

Whitewater River Watershed Steering Committee Meeting



Minutes of February 22, 2016

Whitewater River Watershed

Attendees: Heather Wirth, Chris Fox, John Kruse, Ben Braeutigam, Jon Seymour, Helen Kremer, Mike Kohlsdorf, Mike Schwab, and Bruce Koehler

The meeting began at 6:00pm at the Harrison Library in Harrison, OH. After Heather Wirth, Technical Coordinator, called the meeting to order, attendees were asked to review the previous meeting minutes. With no immediate revisions, members of the committee were asked to let Heather know if they had any additions or corrections that need to be made.

Under new business, Heather updated the committee on the planning of some upcoming events.

Conservation Tillage Breakfast/Workshop – Saturday, March 12, 2016 at Zimmer Tractor in Brookville, IN - Workshop will start at 8:30 am and PARP from 9 am to Noon – Dave Brandt, a nationally known producer from Ohio, will be one of the speakers during the PARP program. Members were encouraged to help spread the word about the workshop to get a lot of producers there to hear Dave's knowledge and experience on using cover crops and no-till.

Storm Drain Marking – City of Harrison approved the project's request to put markers on storm drains throughout the city. Jim Leslie, with the City of Harrison, sent a list of streets that already have permanent markers on the drains. Heather will do an inventory of the other streets and drains and determine how many markers will need to be ordered. Heather also asked a couple of teachers from Harrison High School if their groups would be interested in helping with the project but have not heard back yet. The project may try to do a volunteer day on a Saturday this summer to promote involvement from the community and youth groups as well.

The final draft of the management plan was submitted and IDEM reviewed it and sent back comments. Overall IDEM thought it was a pretty good plan and it just needs a little more details and clarification in some areas. One of the comments was to clarify/justify the decisions made to split the Blue Creek subwatershed into 2 priority areas and to move Howard Creek subwatershed from medium to high priority after the original ranking took place. The committee ranked the 2 different forks of Blue Creek using Site 24 (east fork) and P2 (west fork) data along with the windshield survey and landuse map. Site 24 was one of the best sites in the entire watershed and P2 was one of the worst. The east fork scored 13 (no priority) and the west fork scored 23 (high priority). Next the committee reviewed all of the data for Howard Creek. After looking at everything, the committee felt the original ranking for sediment, a 1, was not accurate with the information found during the windshield survey. The windshield survey discovered 76 areas of either streambank, sheet & rill, or gully erosion along with many other concerns that lead to erosion (128 total areas), so the original 1 for sediment was changed to a 2 which gave Howard Creek the final score of 21 (high priority). The timeline of the goals were also discussed and the committee felt 15 years was long enough because it is too difficult to predict what the future holds.

Under additional items, Heather will try to use MySynchplicity website to share the management plan with the committee members before resubmitting it to IDEM. The committee also had a short discussion about the watershed signs. A request was made to put one on Barbara Rd and may see if there are other areas to make another sign order worthwhile. The committee decided to wait until feedback is received from EPA on the grant application before scheduling the next meeting unless something else comes up in the meantime. With no further business or concerns, the meeting was adjourned. The next Steering Committee for the Whitewater River Watershed Project will be set at a future date.

Heather Wirth

Heather Wirth, Technical Coordinator