Project Title: McCoy-Linn dam removal and fishing park project
Project Location Spring Creek, near Bellefonte, PA; Centre Co.
Latitude 40.930889 Longitude -77.785615

Dam removed McCoy-Linn dam, DEP No. 14-022
Date of removal Expected summer/fall 2007
Linear feet restored 4,012 feet riparian habitat, 2,006 feet instream habitat
Stream miles opened 2.0 miles
Species to benefit coldwater species

Project Costs:
Growing Greener contribution $25,600 toward design/engineering
Federal contribution $195,000 toward implementation
State contribution $160,000 toward engineering & implementation
Private contribution $26,000

Project Overview:
The McCoy-Linn dam was originally built in 1774 as a source of water power and was subsequently rebuilt several times, most recently in 1936. The current 25-foot high, 101-foot long dam has breached several times in storm events and is in poor condition. The PA Fish & Boat Commission, owner of the dam, would like to remove a liability and maintenance problem, restore a high quality trout stream and create a recreational fishing area for local citizens. Although the site has significant historical relevance, the dam in its current state is unsustainable and removal provides the opportunity to improve an adjacent historical resource (an abandoned canal system), create a recreational area, and restore an environmental resource. The removal and recreational area construction activities are expected to cost approximately $450,000.



Photo 1. McCoy-Linn dam (14-022). 2005.



Photo 2. McCoy-Linn station with canal behind (canal is filled with shrubs). 2005.

SPRING CREEK WATERSHED COMMUNITY

A grassroots stakeholder initiative

Exploratory meeting regarding the removal of McCoy Dam
August 6, 2003
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

As interested members of the Spring Creek Watershed Community, Trout Unlimited and ClearWater Conservancy volunteered to call an exploratory meeting to discuss the removal of McCoy Dam. Stakeholders invited to this initial meeting include: PAFBC (John Arway, Mark Hartle, Scott Carney), PADEP (John Sengle, Joan Stattler, Gary Byron, Mike Welch, Jack Kraeuter, Vince Humenay), Trout Unlimited (Ted Trostle), USGS/Biological Resources Division (Bob Carline), American Rivers (Sara Nicholas), ClearWater Conservancy (Jeff Sturniolo, Katie Ombalski)

Agenda

1. Introductions

2. Basic information about the property.
   a. Who owns the dam and adjacent lands?
   b. Does Allegheny Power still have any responsibility, liability, interest, or roll to play in dealings with the property?
   c. Others?

3. Current positions on removing the dam.
   a. PAFBC
   b. PADEP
   c. TU
   d. CWC – interested in improving the health of Spring Creek and its tributaries. Have not formally taken a position on the topic.
   e. Others?

4. Concerns with Dam removal
   a. Sediment testing (cost of sediment testing, cost of disposal if it is determined necessary)
   b. Possible compliance outcomes
   c. Change in stream flow both up and down stream
   d. Stream bank stabilization
   e. Public access
   f. Others?

5. Formulating an appropriate plan of action – what are our next steps?
   - Agency agreements - memo's of understanding?
   - Identify funding sources?
   - Contacting other interested stakeholders?
   - Timeline?

SPRING CREEK WATERSHED COMMUNITY

A grassroots stakeholder initiative

McCoy Dam Committee
October 23, 2003
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Participating Stakeholders:

- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited
- USGS/Biological Resources Division
- American Rivers
- ClearWater Conservancy

Agenda

	Topic	Stakeholder
1.	Introductions	**TU/CWC**
2.	Report on scope of services & proposed sediment sampling plan	**PA DEP**
3.	Discussion	**Committee**
4.	Next steps	**Committee**

McCoy

CENTREDAILY.com

Posted on Sun, Jun. 25, 2006

Dam in distress

By Mike Joseph
mjoseph@centredaily.com

MILESBURG -- At the confluence of Spring and Bald Eagle creeks, where waters that drain two valleys merge, the state's quest to improve safety, the surroundings and a fish habitat will join debate this week with the fear of flooding.

The state Fish & Boat Commission plans to remove McCoy's Dam, an 80-year-old concrete structure across Spring Creek that stopped generating electricity decades ago but that Milesburg residents a mile downstream have come to regard as a bulwark against flooding.

The commission's Scott Carney, who has engineered the removal of scores of old dams from state waterways, said McCoy's Dam has no flood-control function but exposes the state to liability because anglers fish dangerously close to the boil in front of the dam and recreational boaters use it for thrills.

"The bottom line is, we have kayakers shooting over that dam all the time, despite its being marked," Carney said. "When we look at the alternatives, and no functional benefit, it's a liability -- and removing it is the best option."

Carney and a host of government and non-government organizations -- including ClearWater Conservancy, Trout Unlimited and the state Department of Environmental Protection -- will hold a public meeting 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Milesburg Community Center to present the plan.

The almost $400,000 project, to begin next spring, will breach and remove the dam, turn 4,000 feet of slow water into a free-flowing stream, narrow the waterway by at least half and use dredged silt to build up the banks and help create a 10-acre parking and public access area.

The movement of fish would no longer be constrained by the dam, Carney said, and the entire ecosystem would be improved by the removal of the unnatural structure.

"It's important that we get the correct information out, and that's why we're having this meeting," Carney said.

Milesburg residents, and McCoy family descendants, worry that Spring Creek without the dam will add to silt and cobblestone deposits downstream, particularly at the confluence with Bald Eagle Creek in the heart of downtown. Such deposits are already building up there through the stream surface, leaving less room for water to flow.

"We have concerns about some of the sediment that's going to come down here because the juncture of Spring Creek and Bald Eagle Creek is building up," said James Reigh, Milesburg Borough Council president. "If it's to benefit kayakers at the cost of the borough, no we're not for it. If it's not hurting anybody, leave it alone."

Councilman Paul Bartley attributed increased Spring Creek water flow in recent years to increased stormwater runoff from more paving and development in Nittany Valley, which Spring Creek drains. It took a 3-inch rain to flood Milesburg almost 30 years ago, Bartley said, but since then a 2-inch rain has been able to put Milesburg in flood stage.

"We're just concerned about the volume of water coming down," Bartley said. "We've reached a point where they've done so much development up there, so much asphalt is being laid, the water's not being put back in percolation -- it's discharging into Spring Creek."

When Hurricane Ivan remnants dumped more than 4 inches of rain on Centre County in September 2004, some Milesburg residents had to be rescued by boat as floodwaters surged into their homes.

"Spring Creek came down through with such force that it actually blocked off the flow of Bald Eagle," Bartley said. "Spring Creek actually closed off the flow of Bald Eagle, and Bald Eagle had to leave its banks because there was nowhere else for it to go."

Jim Coder, council vice president, said he's concerned that removing the dam will exacerbate Milesburg's flooding problem by setting loose more sludge. "Without a doubt, it's holding back quite a bit of sludge in there," he said. "We've already got some of it, so we know what's going to happen. ... I think it's going to hurt us."

Because of such concerns, Carney expects to get an earful Tuesday. "I anticipate the public meeting may be testy," he said. "They usually are."

But he said the issues arising from development and increased stormwater runoff will not be affected by the dam's removal because "the dam has no flood-control purpose ... no storage capacity."

Bellefonte entrepreneur John McCoy built the dam in 1926 to generate electricity and sell the power to West Penn Power. Flooding in March 1936 washed out the original dam, and he rebuilt it that year, with steam shovels working from the middle of the stream.

McCoy died in 1949. West Penn Power bought the dam soon afterward, removed the waterwheel from the generating station alongside and ended electricity production there for good. West Penn later donated the dam and 39 acres of land to the Fish Commission, the present owner.

McCoy family members still own property and homes -- including the stone house built in 1795 by ironmaster Samuel Miles -- just downstream of the dam. They oppose the commission's plans, voicing the same concerns as the Milesburg councilmen and some of their own.

Bellefonte resident Anne Brooks, John McCoy's granddaughter, said West Penn Power left the McCoy family little choice but to sell the dam, and she still harbors hope of owning it again and keeping it as is.

"Actually," she said, "they (West Penn Power) should have given it back to the McCoy estate because they kind of forced us to sell it to them, and we should have had dibs on getting it back."

Robert Donaldson, ClearWater Conservancy board member and retired county planning director, said he has mixed feelings about the dam removal.

As a fisherman who is drawn to structures such as the dam, where the fishing is "extra good," he doesn't like the idea. But he said the dam removal will make for faster water that in the long run will be cooler and healthier for fish.

"We're going to lose something, but we're going to gain something," he said, "and I think in the long run we're going to gain more than we lose."

Mike Joseph can be reached at 235-3910.

© 2006 Centre Daily Times and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved.
http://www.centredaily.com