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Subject: : Conservation

Topic: : Chicken Farm on Big Spring Creek

Re: Chicken Farm on Big Spring Creek

Author: : barbless

Date: : 2012/3/12 23:01:38

URL:

Okay, I did a little more research.

It turns out that the total area in the farm plans is around 8 1/2 acres. That's a lot bigger. And the farmer wants to eventually put up two barns, not one.

None of the print stories I've accessed so far mentioned anything about the number of chickens in the proposed farm. Sloppy reporting, or bad editing. Or worse editing.

I finally found the number in the captions attached to the image link below- 32,000.

32,000 is a lot of chickens.

<http://www.wgal.com/slideshow/news/27345215/detail.html>

The same link also mentioned that \$350,000 was just spent on an extensive stream restoration project at Big Spring.

Under the circumstances, maybe the money would have been better spent in a fund to buy out the farmer.

Maybe it isn't too late to make him an offer, in fact.

I'm serious. The spring creeks of the Cumberland Valley are exactly the sort of places that groups like the Nature Conservancy negotiate to preserve and protect with easements, by negotiating with private landowners, using a combination of private donations and the Land and Water Conservation Fund:

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/...ter-conservation-fund.xml>

If you click on the PA location of the interactive map in the link below, you'll read that the Land and Water Conservation Fund has spent over \$300 million over the last four decades to preserve Pennsylvania wildlands.

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/...conservation-fund-map.xml>

But as it happens, I'll tell you what I'm seeing: we're on the verge of losing Big Spring. All of us- but especially you Pennsylvanians.

I think many of you are victims of your own denial. On a lot of levels. Like letting yourselves get shined on by a bunch of reassuring words, with no way to hold people to account once the deal is done. Or by deluding

yourself into thinking that private property rights give people the right to pollute water.

Water isn't private property. It moves from the clouds to the ocean, and everywhere in between.

As for the people who value your priceless natural treasures enough to fight for them- you need to appeal outside of your own local power structure. Get the word out. Talk to people. Talk to Riverkeepers. Talk to American Rivers. Contact every fishing blog you can find on the 'Net.

Otherwise, the know-nothings will keep rolling over you. People like those with attitudes like the majority of those expressed in the comments of this news article: <http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf.html?ci=5687&title=Farm+proposed+outside>

I read the comments in this forum. Where are your contributions to the comment section of that news story?

As matters stand now, I haven't pulled up a comment on this story from any fly fishing site or 'blog, except for this brief item that's just been posted in Fly Fisherman

<http://www.flyfisherman.com/2012/03/1/g-creek-and-logan-branch/>

The author, a PA resident, sounds resigned to the situation. I think that's unfortunate. Some things you shouldn't let slide past you without a fight.

I note that public comments are being accepted by the Pa. Dept. of Environmental Protection for another week- the deadline is March 21, 2012.

I should have my letter done by tomorrow. And I'm going to send a few alerts out to some fishing blogs, beginning with Trout Underground. Including this bit here:

"written comment on the plans to build a chicken farm for 30,000 chickens at the headwaters of Pennsylvania's Big Spring may be sent to Valerie Marx, DEP South-central Regional Office, 909 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110. The public comment period will close on March 21."

I'd like to find out that I'm getting worked up over nothing. But I'd rather get worked up over nothing than fall off in doing the due diligence on this issue.

Incredible. No sooner does \$350,000 get spent to restore a stream habitat, than someone decides that it's the perfect place to park a barn for 30,000 chickens. And for those of you who constantly moan about the unaccountability of "the government", consider that the farmer apparently refuses to talk to the press, or to attend the public hearings on his own project.

<http://cumberlink.com/news/local/prop...e1-883a-001871e3ce6c.html>

Are you going to cop out on this one? Is your level of cognitive dissonance that high? Or are you going to fight?

I dunno, sometimes. Every time I think that PA might be a fantastic place to live- and it is where I trace half of my family roots, after all- I get the idea that what I most like about it is destined to get buried by apathy, neglect, pettiness and greed. People despising their birthrights, for a mess of pottage.

Trading a world-class spring creek for a factory farm..."it's either that or a truck depot", according to a comment in one of the article links. Great, poor-face. Thanks for the advance warning.

Maybe I'll check in again for a visit some time, after I relocate back to the scary liberal West Coast again.