

Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee
02 October 2023, 5:00pm EDT
Agenda

Call to order & roll call

Mission and purpose of the Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee (LCWAC), as resolved September 23, 2004.

Minutes of previous meetings

Proposed Agenda for this meeting:

- 1. Welcome new Lewis Creek Watershed Committee member – Randolph Bertin**
- 2. Acknowledgement of and remarks by fellow citizens present**, and recent public interactions and/or local press reported by LCWAC members – **All**.
- 3. Ongoing monthly E. Coli testing of 12 sites throughout the Lewis Creek Watershed**, by City of Staunton, Department of Public Works – **All**
- 4. Remediation of PCBs in the Lewis Creek Watershed** – update & next steps by CSX, Buckingham Branch, EPA, DEQ, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA), and the City of Staunton – Fred B. has now spoken with all stakeholders except CSX. **EPA Project Manager Ruth Prince** previously indicated she can Zoom with us both this coming Fall and next Spring to brief us on the final CSX remediation plan and activities.
- 5. Staunton's "Flood Awareness System"** – special guest - **Kurt Plowman, City of Staunton IT**, will talk about Staunton's flood monitoring system.
- 6. Education & Youth Projects - Fred**
 - a. Trout Unlimited "Trout in the Classroom" (TIC) in Staunton Public Schools -now permanent to SPS 5th Grade curriculum, and being planned as follows:**
 - i. Ware Elementary – 5th grade teacher Shane Brubaker + 65 students** continue to maintain tank from Fall 2022 through 2023-24 school year.
 - ii. Bessie Weller Elementary – 5th grade teacher Ashley Cole** now has a new tank up and running; ongoing awareness needed with Weller Woods Project to ensure health of Asylum Creek for planned trout release in Spring 2024
 - iii. Shelburne Middle School – 6th grade teacher Kirsten Evans + some students from Shane's prior 5th grade class** now have a new tank running.
 - iv. Plan for McSwain Elementary program in Fall 2024 – teacher TBD; plus, support from Staunton High School Nature Trail Project, and new teacher/leader Nate Lawrence** - possible release site for McSwain trout
 - b. TIC @ Stuart Hall - teacher Catherine Badalamenti + 10 students in their Environmental Club** – now have last year's tank up and running again.

7. **LCWAC + FOMR** – quick discussion about continued partnership and collaboration between Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee and Friends of the Middle River – Fred attended most recent FOMR Board meeting. ***FOMR representative to LCWAC is Marion Bittinger.***
- a. **Clean-ups across greater Middle River Watershed, including Lewis Creek**
 - b. ***Probable expansion of FOMR's Benthic Monitoring Program within Staunton's Lewis Creek Watershed*** - to be managed by LCWAC - any interest?!? – **ALL FOMR Members who have volunteered to date:**
Paul Bugas, Whit Morris, Lonnie Neavear, Howard & Jan Kator

8. **Staunton's Adopt-a-Stream Program – Fred, Pete & Willow**

- i. **Shenandoah Valley Club of the Deaf (SVCD) @ VSDB / Lewis Creek** – application submitted and have already completed their first clean-up; new signs being designed and produced – **Pete and/or Willow**

Possible additions to the program:

- ii. **YMCA Youth Corps – Stephanie Mason (YMCA Student Programming Coordinator & SPS School Board) – Buttermilk Spring along Stuart Street at Jones Garden AND possibly Lewis Creek at YMCA Farm**
- iii. **Asylum Creek @ Weller Woods – Staunton Rotary Club (the Noon Club)**
- iv. **Stuart Hall – (teacher Hunter Murray?) - Lewis Creek along New Hope Road @ Stuart Hall Ballfields**
- v. **Staunton High School's "EARL Club" – the creek running behind SHS and running through their proposed Nature Trail Project (creek name?)**
- vi. **Other local neighborhood interests – *possible additional stretches:***
 - 1. ***Asylum Creek, upstream from Weller Woods***
 - 2. ***Buttermilk Spring, up & down stream from Jones Garden***
 - 3. ***Lewis Creek along New Hope Road***

9. **Stream Naming Project**, for consistency across Lewis Creek Watershed – **Doug**

- a. **Peyton's Creek**
- b. **Creek running behind Staunton High School – historic name?**

10. **Wharf Parking Lot Painting Project** – Let's paint the Wharf parking lot to show where Lewis Creek runs underneath! – **Fred Coye H.**

- a. **Possible partner – *Staunton Outside Arts* – local project throughout October**

Consideration of future agendas & possible guest speakers for upcoming meetings:

November 2023 – *Ruth Prince, EPA Project Manager*, about CSX's PCB Remediation proposal.

Spring 2024 – *Ruth Prince, EPA Project Manager*, about CSX's PCB Remediation progress.

LCWAC meeting adjournment.

Primary resources for continuing reference by LCWAC:

Decision Rationale of Total Maximum Daily Loads for Aquatic Life Use Impairment on Lewis Creek in Augusta County, Virginia, as published by US EPA, Water Protection Division on 02 August 2006 (9 pages)

Consideration of UVA Green Infrastructure Strategies for Staunton, VA, as published December 11, 2009 (Water Resources Policies & Strategies, pages 91-116)

Consideration of UVA Lewis Creek Subwatershed – Stormwater Management Site Analysis & Masterplan, as published 2011 (46 pages)

City of Staunton, Virginia MS4 Program Plan 2018-2023, as updated 4/29/2020; General Permit No. VAR040132, for the Virginia Stormwater Management Program, General Permit Registration Statement, for Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4).

PCB Total Maximum Daily Load Development for Lewis Creek, Staunton, Virginia, as prepared by Department of Biological Systems Engineering, Virginia Tech & Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and as submitted by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, ***Draft Report*** published June 2021 (80 pages, plus Appendices)

Trout Unlimited's "Trout in the Classroom" (TIC) - Trout, Steelhead and Salmon in the Classroom (TIC or SIC) enhances science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics curriculums. Students study and raise trout from eggs to fingerlings (small fish) in a coldwater aquarium during the school year. It is a unique opportunity used to teach the relevance of watersheds. Where permitted, the program culminates with a field trip to a community stream, river, lake, or pond where students release their fish into a state-approved location.

<https://www.troutintheclassroom.org/>

Partnerships are at the Core of the Program's Success - In many areas, Trout Unlimited chapter and council volunteers facilitate the program in partnership with state or federal agencies at public and/or private schools. However, a variety of partnerships exist between other non-profits, agencies, private businesses, and individuals to make the program happen.

Staunton City Schools Proposal for Staunton High School Outdoor Learning Space and Nature Trail