



REPORT ON MCCD

July 2022

By Paula Heeschen for Brodhead Watershed Association

MCCD discusses Brodhead upgrade petition; continues efforts to combat tainted fill

THE MCCD Board agreed to provide a letter of support to the Brodhead Watershed Association for its petition to upgrade a segment of the Brodhead Creek. District board member Craig Todd, who's also past president of the BWA, said BWA is seeking letters of support for the upgrade of the mainstream of the Brodhead from the confluence with Paradise Street up to the headwaters of the Middle Branch.

Biologic studies indicate high macroinvertebrate scores for the stream, Todd said.

The board approved the letter, which BWA plans to submit with the petition at the end of August with support from agencies and key property owners.

Stream classifications are based on biology and can affect how development occurs in the watershed. Todd will discuss stream biology and the upgrade process at the August meeting.

MCCD continues to educate the public and municipal officials on how to protect themselves and their property from contaminated fill. Some haulers from New York and New Jersey, which have tight disposal regulations, often advertise "fill" at low cost or even free to unwitting Pennsylvanian property owners for use on lawns or landscaping.

Part of the MCCD effort, head Resource Conservationist Lori Kerrigan said, involves assuring township officials that they have the authority to act in cases of tainted fill, which can reach waterways and damage fish and aquatic life. The district tells local officials who refer complaints to the district, "You guys have this authority," Kerrigan said. Many municipalities have a dumping ordinance but either don't realize it, or don't enforce it. Part of the problem is that local zoning officers are "constantly in rotation" in and out of the position, she said, so it's a constant challenge to keep them informed on what they are able to do.

"I think it's going to be about meeting the supervisors," and educating them about their authorities.

Kerrigan also has sent the county Planning Commission potential draft ordinances for municipalities.

The state Department of Environmental Protection is aware of the problem and lending support, she added. The department sent Internet links pertinent to clean fill regulations that the district can place on its website.

District Manager Kristina Heaney also continues to work with other agencies to promote education and outreach.

"Education is definitely our greatest tool," she said. "We need to go after municipal leadership. That's my next strategy of attack." The district will try to get on the agenda of the county Council of Governments, which meets monthly.

In other business, the Board:

Approved hiring Colleen Lidon to the Environmental Education staff. An East Stroudsburg University graduate, she has worked for the Wildlands Conservancy and is education coordinator at camp.

Learned that the no-till drill is being stored in the county prison barn. Starting in August, the program will go live. No-till drilling better keeps soil on farm fields.

Heard that work continues to prepare for next year's Agriculture Day.

Noted a donation to Kettle Creek Environmental Education Fund that will expand the kayak program. The money will go toward the purchases of more kayaks, paddles, jackets and trailers. The district will touch base with the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau to help promote the program and other Kettle Creek offerings. "That's a great opportunity" to showcase the area's natural beauty and environment, Heaney said, noting that an enhanced kayak program will bring more people to the district, including the building.

Acknowledged the growing success of the Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program, noting that under Resource Conservation Specialist John Motz it has expanded from about \$10,000 a year to \$240,000. Dirt and gravel roads contribute dust and sediment, which can reach and pollute area streams and waterways. The road maintenance program aims to assist local officials to better maintain them to curb pollution. Heaney noted that with the latest allocation, DEP has commended Monroe County for its work. "Hats off to John," she said, "It is the most successful dirt and gravel program in the state."

Commended the technical section for a successful day working with area engineering firms and interns. The program involved touring various sites to demonstrate how best management practices, including rain gardens, green roof and other techniques, help keep soil on construction sites and out of waterways.

THE NEXT DISTRICT BOARD MEETING WILL BE AT 8 A.M. ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2022. The MCCD board meets at Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center, 8050 Running Valley Road, Bartonsville.