

Stabilizing and Enhancing Local Economies in the Upper Delaware River and Tailwaters by Preserving the Unique Cold Water Fishery

New York State Department of State Delaware County Department of Watershed Affairs

The Development of a Stream Corridor Management Plan for Delaware County,
NY below the NYC Delaware River Basin Reservoirs

Community Outreach Plan

Prepared by Friends of the Upper Delaware River

SCMP Community Outreach and Participation Plan

I. Goal Statement – SCMP Community Outreach and Participation Plan

Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR) and project partners will develop and implement a comprehensive Community Outreach Plan to support the development of “Volume 1” of a Stream Corridor Management Plan (“SCMP”) for waterways below the NYC Delaware River Basin Reservoirs in Delaware County, NY.

The Community Outreach Plan will identify key individuals, organizations, and entities involved in the project, identify a visioning process and the roles and responsibilities in coordinating the entire outreach process, logistics, and the proposed schedule of public meetings.

Goals of the SCMP Community Outreach Plan:

- 1) Ensure that a diverse set of community watershed stakeholders have a clear understanding of the goals, objectives, and value of the SCMP.
- 2) Provide an opportunity for watershed stakeholders to learn more about how streams function, the ecological services they provide, and how they intersect with the social, cultural, and economic conditions and needs in the Upper Delaware River watershed.
- 3) Create dynamic public forums where stakeholders can share their feedback and insight based on their personal, localized, and historic knowledge about area waterways.
- 4) Provide all members of the public and other stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in the development of all elements of the Stream Corridor Management Plan

II. Overview of the Development of “Volume One” of the Delaware County Stream Corridor Management Plan

The key components of Volume One of the Delaware County Stream Corridor Management Plan will include:

- Formation of a Project Advisory Committee and five Community Advisory Committees that will provide guidance and leadership in the development of the Stream Corridor Management Plan
- Development and implementation of a community outreach plan that ensures a maximum level of public participation and meaningful stakeholder involvement in all elements of the plan
- A comprehensive series of public meetings throughout the duration of the project that will provide a diverse set of watershed stakeholders with opportunities to participate in the development of the plan
- Development and refinement of a Project Vision Plan that will clearly describe the goals and objectives of the project and will articulate a community based vision for the future of waterway protection and restoration in the targeted project area.
- The plan will incorporate best management practices along with strategies for enhancements to local, county and state infrastructure to be included in existing plans and maintenance procedures.
- Provide a comprehensive assessment of local plans, local laws and regulations and how they support watershed enhancement and economic sustainability.
- Develop mitigation strategies to address flooding, storm water infrastructure and stream restoration for inclusion in the All Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- A delineation and assessment of waterways in the targeted project area that describes watershed conditions and assists in the identification and prioritization of protection and restoration projects.
- A set of management recommendations to guide collaborative efforts among Delaware County resource managers to protect and restore area waterways
- An implementation strategy that will track the progress of the plan and will identify future restoration project, project partners, and funding sources
- Publication of a Stream Corridor Management Plan that will serve as a multi-jurisdictional guidance document for the future management, protection, and restoration of the Delaware County waterways below the NYC Delaware River Basin Reservoirs.

(See Attachment A for an overall project timeline and identification of tasks to be completed)

III. Key Individuals and Organizations

(See Attachment B for names/organizations/agencies of key project personnel)

- Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR) – FUDR will coordinate all elements of the SCMP project in consultation with other project partners and sub-contractors. FUDR has an office on Main Street in Hancock and is available during business hours for community members to stop in to ask questions and make comments on this plan and other UDRTC issues.
- The Upper Delaware River Tailwaters Coalition (UDRTC) – The UDRTC is comprised of municipal and non-profit leaders in the targeted project area. The UDRTC serves as the primary governing body of the project and will provide guidance and leadership to FUDR and other consultants throughout the duration of the project.

- The SCMP Project Advisory Committee (PAC) – The SCMP PAC is comprised of federal, state, regional, and local leaders with an expertise and stake in the management and protection of waterways in Delaware County, NY. The SCMP PAC will provide periodic input, guidance and technical input into the development of the SCMP. The PAC will review the plan throughout the development to enhance the sections with their various areas of expertise.
- Five (5) SCMP Community Advisory Committees (CAC) – The CAC’s are comprised of local elected officials, agency personnel and other individuals associated with governance and management of local waterways in the towns of Deposit, Colchester, Hancock and Sanford and the villages of Deposit and Hancock. These committees will provide localized knowledge of waterway management needs and challenges that will assist in the development of the SCMP. They will also provide an overview of the community’s relationship with the streams and river as it pertains to the local community, economy and historic management of the waterways.
- Delaware County - The Delaware County Department of Watershed Affairs is the supervisor of the project with daily management responsibilities over the project the work of FUDR and project sub-contractors. Delaware County Planning will provide the technical analysis, mapping and field assessment data through the departments environmental planning and GIS professionals with the support of interns. -Supporting Delaware County agencies include the Departments of Public Works, Emergency Services and Economic Development, along with the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District are providing significant in-kind and technical support over the entire management of the project and the development of the SCMP.
- Project Subcontractors – FUDR will hire and supervise three (3) project subcontractors to assist in the development of the SCMP: 1) Woidt Engineering, Ithaca, NY; 2) Trout Unlimited, Northeastern Office; and 3) Land Studies, Inc., Lititz, Pa. Each of these subcontractors have localized technical expertise and on-the-ground project experience in stream management, restoration, and protection. Each of the sub-contractors have received assignments for particular elements of the SCMP including the four rounds of public participation.

Coordination with Project Leaders

- 1) A minimum of five meetings will be scheduled with the Project Advisory Committee to provide project status updates and to receive feedback and guidance on all elements of the SCMP. In addition, FUDR and other project implementers will engage and consult with individual members of the SCMP PAC to seek guidance and technical expertise as needed.
- 2) FUDR and project implementers will work with Town Supervisors and Village Mayors in the project area in the formation and ongoing engagement with members of the local Community Advisory Committees

IV. SCMP Visioning Process

FUDR and Trout Unlimited, in consultation with the PAC and other project leaders, will develop a Project Vision Statement that encompasses the overall objectives of watershed management,

flood relief and economic sustainability, and clearly describes what the communities hope to accomplish. The vision statement will set the tone of the plan and will be used throughout the planning process. An initial set of goals and objectives will be created to provide a realistic framework for achieving the vision as well as help focus limited resources. The New York State Department of State guidebook: Watershed Plans; Protecting and Restoring Water Quality on Watershed Planning, Chapter 3, will be utilized as a framework for developing the SCMP Project Vision Statement.

The first two rounds of public participation/outreach meetings (see below) will help inform the development of the vision statement. These meetings will generate important public feedback and localized knowledge of the watershed and will help formulate a future vision for what the public needs and expectations from this planning effort.

The draft Project Vision Statement will be completed on December 1, 2016 and sent to the Project Advisory Committee and other project implementers for review. The Project Advisory Committee will meet on December 15 to provide feedback and comment on the draft statement. The statement will be further revised as necessary after the second round of public meetings in the spring of 2017.

V. Public Participation/Outreach Meetings

There are four (4) rounds of public participation/outreach meetings built into the community outreach plan that will provide invaluable assistance in the development of the SCMP. An enormously important need is to ensure maximum public understanding, involvement, and buy-in into the SCMP planning process, the final product, and the future implementation of the plan.

In addition to the four rounds of public meetings in the NYS DOS SCMP project, additional funding secured and administered by the Delaware County Department of Watershed Affairs supported a series of meetings to help inform the SCMP. Tom Shepstone (Shepstone Management Company, Honesdale, NY) was hired to facilitate six (6) public meetings, two each in Colchester, Deposit, and Hancock to:

- 1) Inventory existing programs and regulations at the town and village level that address stream management, protection, and restoration. The purpose of gathering this material is to avoid duplication and ensure cohesiveness and consistency with existing public programs associated with waterway management in the project area.
- 2) Invite longtime residents of the area to relay information based on personal observation and memory and identify on maps specific local waterway conditions such as flooding impacts, highly erosive stream segments, floodplain impacts, and areas for potential economic development.

Fall 2016: 1st Round of Public Participation/Outreach Meetings

A series of 9 public watershed stakeholder meetings (3 topics) will be scheduled in the fall of 2016 and will be held in the NY towns/villages of Colchester, Deposit, and Hancock. The meetings will address and explore, in depth, identified priority issues that are most important to watershed stakeholders with regard to the future management, protection, and restoration of waterways in Delaware County.

Each meeting will include one or more speakers with an expertise in the selected topic.

The following topics will be addressed:

1) What is a Stream Corridor Management Plan and Why We Need One

This public meeting will address the importance of adopting a Stream Corridor Management Plan in Delaware County, NY, the public process necessary to ensure a comprehensive, meaningful and effective plan is developed, and the practical implementation of the plan is assured. The presentation will also highlight the historical impacts of severe weather patterns that have negatively impacted communities as a result of flooding and threats to public infrastructure to reinforce the need for a comprehensive plan.

Presenters:

Shelly Johnson-Bennett, Delaware County Planning Department
Wayne Reynolds, Delaware County Department of Public Works

2) The Basics of Stream Dynamics

This presentation will address basic information about how streams function, the ecological and economic services they provide, and both reactive and responsive management efforts that can protect waterways, people, and communities.

Presenters:

Graydon Dutcher, Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District
Mark Guttshall, Land Studies, Inc.

3) Flooding, Changing Weather Trends, and the Economic/Recreational Benefits of Stream Protection and Restoration

This presentation will discuss how changing weather patterns have exacerbated flooding problems in the already flood prone area of Delaware County, how management practices can be implemented to mitigate the impacts of increasingly severe weather patterns, and the economic value of our waterways to communities and people highlighting the 2014 Upper Delaware River Economic Study.

Presenters:

George Fowler, Woidt Engineering
Stephanie Dalke, Pinchot Institute and Common Waters Partnership
Jeff Skelding, Friends of the Upper Delaware River
Tom Shepstone, Shepstone Management Company

April 2017: 2nd Round of Public Participation and Outreach Meetings

Three public meetings will be scheduled in April, 2017 in Deposit (includes Sanford and Broome County), Hancock (includes Tompkins) and Downsville (Colchester) during the waterbody characterization phase of the project to solicit public input in defining and characterizing the nonpoint source pollution issues in area waterways, address economic growth areas and flood mitigation strategies, refine the project vision, goals, and objectives, and to review and discuss water quality and watershed and stream corridor protection and restoration issues.

A CAC leader, Friends of the Upper Delaware River and Trout Unlimited will coordinate each of these meetings. An interactive mapping exercise that engages meeting participants will be used as a mechanism to gather information and identify specific locations in each community.

May, 2017: 3rd Round of Public Participation and Outreach Meetings

Three public meetings will be scheduled in Hancock, Deposit, and Colchester to allow for public review and comment on the Stream Corridor Management Plan draft recommendations and prioritization. A written summary of public input obtained at these meetings will be prepared and provided to Delaware County for review and comment. Public input will be incorporated into the final Stream Corridor Management Plan to the satisfaction of the County and the NYS Department of State.

A CAC leader, Friends of the Upper Delaware River staff, and Trout Unlimited will coordinate this series of meetings. Each participant will receive a copy of the draft recommendations and will be asked to provide written comments, questions, and other forms of feedback during the meeting. Public comments will be collected at the end of each meeting and will be incorporated into the draft Stream Corridor Management Plan.

August 2017: 4th Round of Public Participation and Outreach Meetings

Three public meetings will be scheduled prior to the preparation of the final Stream Corridor Management Plan to allow for public review and comment on the draft document. A written summary of public input obtained at this meeting shall be prepared and provided to the County for review and comment. Public input shall be incorporated into the final Stream Corridor Management Plan.

A CAC leader, Friends of the Upper Delaware River staff, and Trout Unlimited will coordinate this series of meetings. Each participant will receive a copy of the draft recommendations and will be asked to provide written comments, questions, and other forms of feedback during the meeting. Public comments will be collected at the end of each meeting and will be incorporated into the draft Stream Corridor Management Plan.

Public Participation Recruitment for Public Meetings

It will be important to ensure substantial attendance at each of the public meetings in order to maximize the role of watershed stakeholders in the development and eventual implementation of the SCMP. The following recruitment actions will be undertaken with a goal of generating at least 50 participants at each meeting:

1. The placement of public meeting notices in the legal sections of local newspapers as required by the NYS Department of State two weeks prior to the meetings.
2. The placement of highly visible fliers announcing meeting time, location, and description posted in common community gathering areas throughout the targeted communities prior to the scheduled date.

3. Public meeting announcements utilizing the networks and contacts of our government, non-profit, and business partners.
4. Press releases issued to local media outlets including the Hancock Herald, The Reporter, Deposit Courier, the River Reporter, and the Watershed Post.
5. Extensive use of social media to promote the meetings and encourage public participation
6. Generation of traditional media coverage including radio programming and news stories in local media outlets throughout the targeted communities.
7. Meeting announcements utilizing the networks and contacts of regional coalition partners including the Common Waters Partnership, the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed, and Trout Unlimited.

All of the public meetings will be recorded and notes will be distributed to all meeting participants. The final summaries will also be submitted to DOS and DC for review and approval. The ideas and input from meeting participants will be used to guide the waterbody characterization phase of the project.