rockview
2. **Report on Officers and Committees:**
   1. Vice-Chair Standing Committee Reports – Bob Igo Standing Committees are meeting and developed annual plans. (See attached 2025 Work Plan)
   2. Finance Reports – Approval of Bills – Kevin Abbey – (See attached)
   3. Atlas – Jon Eaton – Two articles coming: Dave Roberts to update on status of PFAS. There will be an article by Matt Maris on the Big Spring, considering an article on Eels, Next meeting in April 17
   4. Educational Report – Jasmine Fields - Stormwater Education plan to be discussed at their meeting on 3/24
   5. AmeriCorps – Elyse Johnson & Caitlin Dooley – Reviewed the State of the Water meeting Plan (Elyse and Caitlin are at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Halfmoon Partners to the Bay trip)
3. **Old Business:**
   1. Motion for Meeting Members to propose and approve the “2025 State of the Watershed” event from 10AM - 2PM on March 27th at Millbrook Marsh’s Spring Creek Educational Center. Motion to approve Bob Igo and second Josh Portney
   2. Dave Roberts discussed the PFAS problem in Benner Township and the work that is being done by the Senior Environmental Corps. Agreement between PSU and DEP. There will be a comment period for municipalities, citizens, and groups.
4. **New Business:**
5. Doug Mason requested ($200.00) to cover the two registrations ($150) for

Doug Mason and Barbrara Fisher. Doug will be the Patton alternate while

Barbara is representing the Atlas program to attend the Watershed Congress on

March 29th in Reading. Doug also requested $50.00 to cover fuel expenses.

Amended to ~$291 total to using the $.61 milage rate. Motion to approve – Bob Igo and seconded by Josh Portney

1. SCWC Executive Committee will discuss the need for the replacement of a

member to work with the Exec. Committee and the Regular Member Meetings.

We hope to have this position filled by our next Regular Member meeting.

Randy briefly reviewed situation noting that this will be addressed before our next Exec Committee meeting in April

1. **Relevant water-related news from member Municipalities:**
   1. College (Dustin Best): Working with Clearwater on their new facility and there will be additional wellhead protections for the Shilo Road development
   2. Benner (Dave Roberts): PFAS
   3. State College (Josh Portney): mentioned that State College Water Authority is involved with resolving the Rock Spring Water Authority problem
2. **Educational Topic:** Introduction by Doug Mason

*Spring Creek Watershed MS4 Permit & Pollution Reduction Plans* - On behalf of the Spring Creek MS4 Partners, Jasmine Fields will give an informative presentation on the Spring Creek MS4 Partnership, MS4 Permits, and the Chesapeake Bay Pollution Reduction Plan.

**11) Matters of Record:**

1.See [SCWC Event](https://www.springcreekwatershedcommission.org/) Calendar for details and future postings.

The next SCWC Regular Meeting is 3/19 from 6:30-8:30 PM

2. SCWC sent support letters to “The Hamer Foundation and the Susquehanna

River Basin Commission.

1. Additional documents attached: The SCWC MS4 Permit Review Comments and Coordinating Committee 2025 Plan

**12) Adjournment** – Motion to approve Bob Igo followed by Second Dave Roberts

**Attendance:**

Bellefonte – Randy Brachbill

Benner – Dave Roberts

College – Dustin Best

Ferguson – Lisa Strickland

Harris – Bob Igo

Patton – Doug Mason

State College – Josh Portney

Guests:

Presenter – Jasmine Fields from State College and SCWC Exec Comm member

Andrew Bechdel

Jen Dombrowski

Lee Murphy

SCWC MS4 Permit Review Comments

March 18, 2025

Prepared by Elyse Johnson and Lee Murphy

You can review the “General” permit and related materials at : <https://greenport.pa.gov/elibrary/GetFolder?FolderID=1427531>

1. NOI Instructions
2. Page 7, “Impaired?”

If all surface waters in the Chesapeake Bay drainage are to be considered impaired, please say so explicitly.

1. Page 11, “Step 1 – Determine the Annualized VMO…A: Do not include impervious areas within the UA owned by another entity…”

In the Centre Region that clearly applies to PSU. Please clarify that it also applies to PennDOT.

1. Page 11, “Step 1 – Determine the Annualized…B”

The NOI implies that in order to be counted as treated area, SCMs must infiltrate (for full credit) the 1” storm. In karst geology, many developed sites should not include significant infiltration, because of the likelihood of creating a sinkhole that poses serious operation and maintenance challenges for the SCM. It is therefore not reasonable to exclude such SCMs from credit (as long as it can be shown that the logic in the PA Stormwater Manual and the Model SW Ordinance has been applied, confirming that the best feasible control has been applied). It would be helpful if DEP provided a checklist to be used in that confirmation.

Satisfactorily designed/constructed/maintained Chapter 102 BMPs should therefore qualify, as stated on page 12.

1. Page 13 “C”

The plan to use a maximum 12% untreated impervious as a 50-year goal is an improvement over the 2018 permit. It is more focused on the key urban stormwater pollution problem and easier to apply.

1. VMP Instructions
2. Page 2, “What SCMs Can Be Implemented?”

It must be clear to MS4s whether a given SCM qualifies for credit. Words like “preferably” create confusion. There will be instances in karst terrain where infiltration should be limited or totally prevented. Rather than providing a list of acceptable SCMs please consider requiring assurance that the design incorporates the Villanova approach, as described in the Stormwater Manual, and that the best possible SCM approach(es) have been used for a site.

At the bottom of page 2, it says Chapter 102/105 SCMs “may not be utilized” (because they do not always infiltrate?). That language should be reversed to agree with the NOI Instructions, top of page 12, and the discussion above about karst areas. If the Stormwater Manual logic is followed, and the best possible SCM approach is being used, the site should be credible.

1. Page 3, “Allowable Exceptions”

The dirt picked up in street sweeping is often mostly winter grit which is collected for aesthetic reasons and to reduce clogs in stormwater pipes (and sometimes to be reused). It has such a large particle size that it is generally not considered a pollutant (like sediment), and as a result, should not be credited.

General Comments:

1. The MS4 Program should never disincentive the implementation of a stormwater BMP beneficial to the environment. The 5-year accounting increments in parallel to permits should allow for banking, lookbacks, and other procedures such that delaying projects by permittees, future permittees, or deferral by geographic proximity to an urbanized area boundary is never a factor in decision-making by municipalities.

2. The permit should allow adequate and appropriate time for the requested analysis of every basin and stormwater control measure. This includes file research and rights-to-know of DEP and Conservation District files. Having accurate, science-based information as a foundation to taxpayer-funded decision-making is imperative. To provide the detail required to populate the MEP calculator, adequate time must be provided.

3. The MS4 Permit and Model Ordinance should be restricted to the MS4 legislation and avoid delving into local zoning issues like parking capacity or an icy sidewalk.

4. Collaboration by local partners, such as the Centre Region MS4 Partners, should be rewarded with credit. Combined resources respectful of taxpayer funds and consistent in their message to Target Audiences is a tenet of the MS4 Program and should be encouraged.

5. DEP and Conservation Districts should retain all responsibilities relative to Chapter 102 approvals. While certain municipalities may have staff or independent consultants to review such documents, the reviews are best left to independent regulatory agencies experienced in these matters and unbiased by boards or elected officials pressuring for favorable reviews on pet projects. Offering municipalities the opportunity to issue approvals that supersede Conservation District and DEP reviews can become problematic.

6. Given the concerns with providing specific information on every basin and underground detention system in the region to the MEP Calculator, and inadequate training on how unique features are assessed, the draft permit should be delayed. The delay should allow for:

a. Adequate review of unrealistic timelines in the permit;

b. Adequate training and responses to comments/requests for clarification; and

c. Re-drafting of the permit to resolve the noted inconsistencies between the permit and its empowering legislation.

7. Further, the permit advises that permittees must present information to environmental advocacy groups, though DEP did not advertise this MS4 draft to such groups despite DEP’s awareness of widespread public interest. Once a clean permit is produced, provide notice to all environmental advocacy groups such that a thorough review may be performed in a timely manner.

8. Some municipalities preserve and/or enhance natural stormwater volumes; how would this be accounted for in the MEP calculator for existing preserved areas and VMP for proposed preserved areas? In the case of large regional features, what level of documentation would be anticipated by the department.

9. Additional nonstructural SCM's such as conversation landscaping (i.e. Lawn conversions, tree planting) are encouraged by various environmental stakeholders. These SMC's encourage natural infiltration processes and water quality improvements through soil health. By omitting credit for these practices under the nonstructural SCM portion DEP is disincentivizing these practices and collaborations.

SPRING CREEK WATERSHED COMMISSION (SCWC)

Financial Update Report – March 17, 2025

SCWC Accounts

The Commission has two (2) separate, "custodial" accounts maintained by the Commission's fiscal agent - ClearWater Conservancy. Both accounts are audited each year as part of ClearWater's year-end audit.

1. General Administrative (Account #2304) – all administrative expenses, municipal contributions, accounts payable/receivable, meeting expenses,

Co mmunication Coordinator and AmeriCorps.

**BALANCE $47.007.74** **as of 2/28/2025**

* No activity in February
* Incudes 2025 Municipal Contributions from 9 members
* 8 townships (Benner, College, Halfmoon, Harris, Ferguson, Patton, Spring & Walker) & 1 borough - State College
* **Potter Township has indicated intent to withdraw**
* **Only Bellefonte Borough contribution is outstanding**

2. Spring Creek Watershed Plan Phase III (Account #2601) – set up in 2018 @ $16,250 to fund Watershed Phase II Planning activities. Re-named Phase III on

7/19/2023; no activity since.

**BALANCE $2,150.63 as of 2/28/2025**

3. 2025 Budget & Municipal Contributions –

* 2025 Budget adoption (9/18/24 meeting);
* The 2025 per capita share of $.15 is same level as 2024 amount.
* Budget sent to municipal members in September;
* Invoices for the 2025 annual contributions sent in October.

Respectfully submitted 3.17.2025

Kevin Abbey, Watershed Commission Treasurer

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SCWC Coordinating Committee 2025 Plan** | |  |  |  | 2/5/2025 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Committee** | **Project/Event** | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** |
| Governments | Meetings | 16-Jan | 18-Apr | 24-Jul | 16-Oct |
| Chair Kent Baker | Mapping Project - Finalize Form and Function | 16-Jan |  |  |  |
|  | Populate Map with Projects |  | 18-Apr |  |  |
|  | Stormwater Education - Identify Major Stormwater Problems |  | 18-Apr |  |  |
|  | New DEP Regulations & 2026 Program |  | 18-Apr | X | X |
|  | Participate in Stormwater Education Programs |  |  | Support | Support |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Authorities | Meetings | 27-Feb | 22-May | 28-Aug | 5-Dec |
| Chairs - Ray Stolinas, and Mike Tylka | Informational Programs | Centre Co Growth Forecasts | Pa Statewide Water Plan | Storm Water Demo | Water Quality Data Review |
|  | Mapping Review | X | X |  |  |
|  | DEP/SBA Stormwater Program |  |  | July |  |
|  | SCWC Storm Water Education Plan |  | X | X | X |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Conservation and Stewardship | Meetings (Dates TBD) | Jan & Mar | May & July | Sept & Nov |  |
| Chairs - Jim Coslo and | Live Staking Program | 27-Mar |  |  |  |
| Andrew Bechdel | Spring Clean Up w/CWC |  | Apr |  |  |
|  | Bird Net Project w/MSRKA |  | May |  |  |
|  | Tudek Park - Invasive Plant Clean Up |  | May |  |  |
|  | Develop Stormwater Education Plan | X | June |  |  |
|  | Ag Progress Days Table |  | Aug |  |  |
|  | Implement Stormwater Education |  |  | X | X |
|  | Fall Clean Up with TU |  |  | Nov |  |