

Spring Creek Watershed Commission

Regular Member Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2026



The Spring Creek Watershed Commission Regular Member Meeting was held in person at the Harris Township Municipal Building, State College, PA and via ZOOM on 2026
A recording is available at www.cnet1.org
Regular Member Meetings begin at 6:30PM and end at 7:30PM
An educational presentation follows from 7:30PM to 8:30PM

1. Call To Order

Meeting called to order by Randy Brachbill, Chair at 6:30PM

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Randy Brachbill - Bellefonte
Kevin Abbey - Ferguson
David Roberts - Benner
Olivia Lopatofsky - State College
Susan Chyczewski - Patton
Chris Murrell - Harris
Gretchen Brandt - College
Lee Murphy - College
Trevor White - Ferguson
Elyse Johnson - Watershed Coordinator,
Jon Eaton - Watershed Atlas
Deb Escalet - Americorps
Elizabeth Chrisfield- Clearwater Conservancy

3. Public Comment and Written Correspondence

No comments or correspondence received

4. Review and Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved

5. New Agenda Items

None

6. Report on Officers and Committees

a. Vice-Chair Standing Committee Report

Kevin Abbey - Regular meetings have produced good exchanges and positive results concerning issues and challenges such as Data Centers and the Rockview SCI site.

b. Treasurer's Report – Approval of Bills

Kevin Abbey -Administrative Account holds \$42823.24. All Municipal Member contributions have been received totaling \$27,444.50. The Phase III Account holds \$2150.63. Disbursements include \$180.70 for legal notices and \$1500 for the Watershed Coordinator paid in February.

c. Watershed Coordinator Report

Elyse Johnson, Watershed Coordinator - Conservation and Stewardship sign project is moving forward in partnership with the Centre County Conservation District.

The 2026 Watershed Congress in Reading, PA highlighted projects in the Delaware watershed. Barb Flsher, Donann Stoicovy, Deb Escalet and Elyse Johnson split up across various learning sessions about education, stormwater, land preservation, macroinvertebrates, native landscaping, etc.
DEP hosted a public hearing on their Climate Action Plans at Schlow Library.
PSU partnered with Barbara Fisher to record a Spring Creek watershed sound track.

d. AmeriCorp Member Report

Deb Estalet reported on the Muddy Paws first grade field trip in Pennsylvania Valley.
Americorps assisted in watershed cleanup day and water quality sampling at 22 sites.

e. Atlas Committee Updates

Jon Eaton - A new article on the Prehistory of the Spring Creek Watershed will be added to the Atlas along with an article on Chlorides.

f. Conservation & Stewardship Committee Updates

Partners are working together to build the Acres MyWork program summer work plan for this summer.
The ongoing sign project is nearing completion, with additional signs for Talleyrand Park in development.

g. Governments Committee Update

Kent Baker is stepping down as Chair. Consideration of a new Chair and possible reorganization is needed.
Committee members include township and MS4 engineers interfacing with SCWC concerning multiple issues including the separation of stormwater from sewer systems.

h. Authorities Committees Update

The Committee continues to focus on Rockview SCI and assessment of Data Center impacts.

i. Grants Committee Update

The Grants Committee is under reorganization.

7. Old Business

a. SCI Rockview

Kevin presented a summary of SCWC presentations to Member Municipalities explaining the proposed action to send a letter to Governor Shapiro. All Members were supportive of the letter. A draft letter was presented for discussion. Chris Murrell made a Motion for the SCWC to sign and send a letter to the Governor concerning Rockview water resources and future land usage. Chyczewski seconded the Motion. A vote was called and the Motion was approved unanimously. Jon Eaton added that protection of the underlying aquifers at the Rockview site is needed.

b. Stormwater Workgroup's Tudek Park Regenerative Stormwater Project

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission's Consumptive Use Mitigation Grant Program has awarded \$41,640.00 to the Spring Creek Watershed Commission's Stormwater Workgroup to implement the Tudek Regenerative Stormwater Project. This is a partnership with Fish & Boat, Keystone Water Resources, and a PSU engineering capstone students. Restoration, signage, and monitoring are all part of the project to reduce stormwater flash. All SRBC Consumptive Use Mitigation Grant 2026 Awardees can be viewed here::

<https://www.srbcc.gov/our-work/grants/consumptive-use-mitigation-grant-awards-2026.html>

c. Watershed Cleanup Day - 820+ volunteers picked up over 19,000 pounds of trash.

8. New Business

a. ACRES MyWork Program - the 2026 MyWork program is open for summer projects. Projects include Centre County CAP meadow conversions, invasive removal, watershed care, and monitoring activities for young workers.

b. 2026-2027 Americorps Service - Following discussion of the value Americorps offers a Motion was made by Kevin and seconded by David to submit a full-time PMSC Americorps Member application by May 26. The Motion passed unanimously.

c. Election of Officers - Randy Brachbill announced he is stepping down as Chair as he is moving. Kevin Abbey was nominated and approved as the new Chair. Chris Murrell was nominated and approved as Vice Chair. Gretchen Brandt was nominated and approved as Member at Large

9. Relevant water-related news from member municipalities -

PA Water Aqua merger

Ferguson Township - Rock Springs water system issues

10. Educational Topics - Natural Resources of Rockview SCI Lands

Elizabeth from ClearWater Conservancy presented an overview of the potential for science based use of the natural resources at the Rockview site in preparation for possible divestment of the lands from the State since the main prison closure. The long history of the site has preserved a valuable land, forest, agriculture, and water resource between the State College and Bellefonte development areas. The site comprises a large percentage of the Spring Creek Watershed and hold great potential as a community asset. The region has a long conservation history as exemplified by the previous Rockview divestiture that created the Benner Spring Creek Canyon Conservation Area and opened a vital part of the Spring Creek fishery to the public. The BioGeography and Forest Connectivity values are very high for the Rockview site. Visioning includes a wildlife corridor from Mount Nittany to the Spring Creek Canyon Trails with riparian buffers and recreational green way trails. The nationally recognized Spring Creek trout fishery is near a tipping point from excess impervious surfaces leading to thermal degradation and sedimentation that could seriously deplete trout habitat and survivability. There is an urgent need to address impervious surfaces, recharge groundwater, and treat stormwater. The watershed has exceeded nominal impervious surface threshold of 10% area since 1995. The watershed is already over 18% covered in impervious surfaces. The letter sent to Governor Shapiro in March 2026 calls for transparency, a greenway path as a legacy project, state of the art stormwater protection for development within the Rockview site, prime farmland conservation, and preservation of the Mt Nittany forested lands.

10. Matters of Record:

1. Next Regular Meeting July 15, 2026 location TBD
2. Atlas Meetings - 5/21, 6/18.
3. Authorities Committee Meetings - 5/28
4. Conservation & Stewardship Meetings - 7/14

11. Adjournment