

Town Run watershed meeting **Annotated agenda to serve as meeting notes**

November 16, 2023 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Shepherdstown Public Library, 145 Higbee Lane, Shepherdstown, WV

1. Introductions (see picture of sign-in sheet, last page); thanks to Christy from the library for helping us to set up the room.
2. **Town Run Steering Committee** formed (Kay Schultz, Georgette Blanchfield, Sandy Brown, Greg Welter, Suzie Patrick, Carolyn Thomas, Katie Allen and Caroline Hosmer)
 - a. WV Stream Partners grant - 2024 plans
 - i. Sought funds for restoration: area near JSB & Susie's house, also next to springhouse (parrotfeather to be replaced)
 - ii. April 6, 2024 cleanup planned; Carolyn Thomas= contact. Areas to be determined.
 - iii. Developing website with The Downstream Project www.townrunwatershed.org (not live yet)
 - iv. Community education/outreach: lawns to lively native plants, slowing down stormwater
 - v. Identify where roads enter Town Run watershed; consider signage, since we will soon be drinking water from this waterbody
 - vi. Monitoring (Greg coordinating) - PFAS later on agenda. Also, Upper Potomac Riverkeeper samples at the mouth and is willing to have analyzed a sample(s) upstream if someone can agree to regularly sample, spring, summer and fall. **Greg will ask Brent what the parameters are and share with the group. [From September meeting notes: 2 sites can be added, 2x a month, starts in March, needs to know by December so he can order supplies. Only bacteria was discussed at that time.]** Bill showed results on an online map, where red marker indicates exceedance above the standard.
 - b. Administrative conduit- Shepherdstown Community Club - we appreciate their help with this; treasurer = Karen Kinnett
 - c. Town Run watershed steering committee meets monthly; welcomes others to help
3. Downstream Strategies' **Green Infrastructure planning project** with Shepherdstown - public meeting 11/21/23 to gather input regarding concept designs for stormwater management in town. Focus on St. Agnes church and sites like Sage Place and behind the Market House. Next step will be applying for engineering and then a following grant(s) for implementing the projects. Sue said another later step could be broadening the focus to include Shepherd U and Bavarian Inn. Those present clarified that the more downstream creekside area that forms the edge of JSB parking is town-owned. The more upstream JSB parking lot is private? That area has absorbent socks in place to slow runoff into the Run, but could use more stormwater treatment. Stephanie has experience with private landowners giving an easement for work to be done. **We will attempt to acquire the 11/21/23 meeting powerpoint to share the file with this group after the public meeting.**
4. **Monitoring the stream -**
 - a. Greg sent a Town Run water sample (collected near High Street, just east of Princess St.) to a non-regulatory lab for PFAS [using this term broadly; many related chemicals are included in lists of emerging contaminants] testing; got good results (non-detect) for 55 parameters. It was noted that this is not a statistically significant result, so please consider it "encouraging but not

definitive.” Also, if the less-expensive method used here is shown to be correlated with a more expensive method, consider doing this one more frequently.

- b. Town sent samples to a certified laboratory in Florida, Pace. 5 samples (2 at each site plus a duplicate?) and an air sample cost \$3000 each to analyze for a similar suite of PFAS-related compounds. Hope to have result by Dec. 7 water & sewer board meeting.
- c. Regarding bacteria in the water, the drinking water system now has UV (ultraviolet) and chlorine treatments. [See past meeting notes regarding bacteria levels in Town Run vs. Potomac River.] Monica, Gillian and Kristen commented on E. coli v.s fecal coliform vs. total coliform* [see p.5 of *this document for related info from USGS website.*]
- d. Kay mentioned Blue Ridge Watershed Coalition has results on “source tracking” which indicated that people, i.e. septic systems, were the source of some of the bacteria in their surface waters.
- e. Alana mentioned that WV Dept. of Environmental Protection recently did a year of monthly monitoring of Town Run and if it is determined that a Total Maximum Daily Load is needed, the sources of bacteria will be analyzed by monitoring and modeling, but not likely by the method that Blue Ridge Watershed Coalition employed [*molecular, I believe*].

5. Update on The Downstream Project’s work on a potential **Town Run Watershed website**

- **Basecamp software** for keeping in touch - Bill sent Basecamp invitations and will add new attendees so they’ll be invited also. He demonstrated that message topic threads can be started by all members from the Basecamp platform. If you want to reply to a message topic that someone already started, you can just use email and you would not have to log in to Basecamp.
 - Tracks assignments
 - Responses
 - Get a reminder before meeting (or turn off notifications)

We should convert our communication practice to Basecamp. Lois attested that the Comp Plan review committee made good use of it.

- The Downstream Project is a non-profit communications firm that works with watershed associations and conservation groups.
- A small committee is needed to make a website to be used as a repository/corporate memory of “all things Town Run.” Georgette is currently leading this effort by answering questions Bill provided at last meeting. They will meet Nov. 30 if anyone is interested in helping.
 - Volunteers will also be needed to supply content going forward to keep the site current.
 - A monitoring aspect could be included, like was shared for Upper Potomac Riverkeeper [*Bill also demonstrated this aspect of a website at the last meeting.*]

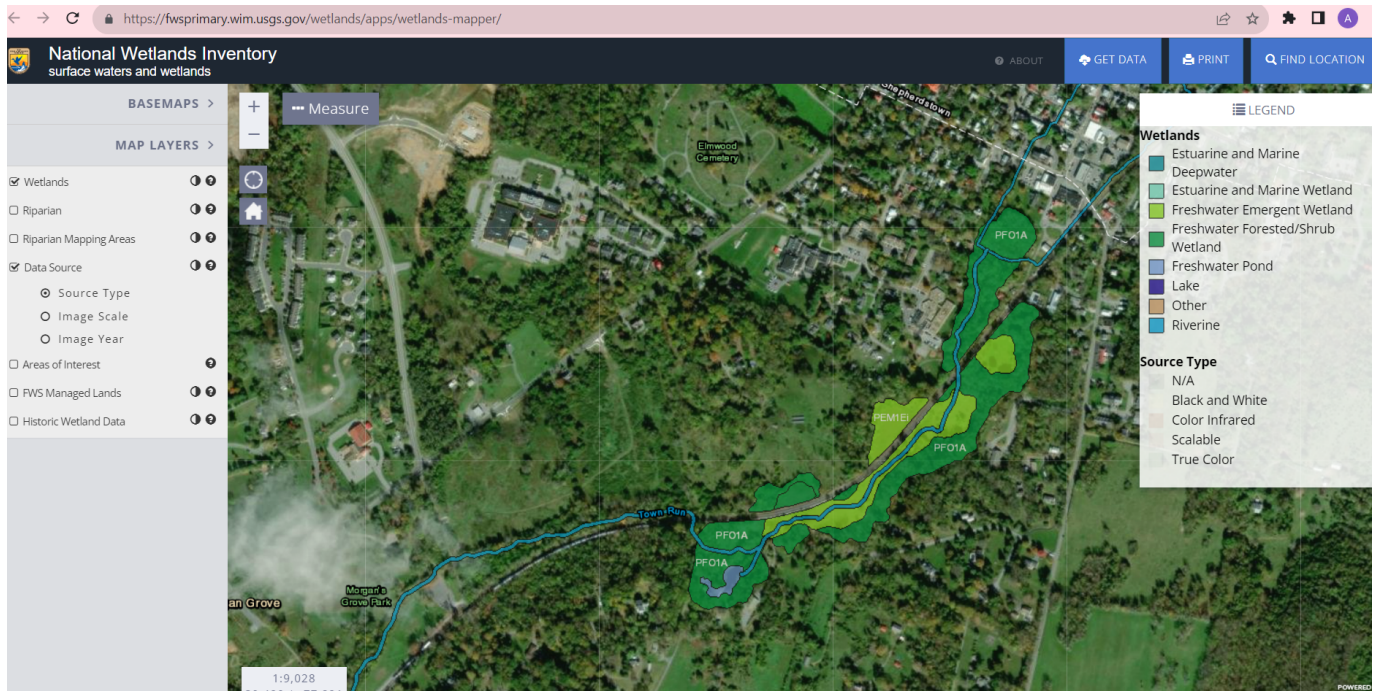
6. **Wetland** situation overview and potential project - Alana explained that hydric soils, wetland plants, and hydrology is required to confirm the presence of a wetland. In the case of developed areas like areas along Town Run closer to downtown, there could be a hydric soil buried under the site if it were a wetland sometime in the past. There is a recognized wetland downstream of Morgan Grove Park named Town Marsh, which is considered “exemplary” and was once the home to rare plants, but has stresses. Using this link that I had included at the bottom of p. 1 of today’s agenda, one can view how it is classified, by the types of water & vegetation.

Story map: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5759b5824bc841468b0e37ee6fc132b3>

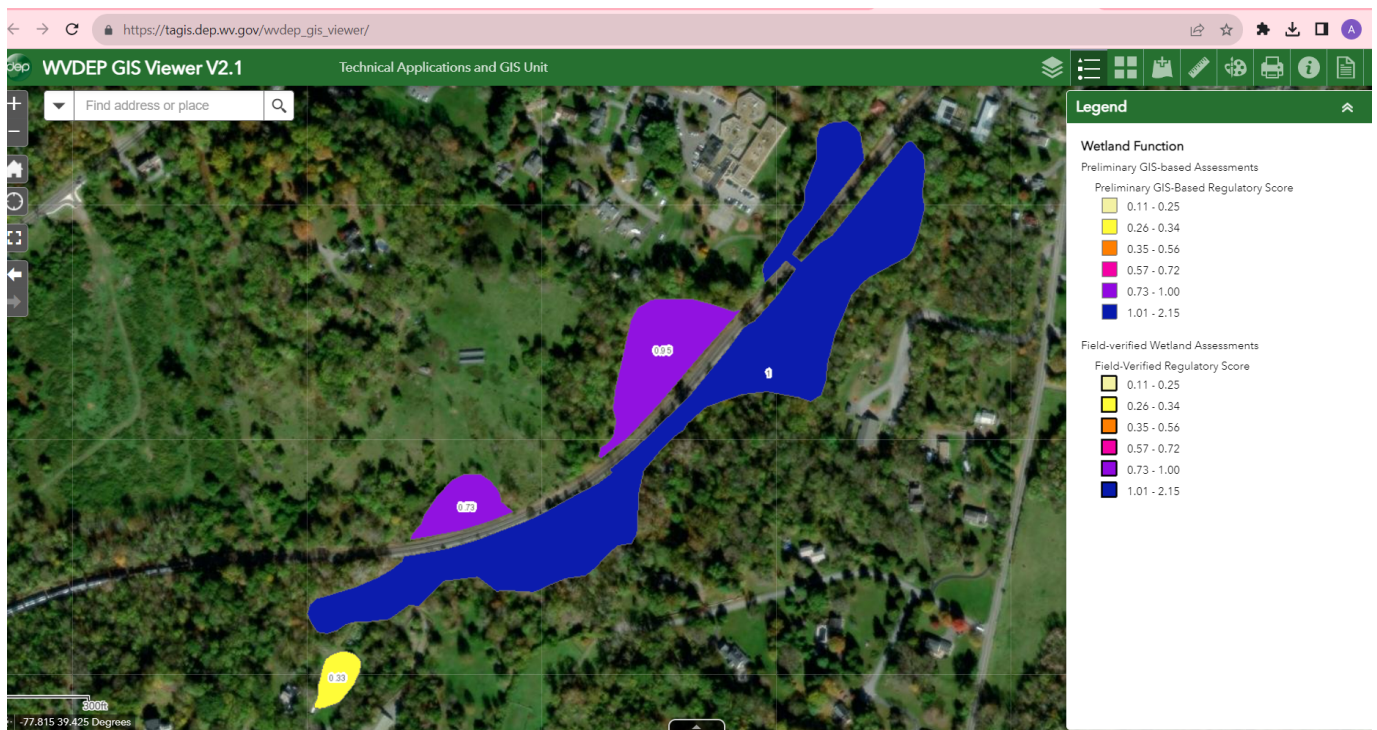
Wetlands mapper referred to in story map above:

<https://fwsprimary.wim.usgs.gov/wetlands/apps/wetlands-mapper/>

I accidentally left my printouts behind, so here is the image of the wetland boundaries:



Using the [WVDEP GIS viewer](https://tags.dep.wv.gov/wvdep_gis_viewer/), one can see the value placed on the wetland - high (value of 1), and also that it doesn't quite extend as far north as the backyard of Morgan Academy, but I believe the wetland there is connected to the one depicted here:



It was mentioned that Toll House woods (new development on 480) has a defined wetland which it has to buffer by 25 feet. As far as we know, it's OK so far. Kay said she was told that the area in the upstream direction of JSB parking lot was once wetland. **We agree we should try to do outreach to students about**

wetlands: Shepherdstown Elementary, Morgan Academy, and PVAS' 4th grade watershed program (Laurel Schwartz).

7. **Septic system extent/map** - make plans for estimating number and location of unsewered homes, prioritizing outreach, type of outreach, etc.

- Kristen Bisom prepared maps showing the areas in Shepherdstown that have sewer lines (collection pipes). The unsewered area within the watershed represents about 263 homes. It was noted that not all homes in the "sewered" areas have connected to sewer, but most have. A next step would be to draw in the areas that are on septic, despite being within the sewer polygon. Town representatives and local residents are needed for this task. Kristen will add some street names, school names, and wetlands if easy to do. We don't know of a "springs" layer to use. Land use/land cover would be nice but can be a later stage. Septic seal data would be interesting to add, if possible. Those interested in the map exercise are Sandy, Kay, Greg and Gillian.
- Gillian reported that the Health Department is working on scanning files. They do have GPS coordinates for septic systems that were installed under the state requirement to register septic systems (1970). There would also be records for sites that have had repairs during that time. Some homes before that may have out-of-date septic systems including cesspools. The data goes to DEP and Monica showed us that those points can be obtained on the Source Water Protection map viewer online.
- Outreach about septic systems is needed; the Health Department doesn't have requirements for doing that. The group discussed the idea of outreach to prospective or new homeowners, and whether an inspection of the septic system is required during property transfer. Gillian said many loan companies require septic to be checked/pumped, but it is not a law like mitigating lead paint.
- The town's water customer mailing list could be a way to do outreach about septic system care and funding opportunities.
- Please keep the maps on the agenda and help people to interpret them.

8. update on the Water Department's plans and timetable for using Town Run water - answer: when the disinfection byproducts tend to be highest, late May. It would last until roughly September, depending on the need and the amount of flow (often expect drought this time of year). The % of the mix will be determined at the time *[past meeting notes may have more details as well]*.

Next meeting January 11, 2024 at the Shepherdstown Public Library again, 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Adjourned 11:03 a.m.

Future meeting possibilities:

- Save Our Streams workshop is to be determined (Sept. 13 date originally decided upon is no longer ideal). Location chosen was Morgan's Grove Park due to parking, safe access, pavilion, and precedent by student groups led by PVAS and Cacapon Institute.
 - GIS resource people who can show us updated maps of wetlands and forest buffers in the Town Run watershed
- Possibilities: in the CBay conservation & restoration portal <https://gis.chesapeakebay.net/targeting>

***information about T. Coliform and E. Coli in case folks need additional information - from USGS.**

<https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/bacteria-and-e-coli-water>

Total coliform

Total coliforms are gram-negative, aerobic or facultative anaerobic, nonspore forming rods.

These bacteria were originally believed to indicate the presence of fecal contamination, however

total coliforms have been found to be widely distributed in nature and not always associated with the gastrointestinal tract of warm blooded animals. The number of total coliform bacteria in the environment is still widely used as an indicator for potable water in the U.S.

E. coli

Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) is a rod-shaped bacteria commonly found in the gastrointestinal tract and feces of warm-blooded animals. It is a member of the fecal coliform group of bacteria and is distinguished by its inability to break down urease. *E. coli* numbers in freshwater are determined by counting the number of yellow and yellow brown colonies growing on a 0.45 micron filter placed on m-TEC media and incubated at 35.0° C for 22-24 hours. The addition of urea substrate confirms that colonies are *E. coli*. This bacteria is a preferred indicator for freshwater recreation and its presence provides direct evidence of fecal contamination from warm-blooded animals. Although usually harmless, *E. coli* can cause illnesses such as meningitis, septicemia, urinary tract, and intestinal infections. A recently discovered strain of *E. coli* (*E. coli* O157:H7) can cause severe disease and may be fatal in small children and the elderly.

Town Run

11/16/23

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