

UWFP Delaware River Location Monthly Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

10:30am-12:30pm

DuPont Environmental Education Center 4th Floor, 1400 Delmarva Lane, Wilmington DE

I. Introductions (10:30-10:45am)

DE Sea Grant: Emily Maung-Douglass
EPA (Region 3): Nicole Lick
US FWS: Flavia Rutkosky
HUD: Roberto Frugone
National Park Service: Tomas Deza
The Nature Conservancy: Kim Hachadoorian
Northeast Rising / Green Building United: Karen Igou, Zoe Yearwood
PDE: John Harrod, Kathy Klein, Erica Rossetti
USDA: Kesha Braunskill, Kefeni Kejela
Wilmington Citizen: Joseph Scarpa

II. Partner Updates & Resource Sharing (10:45-11:15am)

1. Save the date for our EJ Forum: March 12th, 2024 @ Rutgers Camden
2. PDE is currently hiring for a Delaware Community Coordinator,
<https://delawareestuary.org/home/careers-2/>
3. USDA: The states of NJ and PA will be advertising RFPs in mid January 2024 of IRA funding opportunities. NJ will be focusing on municipalities and PA will be focusing on a wider array of applicants. DE has not announced their plans for distributing IRA funds yet. 100% of funds will go to underserved communities as defined by CEJST.
4. NJ Audubon also recently released a capacity building RFP (“Watershed Restoration and Community Empowerment Program”) similar to PDE’s mini-grant program:
<https://njudubon.org/watershed-grants/>. There will be an introduction webinar on **January 10, 2024 at 10am**.
5. EPA Region 3 + DRBC will be hosting an in-person climate meeting some time in the spring of 2024, more details to follow.
6. Kathy brought up the problems that small non-profits, including PDE which is well-established and has nearly 30 staff, are facing following federal compliance, especially related to the BIL, making sub-awarding funds to even smaller community groups to build capacity extremely difficult, as they will also have to follow compliance. People are actually turning away BIL funding. There is still a huge disconnect and injustice that perhaps UWFP can help address between federal agencies huge barrier to entry for funding disadvantaged communities. Hoping that staff time to deal with compliance, the future TCTACs, or private foundations can help. Accessing federal funds is exceedingly difficult for anyone trying to do small on-the-ground EJ/restoration projects.
7. Greenbuild 2024 international conference will take place in Philadelphia this year at the Convention Center from November 12-15. They are potentially seeking members for an EJ Advisory Committee.

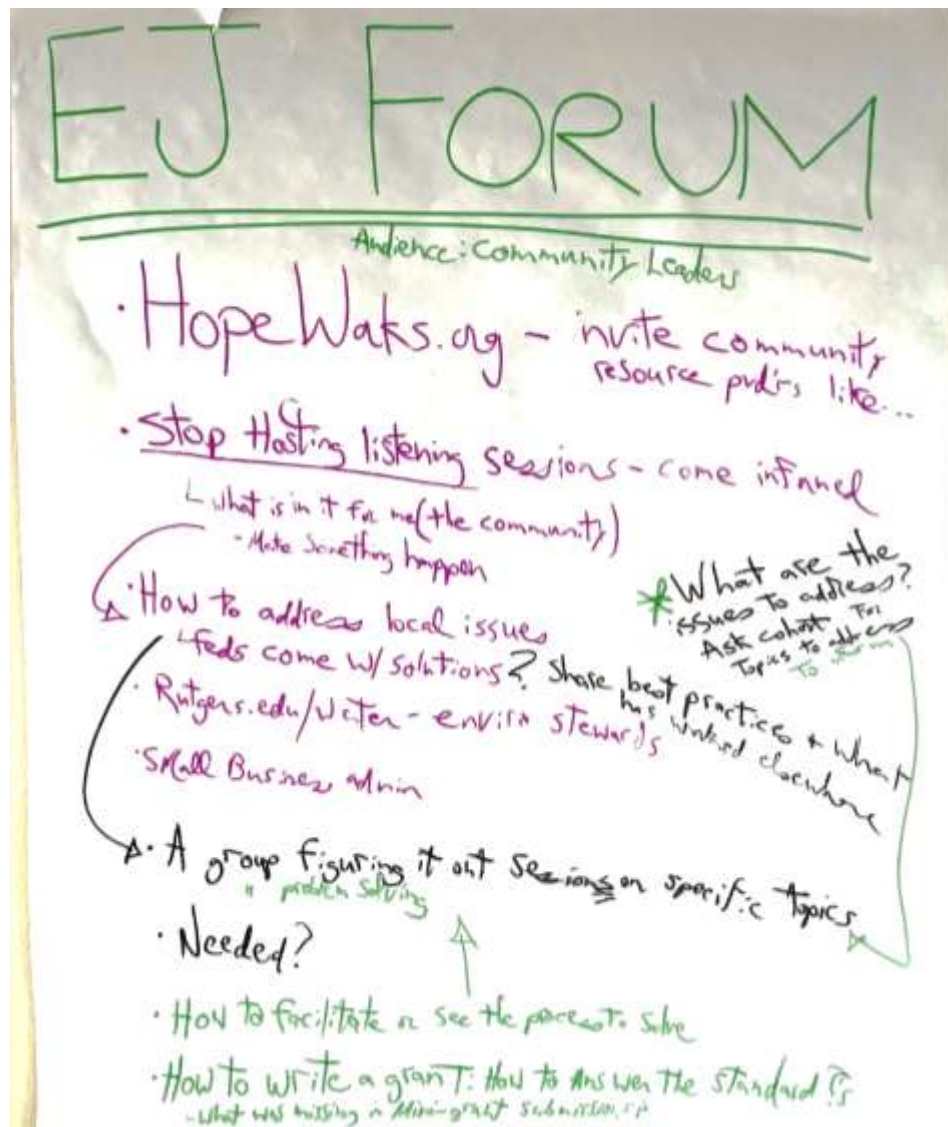
III. 2024 Community Cohort Opportunity Review – see back page (11:15-11:20am)

IV. 2024 Work Plan Approval (11:20-11:30am)

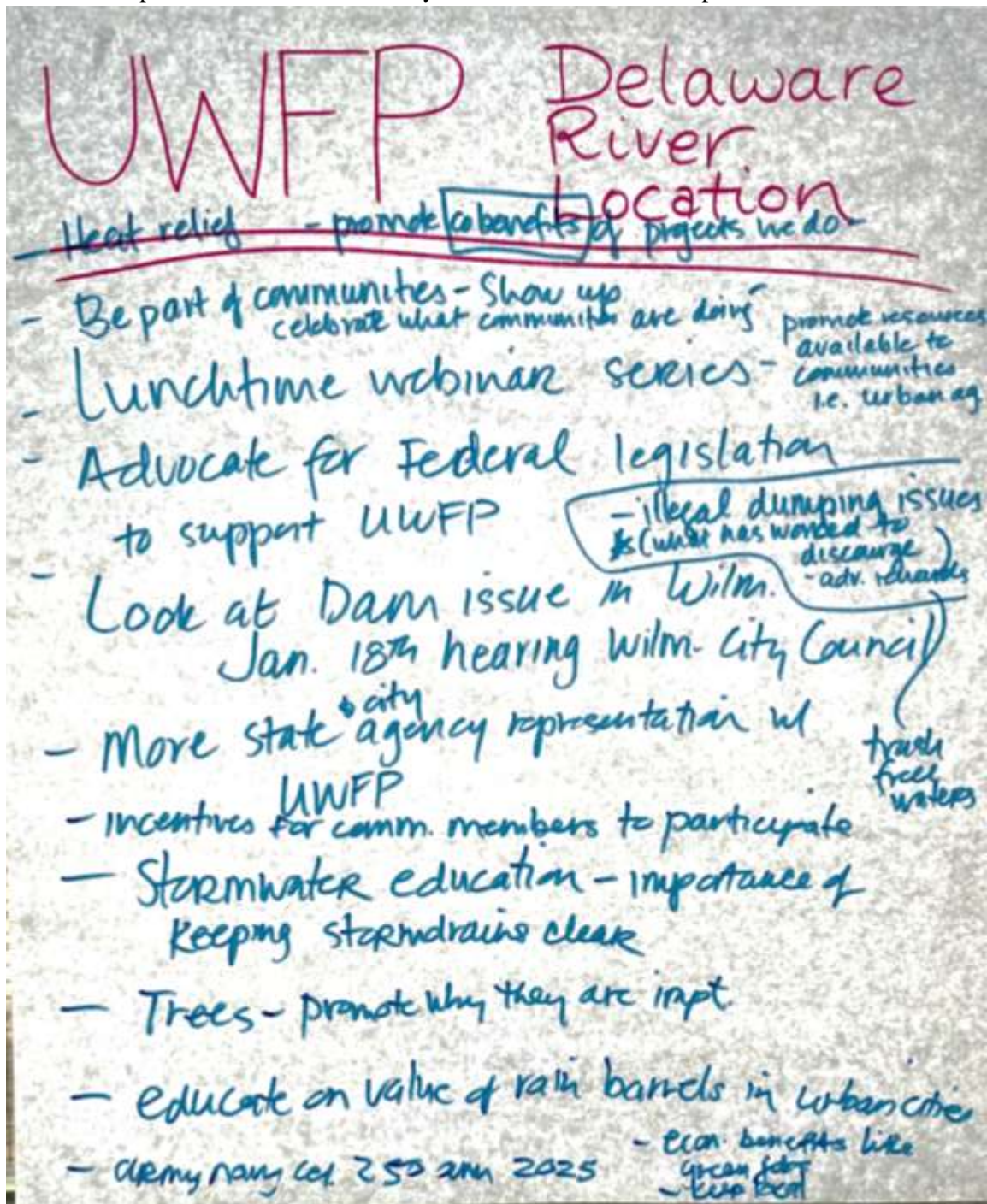
1. Approved by everyone in attendance with the following 2 additions
 - i. Add an objective 2g (on page 7) to Support sustainable urban agriculture
 - ii. As a result of our discussion around the difficulties of sub-awarding and the uncertainty of the future of the TCTACs, add Environmental Finance Centers to Activity 2c on page 8.
2. The workplan will be published on PDE's Urban Waters web page:
www.DelawareEstuary.org/save-the-estuary/urban-waters/

V. Brainstorming Activity – 3 focus groups rotating @ 10 minutes each (11:30am-12:00pm)

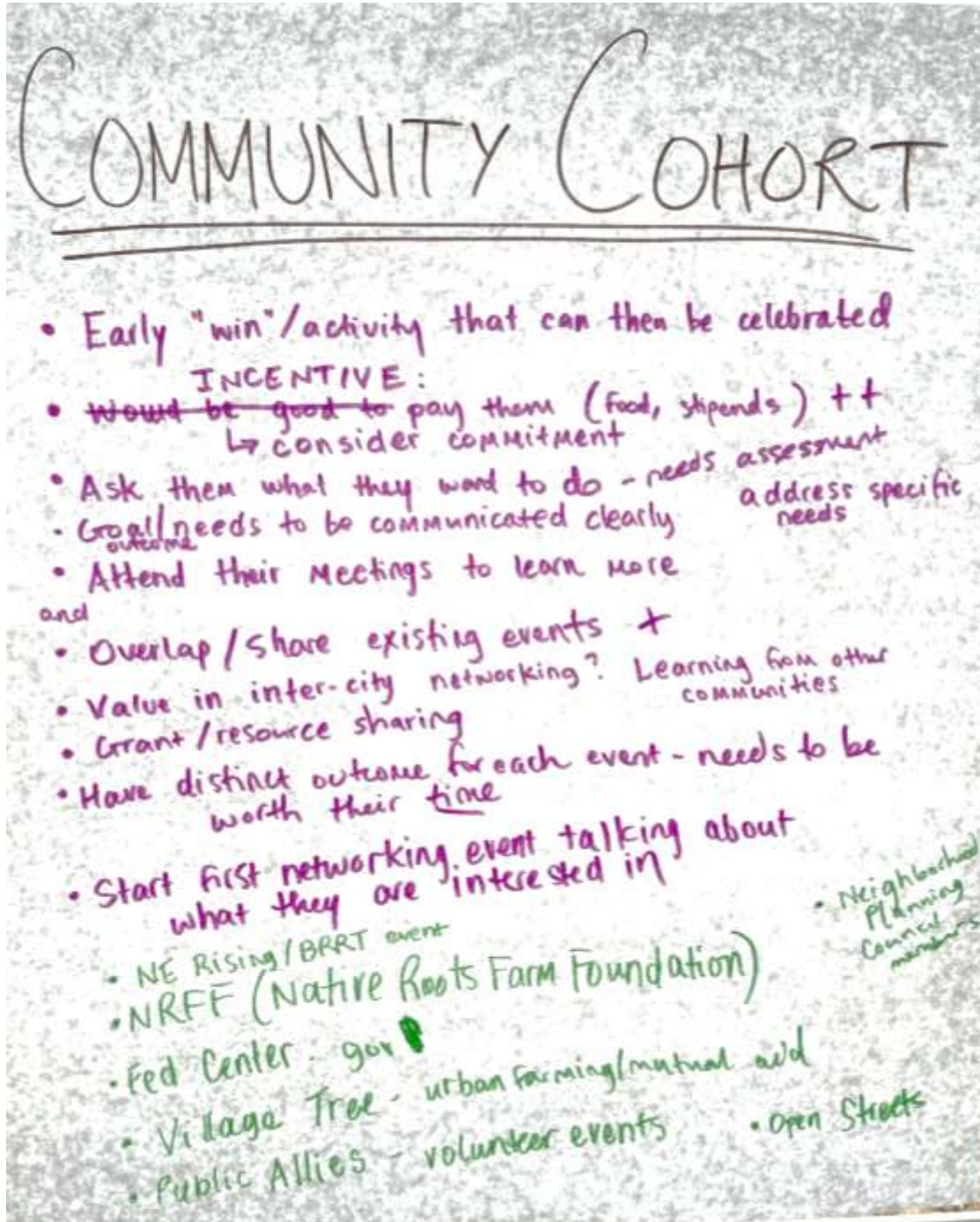
1. Group 1: Ideas for the environmental justice forum



2. Group 2: Ideas for the Community Cohort activities/workshops & members



3. Group 3: Ideas for the Delaware River UWFP Location: what do you want to see/learn/do in 2024?



VI. Lunch/Networking & Wetland Walk (12:00-1:30pm)

2024 Community Cohort Summary

Summary

PDE would like to continue using the UWFP as a mechanism to support more urban community leaders via a Community Cohort that will bring them together across all 3 states and 4 cities in our Location. The ultimate goal of this program would be to support and build capacity for community leaders who are already working towards resiliency, environmental justice, public access, sustainability, and health in their communities. PDE would like to form an intercity Community Cohort and plan several events throughout the year focusing on networking, environmental stewardship, and professional development opportunities. Our ultimate vision is a well-connected, empowered, and informed network of community members that are the voice of positive action and change in our Urban Waters communities.

Cohort Member Eligibility

1. Community-based professionals, general community activists with an interest in the environment, and/or emerging environmental leaders
2. Lives and ideally works in Camden, Chester, Philadelphia, or Wilmington
3. Is actively doing work with community members from their community (does not have to be environmental work)
4. Has specific interests and goals for resilience (Land & Water mgmt.; Disaster and Health; Climate) or environmental justice within their community
5. Can commit to attending 5 of the proposed 8 events (see timeline below)
6. Bonus: is a past or present mini-grant program grantee
7. Bonus: organization they work or partner with is new, has a small staff, or is low capacity

2024 Proposed Timeline

Date	Event	Description
January-February 2024	Recruit and accept Cohort members	Send out applications, review, and select recipients
Tuesday March 12, 2024 All Day	Event 1: EJ Forum	Invite cohort members to EJ Forum. Host a special networking opportunity for them.
Friday April 19, 2024 Afternoon	Event 2: Nature Walk & Networking	First cohort-only event, featuring a nature walk, for Earth Day!
May TBD, 2024	Event 3: Community Tour	Tour one of the several cohort organizations.
Thursday, June 13, 2024 12:00pm	Event 4: Mini-grant Applications Webinar	Encourage cohort members to attend webinar and apply for PDE's mini-grant program to support their EJ projects
July-August 2024	Summer Break	Plan remaining 4 events
Saturday September TBD, 2024 Morning	Event 5: Group Volunteer Day	Coordinate with one of the mini-grant projects to allow cohort members to help volunteer on their project alongside community members, or plan their own project depending on gauged interests.
Friday October TBD, 2024 Morning	Event 6: Project Tour	Highlight one of the completed mini-grant projects. Could also be a bus tour if there is funding.
Monday November 4, 2024 Evening	Event 7: Virtual Workshop/Training	Depending on cohort interests. Might be best as a virtual event.
Thursday December 12, 2024 Evening	Event 8: End-Of-Year Celebration	Dinner, photos, and networking to celebrate the end of the year and receive feedback.