

Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee
02 June 2025, 5:00pm EST
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. ***Acknowledgement of and remarks by fellow citizens present***, and recent public interactions and/or local press reported by LCWAC members – **All**.
2. **Guest Speaker: Darren Smith, SDDA Executive Director**
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 spoken with all stakeholders except CSX or their consultant.
5. ***Clean the Bay Day 2025***: Saturday, 07 June, begin 9-10 am and finish by 12 Noon.
 - a. Contact **Principle at Bessie Weller?** and a representative of **Columbia Gas?**
 - b. Site #1 - Gum Spring Branch in Gypsy Hill Park - begin at West Picnic Pavilion, at Poplar Street Entrance - led by Skyline Rotary & JMU Valley Scholars

Site #2 - Asylum Creek, at Bessie Weller Elementary - begin in Weller Woods - led by Staunton Rotary

Site #3 - Buttermilk Spring, begin at Jones Garden - led by YMCA Youth Volunteer Corps

Site #4 - Lewis Creek, begin at lower VSDB entrance at Kalorama - led by Shenandoah Valley Club for the Deaf - limited to volunteers proficient in American Sign Language

Site #5 - Lewis Creek, begin behind Columbia Gas Office at corner of Commerce & Coalter - led by Friends of the Middle River - limited to adult volunteers who are able to endure high brush and a deep ravine

Site #6 - YMCA fields, limited to YMCA members and Youth Volunteer Corps

6. Future Visions of Daylighted Streams—

- a. Wharf structural issues in Spring 2025
 - i. Any updates? — **Willow or Jeff?**
- b. Ideas for broader community collaboration, communication, etc.— **All**

7. LCWAC + FOMR – continued partnership and collaboration between *Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee and Friends of the Middle River*

- a. ***Expansion of FOMR's Benthic Monitoring Program within Staunton's Lewis Creek Watershed*** – eventually to be managed locally by LCWAC?
- b. ***Nutrient & Environmental Testing*** – possible adoption of St. Mary's River Watershed ***"BOB" test kits***

8. Storm Drain Art Projects —

- a. Potential locations for storm drain murals
- b. Potential funding sources for murals (supplies, artists)
- c. City approval

9. Education & Youth Projects -

- a. **Trout Unlimited "Trout in the Classroom" (TIC) in Staunton Public Schools -now permanent to *SPS 5th Grade curriculum*: Congratulations for a successful year**
- b. **TIC @ Stuart Hall - *teacher Catherine Badalamenti and their STUwards ClubFuture***

10. Staunton's Adopt-a-Stream Program – (can be accessed on City of Staunton website here: <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/departments/community-development/environmental-programs-division/adopt-a-stream-program>)

- i. **Shenandoah Valley Club of the Deaf (SVCD) @ VSDB / Lewis Creek – *Lead project participant***; two (2) signs installed at VSDB; twice-annual clean-ups already being accomplished since 2023— **Fred**

- ii. **West End Business Association: West Beverly Street**

Possible additions to the program – *Fall 2024 - Spring 2025 planning*:

- iii. **Peyton's Creek / Buttermilk Spring along Stuart Street at Jones Garden AND possibly Lewis Creek at YMCA Farm - *YMCA Youth Corps – Stephanie Mason (YMCA Student Programming Coordinator & SPS School Board)***

- iv. **Peyton's Creek / Buttermilk Spring west of Jones Garden** – *Middle River Outfitters*
- v. **Asylum Creek @ Weller Woods** – *Staunton Rotary Club (the "Noon Club")*
- vi. **Lewis Creek along New Hope Road @ Stuart Hall Ballfields** - *Stuart Hall STUwards Club*
- vii. **Unnamed (Opie?) Creek running behind SHS and through their proposed Nature Trail Project** - *Staunton High School's "EARL Club", led by Nate Lawrence*
- viii. **Other local neighborhood interests – possible additional sections:**
 - 1. **Asylum Creek**, neighborhood upstream from Weller Woods
 - 2. **Peyton's Creek / Buttermilk Spring**, downstream from Jones Garden
 - 3. **Lewis Creek**, behind Maple Street neighborhood

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

- a. Creek running behind Staunton High School – Opie Creek?

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

Spring 2025 – Darren Smith, Executive Director, Staunton Downtown Development Association (SDDA)

Spring 2025 – Ruth Prince, PhD Toxicologist, EPA Project Manager (via Zoom)

Spring 2025 – LCWAC Public Forum about PCBs in Lewis Creek – local kick-off of EPA final draft of CSX's "Risk-Based Disposal Approval Application" (RBDAA), and the ensuing 30-day comment period immediately after. **Possible venues** – Rotary Pavilion in Montgomery Hall Park, or Gymnasium in Gypsy Hill Park

Summer 2025 – EPA Public Forum about PCBs in Lewis Creek – in response to comments received during the 30-day public comment period to the EPA final draft of CSX's "Risk-Based Disposal Approval Application" (RBDAA); **Possible venues** – Rotary Pavilion in Montgomery Hall Park, or Gymnasium in Gypsy Hill Park

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).

City of Staunton, Virginia MS4 Annual Report, dated 9/27/2023, for Permit Cycle 2, Year 5, -01 July 2022 through 30 June 2023; General Permit No. VAR040132

Both preceding documents can be downloaded from City of Staunton website here:
<https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/departments/community-development/environmental-programs-division/ms4-program>

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