



## Whitewater River Watershed Steering Committee Meeting

### Minutes of May 27, 2015

**Attendees:** Chelsea Tooley, Heather Wirth, Chuck Goins, Helen Kremer, Kathy Scott, Tim Hesselbrock, Chris Fox, Evan Divine, Bruce Koehler, and Brian Bohl

The meeting began at 6:00 pm at the Harrison Library in Harrison, OH. After Chelsea Tooley, Outreach Coordinator, called the meeting to order, attendees were asked to review the previous meeting minutes. No additions or corrections were present, so minutes were approved.

Heather and Chelsea updated the steering committee on upcoming events. There will be a cleanup on June 20<sup>th</sup> for River Sweep. We will be canoeing an 8 mile stretch of the river and picking up trash and litter on the way. Chelsea updated the committee on the progress of the storm drain marking program, which is scheduled to be completed this fall. Heather also asked committee members for suggestions on a location for a Soil Health/Cover Crop Field Day that will be scheduled sometime in August or September.

Heather also reminded members to send her any documentation of their time, resources, etc for anything done in the watershed, besides attending meetings, to be included for the in kind. Currently the amount of in kind for the grant is slightly lower than where we would like for it to be. The next quarterly report is due the end of June.

Under New Business, the committee held a short discussion on moving forward with the project and implementing the management plan. IDEM's 319 grant program requires a notice of intent to be submitted by June 1<sup>st</sup> if the group is planning on submitting a grant application by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Because of the tight timeline, a lot will be needed to be accomplished in a short period of time. Chris Fox also suggested a subcommittee that would focus on the application for the implementation grant. Heather will email the committee asking for any interest in participating on the subcommittee (implementation task force).

Chelsea and Heather asked for steering committee input on the goals, indicators, and critical areas sections (checklists items 22, 23, and 24) in the management plan. The draft goals section was read aloud and steering committee members were asked to focus on the general topic rather than the specific numbers for each goal. During the goals discussion the point was brought up to think about what kind of implementation grant the committee is interested in. Some of the goals would require monitoring to check progress during the course of the grant, meaning that a budget for monitoring would need to be constructed. After reading through the

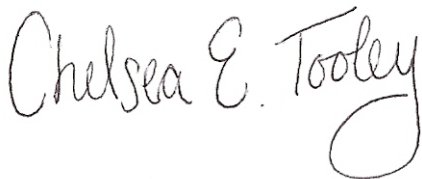
goals section, the steering committee felt satisfied with the topic and parameters of each goal. The WMP has general goals on: sediment, nutrients, education, trash/litter, E. coli, biodiversity/macroinvertebrates.

Moving on the committee focused on indicators. The indicators were read aloud to the steering committee. Each of the goals discussed has a table that focused on actions or indicators that corresponded with each goal and parameter. Most of the indicators were number of programs, practices, attendees, etc. The dissolved oxygen components in the biodiversity goal was a little tricky. Heather wasn't sure what kind of actions or indicators to put in that section and asked the group for suggestions. Chelsea suggested that since we have a tributary listed as impaired for dissolved oxygen we should address it. She suggested monitoring actions and indicators and Brian Bohl suggested increasing riparian buffers as an action item. The group decided it would be beneficial to ask Kathleen her opinion for this draft and to see what other groups have done.

The final item on the agenda was critical areas. A worksheet was passed out with a table listing each of the sub watersheds in the Whitewater River Watershed. For each sub watershed the committee was asked to review the data collected in the plan and rank each area in the categories of nitrate+nitrites, total phosphorus, E. coli, sediment, dissolved oxygen, habitat, macroinvertebrates, urban pollution, and agricultural pollution. If the sub watershed had no or little significant impact on that category/parameter, steering committee members were asked to give the sub watershed a 1. If the sub watershed had a significant impact on that category/parameter steering committee members were asked to give the sub watershed a 2. In order to better mathematically delineate the rankings, some categories (deemed as more important) were double weighted. The categories that were double weighted were: nitrate+nitrite, total phosphorus, E. coli, and dissolved oxygen. There was a short discussion about whether to remove dissolved oxygen (DO) and double weight sediment instead. Although DO is a more easily tracked (through monitoring), the sediment category has more BMPs that address it. The committee decided to leave DO double weighted for now. In addition to the double weighting, since E. coli is the most common impairment listed on the 303d list, E. coli also gets an additional weighting. If every site in the sub watershed was impaired for E. coli and additional 2 points was awarded. After a lengthy process of reviewing each testing site, land use, and windshield survey results for each sub watershed, the committee ranked each sub watershed. The final result is detailed in table # below.

| Sub watershed   | Nitrate+Nitrite* | Total P* | E. coli* | Sediment | Dissolved Oxygen* | Habitat | Macroinvertebrates | Urban Pollution | Agricultural Pollution | Score           | Rank |
|---|------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|------|
| Headwaters Blue Creek   | 2                | 4        | 2        | 2        | 2                 | 1       | 1                  | 1               | 1                      | 16              | 7    |
| Wolf Creek – Blue Creek   | 4                | 2        | 6        | 1        | 4                 | 1       | 1                  | 1               | 2                      | 22              | 3    |
| Big Cedar Creek   | 4                | 4        | 6        | 1        | 2                 | 1       | 1                  | 2               | 2                      | 23              | 2    |
| Little Cedar Creek – Whitewater River   | 4                | 4        | 4        | 2        | 2                 | 1       | 1                  | 1               | 2                      | 21              | 4    |
| Blackburn Creek – Whitewater River  | 4                | 2        | 2        | 1        | 2                 | 1       | 2                  | 1               | 1                      | 16              | 7    |
| Johnson Fork – Whitewater River   | 2                | 2        | 6        | 1        | 2                 | 1       | 1                  | 1               | 1                      | 17              | 6    |
| Headwaters Dry Fork Whitewater River  | 4                | 4        | 6        | 1        | 4                 | 1       | 2                  | 1               | 2                      | 25              | 1    |
| Howard Creek – Dry Fork Whitewater River  | 4                | 4        | 4        | 1        | 2                 | 1       | 1                  | 1               | 2                      | 20              | 5    |
| Lee Creek – Dry Fork Whitewater River   | 4                | 2        | 4        | 1        | 4                 | 1       | 1                  | 1               | 2                      | 20              | 5    |
| Jameson Creek – Whitewater River  | 4                | 2        | 2        | 2        | 4                 | 1       | 2                  | 2               | 1                      | 20              | 5    |
| *Based on Monthly Water Quality Sampling data from October 2013 – October 2014, windshield data, Hamilton SWCD (collected 2013-2014), and land use data |                  |          |          |          |                   |         |                    |                 | 21-25                  | Top Priority    |      |
|   |                  |          |          |          |                   |         |                    |                 | 17-20                  | Middle Priority |      |
|   |                  |          |          |          |                   |         |                    |                 | 13-16                  | Low Priority    |      |

The next Steering Committee for the Whitewater River Watershed Project was set for 6pm on Tuesday June 30<sup>th</sup> at the Harrison Library.



Chelsea E. Tooley, Outreach Coordinator