

# **PINE CREEK WATERSHED RIVERS CONSERVATION PLAN**



**OCTOBER 2005**

# **Pine Creek Watershed Rivers Conservation Plan**

## **Steering Committee Members**

Ralph Brugger ..... Manager, Tioga County Conservation District  
Renee Carey ..... Executive Director, Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Ron Comstock.....Pine Creek Headwaters Protection Group  
Stacy Cromer ..... Natural Resource Conservation Service; Coordinator, Endless  
Mountains Resource Conservation & Development Council  
Chuck DeCurtis ..... The Nature Conservancy – Director of Conservation Science  
Terra Dillman ..... Watershed Specialist, Tioga County Conservation District  
George Durrwachter.. Pine Creek Preservation Association;  
Member, Lycoming County Planning Commission  
Jack Fleckenstein..... Watershed Specialist, Potter County Conservation District  
Paul Hoffmaster ..... Chairman, McHenry Township Supervisors  
Toner Hollick ..... Chairman, Lycoming County Planning Commission;  
Pine Creek Council of Governments  
Amy Jo McClain..... Potter County Planning Commission  
Kevin McJunkin ..... Environmental Planner, Lycoming County Planning Commission  
Jennifer Means..... Watershed Manager, Department of Environmental Protection  
Rob Parker..... Watershed Specialist, Bradford County  
Eric Potter..... Potter County Conservation District  
Wayne Scott..... Watershed Resident  
Jerry Walls. .... Executive Director, Lycoming County Planning Commission  
Jim Weaver .....Tioga County Planning Commission; Endless Mountains  
Resource Conservation & Development Council  
Dr. Mel Zimmerman.. Lycoming College – Clean Water Institute

## **Advisors to Steering Committee:**

Jeff Prowant.....District Forester, Tiadaghton State Forest  
Roy Siefert..... District Forester, Tioga State Forest  
C. E. Schwarz..... Land Management Specialist

## **Lycoming College Clean Water Institute Interns:**

Kristen Colgan	Kristina Kleintop
Amy Curry	Jeannie Shaffer
Alyssa DeDay	Drew Zimmerman

## **Tioga County Conservation District Interns:**

Jehanna Howe	Cris Wood
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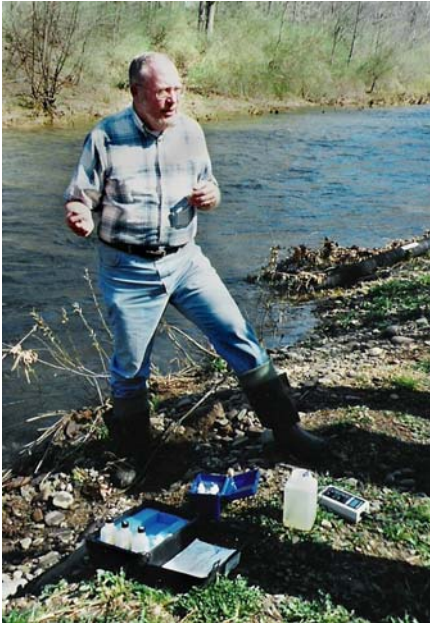
Photos courtesy of: George Durrwachter	Kristina Kleintop
Charlie Schwarz	Jim Weaver

Editor: Helen Schwarz

## *Dedication*

Every once in awhile a head pops out of the crowd that sees a completely different view of the world. Every once in awhile the conjunction of community, activism and need occur simultaneously. Every once in awhile the conjunction of circumstances and individual bears fruit. Such was the case with **Phil Stillerman**.

Phil wasn't from around here, but he sure made the Pine Creek Valley his home. A devoted family man, retired fire chief, and active environmentalist, Phil put his dedication to whatever he did. As President of the Pine Creek Headwaters Protection Group he was everywhere. He talked to politicians, advocated for clean water, facilitated consensus on issues throughout the watershed, spent untold hours working on the abandoned mine remediation of Babb Creek and assisted others in getting organized and energized.



Perhaps the most important work he did was with children. There was always time to show the kids how to monitor a stream for water quality, why it was important and how they could get involved. He was an agent against the intergenerational tyranny of abandoned mine drainage, stream erosion, and water quality degradation we are faced with and was prepared to do something about it. His alkalinity kit and pH meter were always on the seat of his truck. Down the bank slipping and sliding (“the way I’ve gone through life”, he’d say, getting back up and dusting off his backside) to get a sample from some tributary of the Pine.

The Pine Creek Watershed Rivers Conservation Plan owes a debt of gratitude to Phil for his support and early interest in the concept of the plan. He saw immediately the value of pulling the potential partners together to initiate the process. Moreover he was confident that we had the spirit, expertise and moxie to do it ourselves. But most importantly, he had the faith in us to be able to pull it off!

Phil was taken from us while going to his daughter’s house to care for her cat, but his memory and dedication were, for many of us, the driving force in staying on task and seeing this plan to completion. So, to his vision and desire to see Pine Creek remain and become the crown jewel of the West Branch and the entire Susquehanna Basin: We dedicate this plan to our friend -- Phil Stillerman.

## *Acknowledgements*

Funding for this project came from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Community Partnership Program's Rivers Conservation Program.

The Steering Committee was developed by considering the organizations and individuals who are familiar with the Pine Creek watershed, interested in the future and willing to donate their time to assist with the project. These individuals were called together to discuss the opportunity and need for a river conservation plan. They felt the time was right and proceeded with the planning process. Since then, other individuals and organizations have been invited to participate on the Steering Committee based on their interest in serving and willingness to work toward the common goal -- developing a plan that reflects the watershed and its opportunities.

Many people have contributed to the success of this plan, from the Steering Committee and those who supported them, to volunteers and the public (through the survey and interviews).

First, thank you to the old guys: Wayne Ray, retired Endless Mountains Resource Conservation and Development Council Coordinator and Jim Mays, DCNR retiree, for bringing the first round of players to the table in August of 2001 for the preliminary discussions on what this might look like and who would participate. Without them this would not have happened. Thanks, also, to Terry Hough, our DCNR grant advisor, for stewarding us through the process.

The Steering Committee is grateful for Jim Weaver's leadership, energy and inspiration as Chairman during the plan process. He did a great job of holding the group together, including creating enthusiasm and inspiration by planning and guiding a visit through the canyon for an "up close" look at Pine Creek.

Special thanks to Steering Committee members: Jerry Walls, for his vision, support and dedication to the plan; Stacy Cromer for her commitment to supporting the work of the RC&D Council and for never saying no to any request made of her during this project; and Renee Carey, for without her we would never have been able to stay on task and complete this project within the grant period.

The members of the Steering Committee have contributed to the outcome and in their own way made this watershed plan unique. The Pine Creek Headwaters Protection Group represented by Phil Stillerman and Ron Comstock, and the Pine Creek Preservation Association represented by George Durrwachter and Toner Hollick provided a grassroots perspective and were helpful in focusing on implementation. The County Planning Commissions represented by Jerry Walls and Kevin McJunkin (Lycoming); Jim Weaver (Tioga); and Mike Kear then Amy Jo McClain (Potter); were instrumental in formulating management options. Municipal officials, represented by Paul Hoffmaster and Toner Hollick, helped us make the plan doable and realistic. The Conservation Districts provided technical assistance through their staff: Jack Fleckenstein and Eric Potter (Potter) and Terra Dillman and Ralph Brugger (Tioga). Jennifer Means was helpful in

providing an alternative to “stovepipe thinking” and provided a cross department view of the plan. Dr. Mel Zimmerman and his interns from Lycoming College were indefatigable in their assistance to the Steering Committee in research, writing and the too numerous to mention tasks that always needed to be done.

Thanks to District Foresters Jeff Prowant and Roy Siefert, from whom we received invaluable help with state forest information, technical assistance and insights into the Bureau of Forestry’s management objectives.

Al Cole, Steve Stone and E. Neal Mack, landowners in the Canyon, deserve recognition for their insightful interviews. Citizen Wayne Scott’s self-appointed task was to keep open space on the table, and to a large extent he succeeded.

And to bring all the hard work to its printed stage, thank you to our editor, Helen Schwarz, for her thorough and tireless blending of the information the committee gathered; and to Charlie Schwarz, who as a forester had “boots on the ground” in the valley for many years was a welcomed fact finder.

And without question we would like to acknowledge *Raven* and *Brook Trout* for the inspiration they provided. Without that inspiration the process would not have been nearly as fruitful. The resources represented in the **Pine Creek watershed** are without doubt the heart of the matter.



## Plan Partners Contact Information

Arnot Sportsmen Association.....	570-638-2347
Clinton County Conservation District.....	570-726-3196
Clinton County Economic Partnership.....	570-748-5782
Clinton County Historical Society.....	570-748-7254
Clinton County Planning Commission.....	570-893-4082
Concerned Citizens United Together (CLOUT)	
Dauphin County Chapter Trout Unlimited	
Endless Mountains Resource Conservation and Development Council.....	570-265-5288 ext5
Endless Mountains Resource Conservation Trust.....	570-265-5288 ext5
Lycoming College Clean Water Institute.....	570-321-4185
Lycoming County Commissioners.....	570-320-2124
Lycoming County Public Safety Department.....	570-433-4461
Lycoming County Conservation District .....	570-433-3003
Lycoming County Historical Society.....	570-326-3326
Lycoming County Planning Commission.....	570-320-2132
Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy (NPC).....	570-323-6222
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (PA DCNR).....	717-772-3839
Tioga State Forest.....	570-724-2868
Tiadaghton State Forest .....	570-327-3450
Susquehannock State Forest.....	814-274-3600
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP).....	570-327-3636
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).....	717-783-8800
Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Foundation (PEDF).....	717-566-5626
Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC).....	717-705-7800
Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC).....	717-787-4250
Pennsylvania State University	
Pine Creek Council of Governments (PC COG).....	717-753-8921
Pine Creek Headwaters Protection Group (PCHPG).....	717-724-5097
Pine Creek Preservation Association	
Pine Creek Rail Trail Advisory Committee.....	717-783-7936
Potter County Conservation District.....	814-274-8411
Potter County Historical Society.....	814-274-8124
Regional Planning Commissions	
Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC).....	570-265-9103
North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission .....	814-773-3162
Susquehanna Economic Development Association- Council of Governments.....	570-524-4491
Slate Run Sportsmen Association	
Slate Run Tackle Shop.....	570-753-8551

Susquehanna Chapter Trout Unlimited.....	717-323-4367
The Nature Conservancy.....	717-232-6001
Tioga County Conservation District.....	570-724-1801
Tioga County Historical Society.....	570-724-6116
Tioga County Planning Commission.....	570-723-8251
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC).....	412-288-2777

## **Organization/Agency/Municipality**

### **Clinton County**

Pine Creek Township.....	570-753-5671
--------------------------	--------------

### **Lycoming County**

Brown Township.....	570-353-2938
Cogan House Township.....	570-634-3185
Cummings Township.....	570-753-8982
Jackson Township.....	570-324-6343
Jersey Shore Borough.....	570-398-0104
McHenry Township.....	570-753-6695
Pine Township.....	570-353-2818
Porter Township.....	570-398-4526
Watson Township.....	570-398-7829

### **Potter County**

Galeton Borough.....	814-435-2275
Harrison Township.....	814-334-5425
Hector Township.....	814-334-5668
Pike Township.....	814-435-2991
Summit Township.....	814-274-9087
Sweden Township.....	814-274-8829
Ulysses Township.....	814-848-7688
West Branch Township.....	814-435-6325

### **Tioga County**

Bloss Township.....	570-724-1801
Charleston Township.....	570-638-2040
Clymer Township.....	570-724-5353
Delmar Township.....	570-724-5482
Duncan Township.....	570-353-2291
Elk Township.....	814-435-6903
Gaines Township.....	814-435-6471
Liberty Township & Borough.....	570-324-3461
Morris Township.....	570-353-2270
Shippen Township.....	570-723-0614
Wellsboro Borough.....	570-724-3186

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