

Little Juniata River Association
March 13, 2025

The LJRA met at Marzonis Restaurant on March 13, 2025 for their regular monthly meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Bill Anderson, President. Directors present were Bill Anderson, William King, Scott Kavenaugh, Logan Stanger, Ron Kuntz, Joe Reese, Carl Reed, and Lee Pryor.

2025 Riverbank Clean-Up

Our clean-up of the river bank will be on April 12 at 9:00 A.M. Bill passed around a sign-up sheet for those that may be interested in being group leaders. Group leaders should arrive around 8:15 to 8:30 A.M. to receive their assignments and supplies.

Summary of Results from the LJRA Board Meeting

Each year the Directors meet to review our actions from the prior year and the goals we set and whether we achieved them. Bill reviewed our mission statement which is to “monitor, protect, and improve the Little Juniata River and its tributaries as a public cold-water fishery for present and future generations”. He also stated what our vision and objectives are for the future.

Public Easement Program

There is a new person at Fish and Boat who is in charge of easement programs. Her name is Penny Ayres. An easement is an agreement with a land owner which provides for access for the purpose of fishing and boating only. At this point agreements have been signed with five different land owners comprising almost five miles of the river bank in the lower river from the Rothrock State Forest to the mouth of the river. We have other land owners who would like to be involved in this program. One of the high priority sites is the Morrow property. The previous owner died and her son is looking to sell it in three or four parcels. Bill and Penny have been in contact with the son concerning an easement arrangement. The cost for this could be quite high. Bill and Penny have also been in contact with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to possibly obtain funding for this project. Penny will also be talking to George Bonsell who is interested in an easement for his property which runs from the Grazierville exit downstream to Thomastown. The other potential project is the Jacobus property at Watts Spring. The owners died several years ago and the property is now in the hands of their children. There are plans to meet with them at some point to see if there is interest in pursuing an easement for this stretch of the river.

Project on Bells Gap Run

There is a project coming up June 15,16 on Bells Gap Run. This is part of the Bellwood Antis new trail project of which about two miles have been completed. Volunteers are needed, to help out with this work. The stone has already been delivered which was discounted by 50%. Thank you very much to New Enterprise Stone and Lime.

Position of Vice President for LJRA

It was decided at the Directors Meeting that a Vice President was needed and Angie Spagnoli has agreed to fill this position. Her responsibilities will be grants, environmental activities, and other duties as needed.

Summer Banquet

The summer banquet will be on June 7 at River Edge. The banquet committee will again be Angie Spagnoli and Joe Reese.

Altoona Water Authority's Combined Sewer Overflows

A combined system is one in which sewage and storm water go into the same treatment plant. A heavy rain overloads the system and when this happens a valve is turned which bypasses the plant and raw sewage goes into the river. The AWA was directed by DEP to do a study to evaluate the impact on the river of the release of this sewage after a rainfall event. This was to be a three year study which has now been going on for five years. Our group will request a representative from Gwin Dobson Engineers who did this study to attend a meeting of our group to present their findings.

Question Concerning the Paper Mill Dam

Is there any further action being taken to make the dam more accessible to trout moving upstream? Bill stated that when we approached the Mill about this several years ago, our plan was to drop the dam height and ramp it up so that the fish could make passage. The Mill's concern was that they needed the dam water for fire protection. We asked how much water was needed but did not get an answer. There have been changes in management at the Mill and we will be contacting them again.

With no other business to be discussed a motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The ending time was 8:45 P.M.

Lee Pryor, Secretary

