

	<p><i>Collaborative Public, Private, and Non-Profit Partnership Leads to Land and Stream Preservation and Restoration in Adams County</i></p> <p><i>Prepared by Frank Kozak, November 2024</i></p>
Slide 1	<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The ZMR site is a great example of ACTU’s commitment to protecting the environment, fishing, conservation, and community.2. The ZMR project demonstrated this by the permanent protection of 58 acres of unspoiled land and retired agricultural land along and adjacent to Conewago Creek in Adams County.3. This section of the creek is the only “Special Trout Regulation Water” in Adams County (i.e., restricted to Catch and Release, Fly Fishing Only (CROFFO) activity).
Slides 2 and 3	<p>NOTIFICATION AND CONCEPTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In late 2019, Knouse Foods Corporation (Knouse) informed ACTU and other environmental and conservation-minded organizations of its intent to sell a 58-acre parcel of land on Zeigler Mill Road in Adams County.2. The property, which was undeveloped woodland and agricultural land, abutted approximately one-half of the 1.1-mile regulated section of the creek.3. Knouse had been making the section of the creek abutting the property accessible for public fishing for more than three decades. During this time ACTU had been managing and improving the trout habitat of the fishery through the volunteer efforts of its members and others.4. Access to the remaining regulated sections of the creek on two abutting properties had been allowed under informal agreements with private landowners, Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Reeve.5. Both Knouse and the notified parties were concerned that a new owner might develop the property in a manner detrimental to the recreational resource or might not continue to allow public access for fishing or other outdoor activities.6. So, the parties expressed a desire to work together collaboratively to find a solution that would maintain the status quo.7. ACTU and its partner organizations began exploring with Knouse the potential to purchase a permanent fishing easement along the half-mile section of the creek that could potentially be affected by the sale.8. The state, local, private, and non-profit organizations that teamed with ACTU at this point are:

<p>Slides 4 and 5 (Timeline)</p> <p>Slide 6 (ZMR Committee)</p> <p>Slide 7 (Critical path model)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adams County Conservation District • Land Conservancy of Adams County • Watershed Alliance of Adams County • Adams County Office of Planning & Development • PA Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources • Northern Virginia chapter of Trout Unlimited • PA Fish and Boat Commission • Knouse Foods <p>Together, this team became known as the Conewago Access Partners.</p> <p>FUND RAISING</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As plans to acquire the easement progressed over the following year and public knowledge of the effort grew, support developed among the Partners to preserve the entire property. This would protect and preserve the fishing access, the riparian zone, and other land surrounding this section of the creek. 2. To accomplish this, the team worked with Knouse while locating and acquiring commitments for funding to enable the purchase of the property. 3. In late 2020, the Partners started raising the funds. 4. Over the following year, the Partners conducted an untold number of meetings involving innumerable volunteer hours. 5. The successful and innovative fundraising efforts resulted in raising over \$430,000. The key donations that enabled this success include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$32,000 raised by ACTU from 5 TU chapters (with NoVaTU contributing \$5,000), 4 companies, 3s portsmen organizations, and 50 individuals, • \$200,000 from a grant the Land Conservancy of Adams County (LCAC) secured from the PA DEP and DCNR, • \$84,000 from the PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), • \$75,000 from the Adams County Conservation District (ACCD), and • \$40,000 from the J. William Warehime Foundation. <p>ACQUISTION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This work culminated on December 30, 2021 with the acquisition of the 58 acres from Knouse.
<p>Slide 8 (Acquisition Source of Funds)</p>	
<p>Slides 9 and 10 (ZMR Plaque)</p>	

<p>Slides 11 (Parking Lot Engineering)</p>	<p>2. The property became under the ownership of the PFBC.</p> <p>PFBC AGREEMENTS</p> <p>1. In May 2022, following months of negotiations, ACTU entered into a 25-year agreement with the PFBC under which ACTU is responsible for maintaining and improving the land on the Site for the benefit of anglers and other nature lovers alike.</p> <p>2. The PFBC has control of the waterway.</p> <p>3. Concurrently, ACTU members negotiated 10-year fishing easement agreements between the PFBC and Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Reeve, who separately own the remaining properties abutting the CROFFO section of the creek, thereby formalizing agreements that enable access to those sections of the creek going forward as well.</p> <p>4. No hunting on the ZMR site and no fishing during deer gun season were included in the terms of these two agreements.</p> <p>PARKING LOT CONSTRUCTION</p> <p>1. The first major project that ACTU completed under the lease agreement was the construction of a 10-car parking lot, plus an approach road from the lot to the creek, to enable greater access to the creek.</p>
<p>Slides 12, 13 and 14 (Lot construction)</p>	<p>2. This project, which was estimated to cost over \$60,000, was completed in August 2022.</p> <p>3. Importantly, the project was funded entirely by contributions from members of the local community.</p> <p>4. Design and permitting services were donated by the Sharrah Design Group;</p> <p>5. stone, asphalt, and other materials for the parking lot were donated by the Vulcan Materials Company; and</p> <p>6. construction and project management services were donated by Conewago Enterprises.</p> <p>7. That these private companies volunteered to support this project for the public good further exemplifies the unique and wide-reaching level of partnerships that have made this land preservation and protection project a success.</p>

Slide 15 (SMP Grant Activities)	<p>SMP GRANT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In late 2022, ACTU submitted a grant application to the South Mountain Partnership that resulted in an award of \$13,200 for an environmental improvement program at the Site. 2. Mike Waldron, a retired forester, fortuitously joined ACTU in early 2023. 3. The work completed under the SMP grant in 2023 includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PFBC and ACTU members installing and improving stream habitat devices in the lower section of the CROFFO section. • Creating a 900-yard nature trail, including three educational stations, which traverses a heavily wooded section of the Site, providing a new recreational opportunity on the property. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTU decided to keep the trail “natural” • Trail is a work in progress • Planting more than 300 native trees and shrubs on the retired agricultural area, further protecting the riparian environment. • Removing extensive growths of invasive species on ten acres of land, which is prompting the regrowth of native plants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professional forester was hired to spray multi-flora rose on about 3 acres • Matt Kern, the DCNR State Service Forester, and Mike Waldron followed this spraying with three rounds of spraying to date and will continue. 4. The three educational stations that describe riparian zones, invasive plant species, and native trees along the trail were specifically designed and installed for environmental education purposes. 5. The educational stations will inform visitors about the importance of riparian buffer zones, the negative impacts of invasive species, the significance of preserving the property in its native state, and the various native tree species along the trail. 6. Plans are in place to put up a sign about mud sills
Slides 16 (stream work)	
Slide 17 (trail work)	
Slide 18 (tree planting)	
Slide 19 (educational signs)	
Slides 20 to 25 (Upper FFOCRO Stream Improvement)	<p>PHASE I STREAM RESTORATION</p> <p>Phase I of a significant stream restoration project took place this past July. The project work started at the upper end of the CROFFO section of the creek and continued downstream to the junction with the new access parking lot.</p>

	<p>The project was led by Ricky Whitmore, Adams County’s Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Coordinator, who prepared the grant application, contracted the permitting and construction work, and managed the accounting of the project.</p> <p>The PFBC Habitat Division designed the devices and also oversaw the construction effort, which was performed by Flyway Excavating, Inc.</p> <p>The field work involved installing more than 30 log deflectors, repairing numerous mudsill devices, creating root wads, and adding numerous instream boulders.</p> <p>More than 600 tons of shot rock were delivered to the project site and placed among the devices.</p> <p>Phase II potentially coming in 2025 for the lower CROFFO section, if the funding is approved by the Pennsylvania EPA.</p>
Slide 26	
Slide 27	<p>TROUT MAGAZINE ARTICLE</p> <p>GOVERNOR’S AWARD</p> <p>CLOSING</p>
Slide 28 (summary statement)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The purchase of the Site and fishing easements from the abutting property owners will allow anglers from across Pennsylvania and surrounding states to continue to travel to fish this section of Conewago Creek for many years to come, spending their “tourist dollars” in Adams County for food and lodging. 2. Additionally, the work completed since the acquisition of the Site (e.g., parking lot construction, SMP grant work, and other miscellaneous improvements) are valued well in excess of \$100,000. 3. In addition to the long-term preservation of the property in its natural condition a new, no-fee recreational area is in the public interest of all was created
Slide 29	LOOKING FORWARD
Slide 30	2025 STREAM IMPROVEMENT
Slide 31	DISCUSSION

