

## **Little Juniata River Association Meeting**

The monthly meeting of Little Juniata River Association was held on October 13, 2022 at Marzoni's Restaurant. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by President Bill Anderson. The meeting started with those present introducing themselves.

### **Plantings along river devastated.**

New LJRA Director, Angie Spagnoli, voiced concern over an area of the river near the Northern Blair Recreation Center that has been damaged by Penelec. They mowed, sprayed and cut everything in a large area under the power line. Much work had been done by Angie and numerous volunteers in planting 1500 shrubs and trees. Unfortunately, everything was destroyed. It appears that the First Energy contractors may have cut and sprayed well beyond their easement and what was necessary for line safety. Pictures will be taken and measurements made to see if they extended beyond their right of way. Bill will contact Penelec to find out who is in charge of doing this clearing and set up a meeting with them. Note: contact with FE Penelec has proven to be unproductive so far.

Angie also informed the group of an Environmental Education Event to be held November 5, 2022. There will be 20 young people divided into 5 groups which will rotate through 6 stations. The stations are: Birds, Wetlands, Invasive Plants and Climate Change, Reptiles and Amphibians, Native Plants and Fly Casting. The LJRA will be presenting the Fly-Casting Station. There is room for more kids, if you know of a school group or others let us know.

### **Public Fishing Access**

Bill Passed out a map showing the public fishing easements that have been acquired by the LJRA and went over the map in detail. The easement areas are Alyson Road access 3 miles, Greene Hills access 1.5 miles and Dopps (handicap dock) 0.3 miles for a total of 4.8 miles. The Rothrock Forest stretch is also public. Fish and Boat holds the easements. We did all the facilitation, raised the money and handed the land owners the checks. Then Fish and Boat took over. We would like to obtain access below Route 305. It was owned by Max Isenberg who died and now is owned by his son Gordy. Hopefully, we will be able to get that stretch from 305 to the mouth in the future. On the upper river we now have 0.6 miles which is owned by the Walker family. This is on the River Road just past

New Pig. LJRA is working to get more miles of secure public access on the upper river. LJRA also pays for 2 miles of access at Pemberton Quarry to New Enterprise Stone and Lime. LJRA has paid for 3 years at a rate of \$5,000/ year through 2022. The lease will come due again in early spring. We are still trying to get Fish and Boat to pick that cost up because essentially we are creating and maintaining a public resource for fishing and boating. So far New Enterprise is not interested in a permanent easement.

### **New Spruce Creek Fishing Access**

There is new fishing access on Spruce Creek. It was purchased by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and deeded over to the Pa. Fish and Boat Commission. It was originally the Indian Caverns property. The regulations are catch and release, artificial lures only. There is approx. 800 feet of new stream access with these rules.

Four members from LJRA took part in a riparian tree planting at the Indian Caverns site on October 5. One hundred and ten trees were planted. Volunteers from other groups were also there to help out. Fish and Boat has completed extensive fish habitat structure throughout the new stretch. Bill showed some photos of what it looks like now. It will be bank only fishing with no wading.

### **Rutters Planned Truck Stop in Sandy Run Watershed**

Gary Miller informed the group there is nothing new concerning the Rutters project at Pinecroft. As previously stated there could be as many as fifty three semis parked there at one time with potential run off and leaks into Sandy Run which is a Class A Wild Brown Trout stream and also Sandy Run wetlands which is Exceptional Value. Gary has sent messages to DEP and has not received a response. (We heard from DEP there has been no decision as yet).

### **Raw sewage flows into Little Juniata**

Bill gave an update on the Altoona Water Authority who is doing a study on their combined (storm water sewage) outflow system. Every time it rains significantly, the river gets a shot of raw sewage. Millions of cubic feet of raw sewage come down the river along with the storm water. AWA management have appointed a committee and are doing a 5 year study which is being done by Gwin, Dobson Engineers. They are keeping LJRA involved with what they are doing and are sharing information obtained. Altoona has the largest total discharge of any of the 35 municipalities with similar systems in Pa. They are in violation of the Clean

Water Act and the Chesapeake Bay agreement for pollution budgeted to the Susquehanna River Basin. However, they are grandfathered because their system was built over 100 years ago. LJRA will continue to monitor this study.

### **LJRA Banquet this winter**

It was decided that there will be a Winter banquet to be held around the second week in January. The venue is still to be determined. Possible sites are Greenwood Lodge and the U.S. Hotel. Let Bill know if anyone has other suggestions.

A final question was asked concerning lowering the paper mill dam. Bill said that he has not yet been able to talk to paper mill management concerning this. It was noted that the dam is completely fenced in and there is no access to the dam for fishing. Bill said that they are doing this because of liability concerns.

**The next LJRA meeting will be held on November 10, 2022, 7pm Marzonis Restaurant.** Notice will be sent via email.

A motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The meeting ended at 8:40 PM.

Lee Pryor, Secretary