

BEFORE THE UPPER/MIDDLE SUSQUEHANNA REGIONAL WATER
RESOURCES COMMITTEE

ORIGINAL

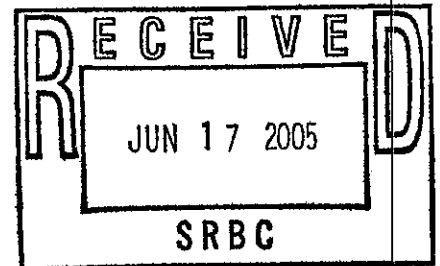
BEFORE: UWE E. WEINDEL, CHAIR
ADAM ZAKARIAN, VICE CHAIR
TOM BEAUDUY
ED BELLIS, PH.D.
MIKE CAVANAUGH, PH.D.
WILLIAM GERLACH, ESQUIRE
TODD GIDDINGS, PH.D., P.G.
TIM HORNER
DAVID R. KAUFMAN
DOUGLAS P. MANNING
GARY PETREWSKI
DAVID L. SNOOK
JERRY WALLS
RICHARD T. WARDROP, P.G.
HAROLD WEBSTER
JOHN J. YAMONA
JENNIFER MEANS, DEP
BILL MANNER, DEP

HEARING: MAY 26, 2005
7:35 P.M.

PLACE: DAYS INN
240 SOUTH PUGH STREET
STATE COLLEGE, PA 16801

REPORTER: LISA L. RIVERA-SMITH, RPR

WITNESSES: DAN CRUST
DAVE YOXTHEIMER
BOB DONALDSON
TODD GIDDINGS, PH.D., P.G.



1 MR. WEINDEL: Utilizing the sign-in sheet that
2 we have in the front we right now have four speakers
3 wishing to present. What I would like to do is call the
4 first person up, Dan Crust, ClearWater Conservancy. Is Mr.
5 Crust here?

6 MR. CRUST: Here.

7 MR. WEINDEL: Oh, I'm sorry, Dan. Please if you
8 would just for the purposes of verification, give your name
9 and address and who you are with and I'll allow you to
10 continue. If you can keep it to about ten minutes, I'd
11 appreciate that.

12 MR. CRUST: Okay.

13 MR. WEINDEL: Thank you.

14 MR. CRUST: My name is Dan Crust. I'm here
15 representing the ClearWater Conservancy of Central
16 Pennsylvania. My address is 2528 Bernel, that's
17 B-E-R-N-E-L, Road here in State College, 16803.

18 ClearWater Conservancy is a 501C3 organization.
19 It's a Centre County based land trust and environmental
20 conservation organization. We were formed in 1980. We're
21 governed by a 20-member board of directors. We're
22 professionally staffed and have over 700 individual,
23 family, business and organizational members. Our mission
24 is to promote conservation and restoration of natural
25 resources in Central Pennsylvania through land protection,

1 water resource protection and environmental outreach to the
2 community.

3 Over the past decade or so, ClearWater has been
4 a strong leader in watershed stewardship in the Spring
5 Creek watershed. Our earliest effort focused attention on
6 natural resources of Spring Creek, the Spring Creek
7 Corridor Study, led to a comprehensive Spring Creek Rivers
8 Conservation Plan and Spring Creek's listing in the
9 Pennsylvania Rivers Registry. By organizing an
10 international countryside stewardship exchange for the
11 Spring Creek watershed in 1996, we gave rise to the Spring
12 Creek Watershed Community, a grassroots stakeholder group,
13 and the Spring Creek Watershed Commission, a group of
14 elected officials from the 14 watershed municipalities.

15 Over the years we've continued to support both
16 of these efforts in a variety of administrative and
17 project-specific ways. For instance, ClearWater staffs the
18 Spring Creek Watershed Community's Water Resources
19 Monitoring Project and we prepared on behalf of the
20 Watershed Commission the Spring Creek Watershed Plan.

21 Based on our experiences, we offer the following
22 recommendations. The Spring Creek Watershed Plan
23 highlighted six priorities to address watershed challenges
24 faced in the Spring Creek watershed in priority order.
25 They are as follows: Identify and protect critical natural

1 resource areas; effectively manage past and future
2 stormwater challenges; protect and enhance riparian
3 buffers; create a watershed-wide entity to coordinate
4 watershed stewardship issues; address stream impairments
5 through the creation and adoption of TMDLs; and educate
6 citizens and decision-makers about watershed issues.

7 In addition, the Spring Creek Watershed Plan
8 identified two other important considerations for watershed
9 management. Ensuring appropriate drinking water quality
10 and quantity and encouraging creative wastewater
11 management.

12 In order for any of these priority efforts to be
13 successful at the local level, we must stress to the
14 committee the importance of sustainable funding and clear
15 authority from the state level. Collaboration among
16 municipalities is essential to good watershed planning.
17 The Spring Creek Watershed Commission is a fine example of
18 a group of committed elected officials who understand the
19 importance of regular communication about their common
20 watershed issues and volunteer their time to come together
21 each month and share.

22 As important as this level of communication is,
23 the Watershed Commission struggles with its organizational
24 sustainability. They lack clear authority or guidance from
25 the state level regarding an appropriate organizational

1 structure that would enable them to function effectively
2 with a stable source of funding. We're sure the Spring
3 Creek Watershed Commission is not the only multimunicipal
4 effort that is grappling with these issues in the
5 Commonwealth. Clear and stable structure is needed for
6 implementation of both locally-derived watershed management
7 recommendations and also recommendations that will result
8 from the state water plan.

9 ClearWater strongly encourages the committee to
10 ensure that all of the issue-specific recommendations that
11 are considered within the state water plan can be
12 effectively implemented at the local level through an
13 effective, efficient and sustainably funded watershed-based
14 mechanism. Partnerships between these watershed-based
15 multimunicipal implementing entities and the widest variety
16 of stakeholders is the other main ingredient for successful
17 watershed efforts that we would like to stress today.

18 Watershed associations, nonprofit conservation
19 organizations, land trusts, chambers of business and
20 industry, planning commissions, and other key
21 constituencies can each provide important perspectives on
22 watershed issues and should be involved with the elected
23 decision-makers in meaningful ways throughout the process.

24 Thank you for your time and consideration.

25 MR. WEINDEL: Dan, appreciate that. Thank you

1 very much.

2 MR. CAVANAUGH: Mr. Chairman, will we be
3 receiving comments? We would like to have a good look at
4 the presenters' statements.

5 MR. WEINDEL: Absolutely. What we would like to
6 do is continue with the next person that we would like to
7 invite. Dave Yoxtheimer. Dave, if you would please state
8 your name and affiliation, address. Thank you.

9 MR. YOXTHEIMER: Sure. Dave Yoxtheimer,
10 Y-O-X-T-H-E-I-M-E-R. I'm with N.A. Water Systems and I'm
11 here on behalf of the State College Water Authority.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to publicly
13 comment on the Pennsylvania State Water Plan. I am
14 providing these comments on behalf of the State College
15 Borough Water Authority as well as providing my
16 hydrogeologic consulting perspective on Act 220. Having a
17 regional water budget available to public water suppliers,
18 regulatory agencies, consultants and the public as a basis
19 to make scientifically-based decisions on how best to
20 manage and allocate our precious water resources will be
21 extremely valuable to all stakeholders.

22 There are concerns in this region that our water
23 resources are potentially stressed or may become stressed
24 in the future. Some of these concerns seem valid while
25 others seem invalid. And an object -- objective data set

1 to base these concerns on will allow us to focus on the
2 valid concerns and manage them accordingly. The
3 Susquehanna River Basin Commission's Draft Groundwater
4 Management Plan from June 2004 provides several examples of
5 concerns within the Spring Creek watershed and classifies
6 the State College area as one of four potentially
7 groundwater stressed areas within the entire Susquehanna
8 River Basin.

9 This report repeatedly singles out the State
10 College Borough Water Authority for creating groundwater
11 issues such as well interference, groundwater mining
12 causing dry stream segments and watershed transfers that
13 also cause dry stream segments. These alleged issues were
14 not based on any scientifically-defensible data and are
15 simply not occurring based on long-term data sets and
16 direct observations by Dr. Richard Parizek and several
17 other consulting hydrogeologists in the area.

18 A regional water budget will allow all
19 stakeholders to use the same data set to conduct their
20 respective analyses so that scientifically-derived
21 conclusions can be made when public water suppliers need to
22 develop new water sources or increase the permitted use of
23 existing sources while also protecting the region's water
24 resources. The level of cooperation between the State
25 College Borough Water Authority, Penn State, the University

1 Area Joint Authority, other public water suppliers,
2 municipal government planners and watershed organizations
3 such as the ClearWater Conservancy is a paradigm for
4 regional water resource management. Proactive innovative
5 water reuse initiatives such as Penn State's living filter
6 and the UAJ's beneficial reuse project should also be
7 considered as major components to any regional water
8 planning initiative such as Act 220 to ensure
9 Pennsylvania's sustainable growth and protect its abundant
10 water resources and natural beauty.

11 It is hoped that Act 220 will capture the many
12 factors that need to be considered in water resource
13 management and allow all involved parties to make informed
14 decisions on the amount of available water resources, in
15 fairly allocating our water resources, and to foster
16 innovation in managing our water resources.

17 Thank you for considering these comments.

18 MR. WEINDEL: Thank you. Okay. Continuing on,
19 I'd like to call Bob Donaldson up, please.

20 MR. DONALDSON: My name is Bob Donaldson. I'm
21 here representing a group of Spring Creek Watershed
22 Community. I was volunteered to be chairman this year. I
23 reside at 218 Canterbury Drive, State College, PA 16803.

24 The Watershed Community is a grass-roots
25 organization that was created in 1997. Dan Crust alluded

1 to the formation. We were created by the ClearWater
2 Conservancy and we still enjoy their support today.

3 The Watershed Community along with ClearWater
4 Conservancy and the Spring Creek Watershed Commission and
5 the Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited have initiated
6 actions to form an environmental alliance through strength
7 in our collective voices within the watershed. I
8 personally am involved in that and I think that forming
9 partnerships are the only way environmental groups are
10 really going to be able to survive in today's society. The
11 mission of the Watershed Community is to promote actions
12 that protect and enhance the quality of life, the
13 environment and the economy throughout the watershed while
14 maintaining and improving the high quality of the Spring
15 Creek and its tributaries.

16 With that said, I -- I kind of -- this isn't in
17 my prepared statements, but when I look at your regional
18 priorities and it seems as if the preponderance of your
19 emphasis is on drinking water and wastewater, and that is
20 perhaps rightfully so. But I think in the watershed here,
21 we have exceptional authorities, both wastewater and
22 drinking water. And so some of the other environmental
23 organizations that I represent get involved in other kinds
24 of things, although they're perhaps indirectly related. So
25 that I kind of struggle with what I'm about to get into

1 figuring out if it has anything to do with the State Water
2 Plan, but that being said, let me just keep going forward.

3 I'd like to do that by seeing if we can
4 visualize for a moment what I'm going to call a hydrologic
5 landscape of the Spring Creek Watershed, and it's made up
6 of various critical natural resource features. These
7 features need to be recognized and protected as part of the
8 State Water Plan. These natural features would include the
9 headwater streams, and Spring Creek is at the upper end of
10 a watershed. We have no water flowing from anywhere above
11 us. So whatever we do to ourselves, we -- we created it
12 ourselves.

13 We -- so we have these headwater streams. We
14 have a number of sinkholes and swallows. We have springs
15 and seeps and closed depressions and natural drainageways
16 and riparian stream corridors. And all of this is kind of
17 enveloped within a rather tricky carsed environment, which
18 basically means it's a limestone area. So that ground
19 water recharge areas and aquifers need to -- to be
20 protected.

21 If you go to the western extreme in our
22 watershed, we have the Scotia Barrens, one of the more
23 outstanding aquifers probably in Central Pennsylvania. It,
24 in fact, is what's feeding directly the Big Spring in
25 Bellefonte at the other end of the watershed. So it's kind

1 of a tricky very complex watershed.

2 These natural features are fragile components of
3 our groundwater and surface water systems which are all
4 interconnected. It can be judged and measured by the water
5 quality and quantity. This hydrologic landscape needs to
6 be emphasized in the State Water Plan, especially as it is
7 affected by nonpoint stormwater pollution and contamination
8 which includes nitrates, phosphates, sediments coming from
9 both rural and urban sources.

10 The protection and enhancement of these critical
11 natural resource features is of primary importance to the
12 quality of our water resources and the aquatic habitat of
13 the stream network. The abundance of high quality water is
14 a major contributing factor to the quality of life we still
15 enjoy here in the Spring Creek Watershed.

16 So on behalf of the Spring Creek Watershed
17 Community, we thank you for the opportunity to present this
18 testimony here this evening.

19 MR. WEINDEL: Thank you, sir. Our final speaker
20 would be Todd Giddings. He's representing the Pennsylvania
21 Groundwater Association. Todd, if you would please.

22 DR. GIDDINGS: Thank you. My name is Todd
23 Giddings. My business address is 3049 Enterprise Drive,
24 State College, Pennsylvania 16801.

25 My testimony tonight is on behalf of the

1 Pennsylvania Groundwater Association. The Pennsylvania
2 Groundwater Association is a statewide professional
3 association and a registered 501C3 nonprofit association
4 composed of members who are water well drillers,
5 manufacturers, suppliers, and like myself, groundwater
6 geologists all working in the groundwater industry in
7 Pennsylvania.

8 Our mission statement includes educational and
9 outreach efforts to promote awareness of groundwater
10 resources in Pennsylvania and to promote the safe use and
11 protection of Pennsylvania's groundwater resources.

12 Pennsylvania's groundwater resources are a hidden resource
13 and thereby it isn't always apparent how to protect them
14 and what the consequences are of actions that threaten this
15 important resource. The well driller members and the
16 hydrogeologist members of the Pennsylvania Groundwater
17 Association have repeatedly encountered very serious
18 groundwater quality problems caused by the improper
19 construction of residential water wells.

20 To put this problem in perspective, one-third of
21 all of Pennsylvania's population depends on groundwater for
22 their drinking water supply. That's approximately one
23 million households that are on individual household water
24 wells throughout Pennsylvania. And that equates to
25 approximately two and a half million people in those

1 households with private residential water wells.

2 Each year significantly more than 20,000 new
3 water wells are drilled in Pennsylvania. And sadly,
4 Pennsylvania is one of but four states in our nation that
5 has no construction standards for our residential water
6 wells nor do we have any educational nor experience
7 requirements to become a water well driller. You can
8 become a Pennsylvania licensed water well drilling
9 contractor merely by paying the licensing fee, \$75.

10 One of the essential components of proper
11 residential well construction is to place a watertight
12 sealing material called grout around the well casing. And
13 I want you to think of that grout, that principal
14 protection element, as the air bag or seat belt for that
15 water well. I don't think many of us in this room have had
16 the experience of being saved from serious injury by an air
17 bag in our vehicle. I haven't, but I think we all
18 recognize that when you need it, you're very glad it's
19 there. And grouting in the construction of residential
20 water wells and other plumbing accessories that protect the
21 groundwater quality that comes out of the well and the
22 water quality in the aquifer the well is producing from are
23 the seat belts and air bags that are so important for
24 residential water well construction.

25 The costs of these metaphorical seat belts or

1 air bags for residential water wells would add
2 approximately 10 percent to the cost of an average home
3 water well. These proper construction features including
4 the grout protect the health of the people drinking the
5 groundwater from their well and they also protect the
6 groundwater resource the well taps into from the entrance
7 of both surface and subsurface contamination. So regional
8 groundwater quality is an issue of protection through
9 proper construction of residential water wells.

10 The importance of construction standards are
11 known in some parts of Pennsylvania. In fact, there are
12 Pennsylvania counties currently and in the process of
13 having countywide residential well construction standards
14 and there are also sporadic municipalities throughout the
15 Commonwealth that have local residential water well
16 construction standards.

17 So to summarize, mechanical details of the well
18 construction are the essential part of protecting the
19 health of the people drinking the water and the groundwater
20 resource. I'm asking the Upper Susquehanna Regional Water
21 Resources Committee in your development of your regional
22 component of the State Water Plan to address the need for
23 residential water well construction standards and to make
24 sure that at a statewide level, because this need is not
25 just limited to the upper/middle Susquehanna region, that

1 the statewide committee becomes aware of the need for these
2 residential well construction standards to protect our
3 groundwater and surface water resources. Thank you.

4 MR. WEINDEL: That basically takes care of the
5 people who signed up. Is there anybody else that would
6 like to make a statement? If not, what I would like to do
7 is basically get out of the hearing portion of the meeting
8 tonight and turn to more or less the open meeting.

9 (The hearing was concluded at 7:59 p.m.)

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