

Lake effect sought Legislators tour Glade Run site

By Paula Grubbs

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MIDDLESEX TWP — A legislator wants to ensure his replacement will be aware of the importance of restoring Glade Run Lake.

State Sen. Randy Vulakovich organized an Oct. 7 meeting at the dry bed of the 52-acre lake on Overbrook Road. He was joined by state Sens. Don White, R-41st, and Scott Hutchinson, R-21st, along with a staff member representing state Rep. Brian Ellis, R-11th.

The lake was drained in 2011 because its faulty dam could have caused the lake to pose a hazard to buildings downstream, according to the state Fish and Boat Commission. The Glade Run Lake Conservancy formed soon after that with the goal of raising funds and awareness to have the dam's estimated \$4 million in repairs completed and the lake refilled.

The legislative gathering was the result of a September meeting between Vulakovich and conservancy president Siggy Pehel, during which the duo spent four hours viewing and discussing the lake and the need to get state legislators in the region behind the funding of the lake's restoration.

Pehel said the Oct. 7 meeting included the three legislators and their chiefs of staff, Ellis' staff member, himself and another conservancy board member.

Vulakovich said the purpose of the meeting was to apprise the legislators in surrounding districts of the lake's status because he said it is an asset for the entire region, not just Butler County.

He also wanted to bring White up to speed on the lake because a senatorial redistricting in 2014 will remove Vulakovich from Middlesex Township and move White in as the state senator.

"I wanted to bring Don down (to the lake) to meet these people (from the conservancy)," Vulakovich said. "He was impressed."

Pehel was excited about the meeting because he has learned that pressure from legislators can mean restoration funding in the governor's budget.

Gov. Tom Corbett included funding for the restoration of Speedwell Forge in Lancaster County in his latest budget, although that lake was drained after Glade Run Lake. Corbett's press office in August acknowledged that united support by local legislators can be helpful in persuading the governor to include funding for their cause during budget proceedings.

Pehel appreciated Vulakovich's efforts in coordinating the meeting. "He's the engine driving this train for us," Pehel said.

He said his two main goals for the meeting were forming a coalition of legislators to

pressure the governor to include funding for Glade Run's restoration, and to get Corbett to the lake.

"We need to get the governor to the lake and get him on board," Pehel said. He said the meeting involved a tour of the lake property, during which Pehel discussed plans for the property, potential grants, the growth on the Route 228 and Route 8 corridors, and the conservancy's educational partnership with the Mars and South Butler school districts.

"The meeting was very positive," Pehel said. "It got everyone in one place at one time, and to me, that says a lot."

The ever-growing conservancy is working on a grant for sediment removal and on a project that would place a picnic pavilion, environmentally friendly restrooms, and other features on the lake's property.

For information on the lake and the conservancy's efforts to restore it, log onto www.gladerunlakeconservancy.com.

- See more at: <http://www.butlereagle.com/article/20131018/NEWS01/710189937#sthash.tCCYzwLv.dpuf>