

Penn's Woods West Trout Unlimited

Board Meeting—October 1, 2020

TU Mission: To conserve, protect and restore North America's Coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

Attendees: Ian, Chuck, Christian, Bob Bukk, Ed, Bryan

Topics (Meeting Opened 7:30 PM):

- 1) Welcome and call to order
 - a) June Minutes... motion to approve by Ed, 2nd: Bryan. **<passed>**
 - b) Chair & officer reports –
 - i) Conservation (details listed below). Working on strategy around our conservation efforts and connecting with other conservation organizations in the area and state, most are listed in the report. Chuck asked for more information on 'watershed groups' – Bryan indicated that it's often formal organizations/coalitions including conservation districts and municipalities.
 - ii) Finance. Treasurer's report below, some discussion of a more formal financial review sign off/report. Ed is happy to work with Walt to further define the format – Ed is more than willing to accept input.
- 2) Old Business
 - a) Autumn Speakers & Topics –
 - i) Christian has October speaker lined up for 10/12 at 7 PM via Zoom. Good feedback from the last meeting posted. Board did indicate that we'd be willing to donate some money to a conservation or fishing group of our meeting speaker's choice in cases where the speaker is doing the meeting gratis.
 - ii) Most SWPA chapters are struggling for meetings and content – Bryan wonders if we'd be willing to allow other chapters to join the meeting. Board has no reservations about this and suggested that Chuck should reach out to SWPA chapter presidents about having their members join (Bryan will send list). Also suggested other non-TU groups.
 - iii) Christian raised the question of a chapter paid Zoom subscription. Board supports this. Ed moved, Bob seconded to buy Zoom Pro with Christian as the primary admin. **<passed>**
 - iv) Chapter computer. Our laptops date from ~2008 and should be replaced. Christian and Chuck will spec out what we'd like and propose at next meeting.
 - b) Cabin Fever 2021 – Board believes that we will not be able to hold this due to Covid-19; a vaccine, while looking increasingly probable, does not seem likely until early 2021. Bryan indicates that all concerned (speakers, hotel) seem willing to push out 1 year. Some discussion of a virtual cabin fever next year, possibly including Kelly Galloup. Bryan proposes pushing cabin fever to 2022 due to Covid-19, Ian seconds. **<passed>**

- c) Chatham Expendable Grant – paperwork was provided prior to the call. This is the Tom Walsh Memorial Award and allows us, amongst other things, to get our foot in the door at Chatham who do a lot of conservation-related education and work. Value is \$2500 per year for 5 years and renewable thereafter in 5-year increments. Christian will touch base with Rich and see if he has any contacts with the Walsh family. Bob proposes that we move forward and approve this, Christian seconded. (We believe we can afford it and that Chatham will be responsible with the money; great partnership opportunity.) <**passed**>
 - d) Autumn Retreat – the board is in favor; Chuck & Bobby will work on it, possibly late October.
- 3) New Business
- a) Some additional discussion and suggestions for virtual Cabin Fever participants.

Chuck moved, Ian 2nd. Adjourned

Meeting closed 8:30 PM

Important Dates: (most are listed on the PATU website)

Committee Reports

Penn's Woods West Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Officers and Committee Chair Reports

For Summer Year: 2020

Committee Chair: Bryan Mathie

Committee: Conservation

Chair Report:

Cornerstones of PWWTU Conservation Efforts

1. Stewardship
2. Partnership
3. Science
4. Legislative

Stewardship:

- 1) PWWTU Conservation now on the radar with Western PA Conservancy and PAFB Stream Restoration for involvement in current projects and building future ones
 - a) Mingo Creek is getting fish structure in the park as we speak
 - b) Buffalo Creek getting some love coming up with PAFB/Western PA Conservancy
 - i) Arrowhead chapter got additional funding for AMD remediation
 - c) Montour Run - Milk Run AMD project got additional funding

- d) Working on getting us involved in several projects next year. PAFB is not allowed to have civilians on project sites at this time so nothing we can do right now with them. We can do stream clean ups at this time.
- e) 20 other projects going on and some pushed to next year. We are discussing which ones we want to be a part of and I will bring to the board for approval with costs and involvement
- 2) Pushed Pine Creek forward – Met with Allison Park Sportsman's club board and discussed next steps in working on Pine Creek and its issues.
 - a) Tom Walsh's passing left a huge gap in supporting Pine Creek we will have to fill if there are going to be projects on the creek – timber removal, clean ups all continuing for now
 - b) Actually found the person and data that has been collected on Pine Creek for the last 15 years and assessing what needs to be done to propose projects on Pine Creek.
 - i) Mary Wilson – Penn State extension and head of Watershed Stewardship program has the info on Pine Creek
 - c) Brady Porter very interested in doing further studies on Pine creek – bringing grad student projects together to discuss with me about their scope and cost. Will bring proposal to the board when/if we get it
- 3) No other stream clean ups or projects in Allegheny County are going on where we can participate
 - a) Peters Creek – Willing to do a Creek Walk on what they have done
 - b) Montour Run – Connected to the board and future projects
 - c) Chartiers Creek
 - d) Deer/Bull Run
 - e) 4 mile/9 mile
 - f) New Watershed group forming for Big Sewickley
 - g) Working on meeting with Little Sewickley Watershed

Partnership: Goals – public recognition for conservation, building partnerships that help our chapter, Build the science to support our conservation efforts

- 1) Local Museums
 - a) Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium: Discussed possible partnership and focus on supporting the trout tank and talk more about conservation exhibits and education
 - b) Carnegie Science Center – Proposed Trout in the Classroom (TIC) but wasn't able to make Fall deadline. Still in conversations. Also talking with other local groups about supporting an overhaul of the Conservation area of the museum – Discussing scope of project, interested parties, funding sources
 - c) Phipps Conservatory – Discussed sponsoring Conservation classes in the Spring from TU, Phipps very interested – Discussing best topics, presenters and cost. Most likely working with Mary Wilson and the Watershed Stewards for presenters
- 2) Watershed Groups
 - a) Met with Sewickley Creek in Westmoreland, Montour Run, Peters Creek, Allison Park,
 - b) ON the front end of the Ohio Watershed coalition and will be in on the first meeting coming up this year. The Delaware watershed including the Schuylkill, The Chesapeake watershed including

the Susquehanna are both covered but nothing about the head of the Ohio has been addressed
– it is starting out of U of Penn and PWWTU will be represented

- 3) Universities
 - a) Duquesne – working on definitive plans with Brady to propose to board
 - b) Chatham – Still working on intro to Conservation, piggy - backing on Bukk contact
 - c) Penn State – Mary Wilson, Watershed Stewardship Program – Developing partnership
- 4) PA TU
 - a) I was recently voted onto the PA TU board as the Southwest Regional VP and I am now on the Conservation committee for PA
 - b) This should give us more relevant and timely information as well as inside track on opportunities for project funding, legislative issues and education/diversity opportunities
 - c) I will have to meet with all 8 chapters (including PWWTU) over the course of a year. What does this board want to know about the other chapters?
 - i) Are we willing to invite their constituents to our ZOOM presenters – many of them don't have the funds, connections or funding we do. I see no harm and only benefit in inviting them. Thoughts?

Science:

- 1) Duquesne: Working with Dr. Brady Porter to identify projects his grad/PhD students want to do and see if we can find ways to link their research into watersheds we want research on to determine what we want to do
- 2) Penn State: Connecting with Mary Wilson on Friday who heads up Watershed Stewards program and knows just about everyone.
- 3) Chatham: Hoping to build partnership with Chatham Conservation program over time to promote and fund science we can use as well as promote Conservation scientists

Legislative:

1. Goal is to start making the chapter aware of what is going on in Harrisburg and PAFB that dramatically affects our waters and our fishing
 - a. Manganese measuring decision – PATU voted to support letter to PAFB and Legislature. Many chapters supported.
 - b. Water drainage issue from Big Fishing Creek – Proposal to take significant amounts of water for manufacturing. Discussing with Dave Rothrock and Head of PAFB, Eric Hussar, with goal of walking the stream with them.
 - c. Slaughter House pouring blood on land around trout waters in central PA affecting soil pH and leaching into stream. Affecting multiple creeks.
2. List of Representative and Senators and their +/- to Conservation
3. PA Committees are very fickle – they will decide from meeting to meeting on what topics to cover based on the pain they cause, the interest their constituents have, how much press it will generate.

Working on a way to keep the chapter posted as to what is going on in Harrisburg and PAFB minute-to-minute and driving action from the chapter if we need to voice our opinion.

My Asks of the board:

- 1) I would like to update the members to the PWWTU conservation strategy and solicit help. I cannot do this all alone. With 1900 members we have to have lawyers that have an interest in legislative issues, we have to have folks in construction that have access to earth movers and supplies, we have people with interest in science. We need to get them involved if this is going to move forward.
- 2) I would like to keep members up to date and don't want to overwhelm them – create Conservation Corner and record 3-5 minute YouTube videos to update members. Need subscription
- 3) I will come to the board with proposals for funding:
 - a) Science studies
 - b) Conservation funding to help larger projects get matching funding
 - c) Our own conservation efforts

Committee Chair: Nora Cline/Jodie Minor

Committee: Women & Diversity

Chair Report:

We have continued socially distanced events this summer including both fishing and video fly-tying. Our last official fishing event will be October 17th at Neshannock Creek. We have plans to begin organizing this fall for 2021 Stream Girls, Covid or not, probably in the autumn of 2021.

Committee Chair: Jamie Schroder

Committee: Membership

Chair Report:

Committee Chair: Ron Milavec

Committee: Education

Chair Report:

Committee Chair: Christian Shane

Committee: Program

Chair Report:

SPEAKER INFORMATION: Planned October 12th - 7:00 PM Zoom Meeting

Michael Hosack, Fisheries Biologist

PA Fish and Boat Commission, Lake Erie Research Unit

Topic: LECAL Steelhead Survey & Management of steelhead and brown trout fisheries (Q & A Session to follow)

Mike's Bio: I've been with the PFBC for a little over 12 years, 11 of which have been focusing on Lake Erie and its tributaries at the Lake Erie Research Unit in Fairview. My job title is Fisheries Biologist 2. I have a B.S. from Penn State in Biology, and an M.S. from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point campus in Fisheries Management. I serve as co-chairman of the Yellow Perch Task Group, and I also serve on the Walleye Task Group, Habitat Task Group, and Forage Task Group of the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission's Lake Erie Committee. I'm responsible for administering the LECAL survey, which I began as a pilot project in the Fall of 2012 in an effort to obtain quantitative data on the status and trends of the fishery.

President: Chuck Buffington

I've been working hard to update and expand the PWWTU website. Added features that should appeal to our members include a list of all posts that updates automatically, more information about our programs, and a buy/sell section that functions like a flea market. The Events section and Calendar are ready to go when we start having events again.

Vice President: Bob Bukk

Would like to discuss the Tom Walsh Scholarship and propose a vote of the Board for approval.

Officer: Treasurer: Ed Barger

A draft inventory spreadsheet has been sent to all officers and known possessors of chapter property greater than \$200 in value, but I have included all items provided to me in return emails. I request that all of you review this list and provide me with any changes prior to the next board meeting. I also have attached a financial summary to this email that provides account status from April 1 (start of the current fiscal year) to the end of September. The Financial summary provides a list of income and spending broken down by the categories used in preparing our annual report to National TU, as well as a detailed list of deposits and debits over this period. Recent transactions after July 1 include donations totaling \$1075.14 and debits totaling \$310.05. Our account balance as of September 30 is \$2,548.69. I will be sending a quarterly account for auditing by W. Reineman, past treasurer, when the next bank statement is issued (early next week). Work is underway to develop a formal documentation of each financial review to better satisfy audit reporting requirements from National TU.

Ex-officio: Dale Fogg