

Little Juniata River Association  
Meeting August 10, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Bill Anderson, President.

Directors present were: Bill Anderson, Scott Kavanaugh, Gary Miller, Carl Reed, Logan Stenger and Lee Pryor.

**Rutters Update**

Eric Oliver gave an update on the Rutters Project. Since the last meeting there hasn't been any sampling events. The Conservation District was there and they have beefed up controls and hopefully we will not see mud flowing into the stream. Bill observed that the rain had cut grooves under the silt fences and silt socks indicating that there is still a problem with run off. We will keep the Conservation District apprised of any additional problems that come up.

**Bells Gap Reservoir Project**

Bells Gap Reservoir has been drained completely and they are doing major work on the dam and the spillway. They are also dredging the reservoir to increase the depth and capacity of the dam. One big rain event in May washed out the channel they had made causing a large amount of mud to gush down Bells Gap Run and into the Little Juniata River. Disposal of the dredged material is on hold as the Altoona Water Authority can no longer take it to Reed Township as they no longer want it. Some of the sediment is being piled up below the dam and will have to be removed eventually. They may be taking water from the Kettle Reservoir while this project is ongoing. There is a concern as to what this is doing to the brook trout population below Kettle Reservoir. This is something we also need to monitor. We are still unsure as to whether they are going to include a larger conservation release. The conservation release before this project was 12 feet. They had indicated in the past that they would make it much deeper.

**Stream Improvement Work on Warriors Mark Run**

Logan Stenger gave an update on a stream restoration project on Warriors Mark Run. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and the WesternPA Conservancy are conducting this project. The goal of this project is to address streambank erosion and improve fish habitat. There is approximately 8,000 feet of stream that will be restored on Warriors Mark Run. The total reduction added together would be 676 tons of sediment, 1,154 pounds of nitrogen, and 386 pounds of phosphorus. Those are annual reductions so each year that is how much less is going into Warriors Mark Run and the Little Juniata River.

**Pending Electro-shocking Survey by PFBC**

Since the first of August PFBC has been attempting to get 3 days of low water availability on the Little Juniata to repeat the trout survey that they did back in 2010. They may do the survey August 16, 17 and 18 if the weather cooperates. The three sections to be surveyed are 300 meters downstream from Shoenberger Bridge, 300 meters downstream from Pemberton Bridge and upstream from the Barree Bridge. Bill invited Bryan Chikotas to come to our meeting and present the results of those surveys possible in November.

### **Brook Trout Protection in Bells Gap Run**

There has been concern for some time that the brown trout population is overtaking the brook trout in Bells Gap Run. This may be a good time with the reservoir being empty to try to significantly reduce the number of browns in the Run. Ken Undercoffer presented data starting in 1995 that showed the brown trout population was increasing. We also see this as an opportunity to study Bells Gap Run and find out why the general trout population is declining. This is confirmed by those who fish it on a regular basis. Denny Johnson and George Marovich of Juniata College along with senior environmental students have agreed to design a study to try to determine what is happening to the trout population in Bells Gap Run. Fish and Boat will also be involved in this project. Juniata College has agreed to do the electro-shocking and provide the equipment. This may be done sometime in September or October. A question was asked concerning taking the brown trout out of the cold water of Bells Gap Run and putting them into the warmer water of the Little Juniata. Would this be detrimental to the trout? The water of the Little Juniata in September and October should be cooler which hopefully would give them time to adapt. Another solution would be to release them to a part of the river that maintains a lower temperature such as the Shoenberger Bridge which seldom goes above 70 degrees. At this point we will wait for the Fish and Boat response and then we will bring Juniata College into the discussion to proceed from there.

### **DelGrossos Sauce**

A concern was voiced regarding a large batch of bad sauce from DelGrossos was dumped down their drain. The Logan Treatment plant couldn't handle that amount so it was bypassed into the river. It is not known what effect this may have had on the fish as not many people fish this section who would have observed a problem. Bill plans to have a talk with DelGrossos management concerning this issue. What plan to they have in place to make sure it doesn't happen again?

### **Fall Streambank Clean-up**

Veeder Root has a group of people that wants to do a streambank clean-up. This would be an opportunity for us to do a high incident area clean-up this fall. We pay for the dumping fees. If there is interest, we will organize the clean-up.

### **Unowned Land Along River**

There was discussion concerning an unowned piece of land that is located downstream from the Grier School on the right hand side after going through the cut. You must make a hard right turn to access it. Squatters have lived there from time to time and there is always a lot of garbage at that location. We have an LJRA member who is trying to buy it so that we can take control and stop the trash.

### **Tee Shirt Sale**

Logan is willing to coordinate a tee shirt sale/fund raiser. More information on this will be forthcoming.

A motion for adjournment was made and carried by common consent. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Lee Pryor  
Secretary