

Little Juniata River Association Meeting

A meeting of the LJRA was held on November 10, 2022 at Marzonis Restaurant. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Bill Anderson, President. The meeting began with those present introducing themselves.

Bells Gap Reservoir Drawdown

There was discussion concerning Bells Gap Reservoir which is currently being drained down. Brown trout were introduced into the reservoir some time ago which compete with the brook trout. One of the goals of the LJRA has been to reduce the number of brown trout in Bells Gap Run possibly by electro shocking and removing them to the Little Juniata. We still have plans to do this. On a previous draw down of the reservoir, we were there and found no brook trout, several big brown trout, many sun fish and many suckers. It was noted that there will also be a drawdown of the Tipton Reservoir. Bill will check into why the Tipton Reservoir is being drawn down. It may be that they are using it in lieu of Bells Gap Reservoir.

Rutters Development in Sandy Run Watershed

Bill gave an update on the Rutters Project. They will have parking spaces for 53 semis. The problem with the location is that it is right in the Sandy Run drainage. All the storm water draining off that site is going to go into the Sandy Run Wetlands. We are concerned that it will endanger one of our major cold water sources in the upper Little Juniata. Sandy Run is a class A wild Trout stream and a major spawning tributary. There was a public hearing on August 8th with about 100 people attending. We were there and gave our testimony expressing our concerns for this project. So far there is nothing back from DEP and Rutters cannot start any kind of construction until they get approval

Special Regulations for Upper River

The next item of business was Bill's meeting with PFBC Commission, Eric Husar, concerning getting C&R All Tackle regulations in place for the entire Little Juniata River. Eric is very much in favor of C&R and at one time proposed this for all Class A wild trout streams in Pennsylvania. This proposal did not go through. However, he agreed to support our goal of C&R regulations on the entire river all the way to

Sandy Run. There will be a presentation concerning this to the commissioners in Harrisburg in January. All LJRA members are invited to attend this meeting. A show of members would be a helpful influence. Bill assured Eric that we do not expect push back from the public as long as we stick with C&R All Tackle.

Raw Sewage Release in River

Bill informed the group that the Altoona Water Authority study is still underway. He is still convinced that they are primarily trying to prove that the combined bypasses do not harm the river. They hired an engineering firm, Gwen Dobson, to do a five year study of the sewage releases which occur every time it rains hard. When this happens, they open a valve and the rain water and sewage all go down the river. They are keeping us involved and we are going to take a hard look at their findings and we may hire our own expert to review their proposals when they are finished.

LJRA Winter Banquet mid-January

There are plans for a Winter Banquet in mid-January. We will probably do it at Marzonis unless someone comes up with another suggestion. The US Hotel in Hollidaysburg is another alternative as well as Evergreen on Route 453.

LJRA Co-sponsors Environmental Education at Northern Blair Recreation Center site.

LJRA Director, Angie Spagnoli spoke on the Environmental Education Event for cyber school kids. They had 5 stations: fly casting, stream ecology, birding, wetlands which included reptiles and amphibians, and tree planting. They put in 85 trees in the ground in an area that was destroyed by the power company. They came in and removed all the vegetation which included a thousand native trees that she had planted over the last six years. Hopefully, some will grow back. Jerry Green from Trout Unlimited came and brought a native trout that he had caught that morning which he had in an aquarium. They also did some kick netting for macro invertebrate identification. Angie said the purpose of the event was to tie in all of the components of the ecosystem and why all of the pieces are important and to get the kids to experience nature and the outdoors. It ran from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturday, November 8th. and was a very successful event.

Public Fishing Easements

A question was asked concerning any plans for acquiring additional public access to the river? Bill stated that possibilities are the Watts Tree Farm area and a stretch of river across from the Rite Aid Drug Store on Rt 220. There are also still many miles of river for future consideration.

A motion for adjournment was made and carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was ended at 8:55 PM. There will be no monthly meeting in December.

Lee Pryor, Secretary