



Whitewater River Watershed Steering Committee Meeting

Minutes of April 28th, 2015

Attendees: Chelsea Tooley, Heather Wirth, Chris Fox, Jon Seymour, Helen Kremer, Kathy Scott, Mike Kohlsdorf, 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 Lawn and Garden Management Workshop on Wednesday, April 29th at the Harrison Public Library at 6:00pm. Chelsea will be presenting on tree care and Mike Hornback, Purdue Extension, will be talking on nutrient and pest management. Saturday, May 9th, the Whitewater River Watershed Project will be partnering with the East Central FFA for a roadside cleanup. High school students will be picking up litter in two hour shifts starting at 10am. The community is also welcome to participate. There will be another trash cleanup on June 20th as a part of the annual River Sweep. We will be working with Morgan's Canoe rental company to help clean up the river. Heather also asked for suggestions and contact information for people that might be interested in hosting a soil health field day on their property this fall.

Heather reported there is a 40% in-kind match requirement for the grant and the amount of in kind for the grant is slightly lower than where we would like for it to be. She requested members and their district or organization to send her any time, resources, programs, etc for anything done in the watershed or where landowners or schools in the watershed were invited or present. The activities and efforts must have occurred during the grant time frame (Dec 2013 to present).

Under New Business Chelsea Tooley asked for steering committee input on the goals and indicators section (checklists items 22 and 23) in the management plan. The goals section focuses on created goal statements that the project wants to accomplish. Each statement needs to state the pollutant/problem, the current load, the load reduction needed, and a timeline for completion. There was a lengthy discussion which is summarized in Chelsea's notes below. Each steering committee member is asked to provide input in the next few weeks and send that input back to Chelsea. If you have any questions you can email Chelsea at any time.

Chelsea's Notes

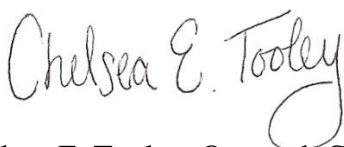
Issues/Problems that Need Addressed

- Sedimentation = exceeds targets? Where (IN site 32) / reduce stream bank erosion → increase riparian buffer by ___ miles.
 - Pros = measurable (load reduction sheet) / Cons = (other than buffer some stream bank practices can be costly.
- Concern = point source development (how to get agencies to take it more concern than they currently do) – working with partners in future implementation? Need more plans to address runoff concern (especially urban runoff with various “chemicals” coming in). Could we promote this river in the community as a PROTECTION effort rather than a cleanup effort? Earlier – talked about a document (summary) to go to various educator, community leaders, to educate them about the current quality of the watershed and how important it is to keep it in prime condition. Could we have a task in the educational requirements that talked about some sort of outreach pamphlet that went to those parties? Friends of the Whitewater River?
- Better communication with county commissions – report/news to them about the progress of the project
- Better education for the voter
- Cleanups in the area (especially equipment left along the rivers) - Trash is a big problem in the area.
- Fish communities/aquatic insects/ chemical water quality
 - Where pollution is flowing over streams that are then used for aquifers (Greendale and Lawrenceburg) – exposure from the WW to drinking water outside of watershed (in the watershed – Brookville, Hoosier Hills, etc)
 - Drinking water protection areas.
 - Everyone likes clean water.
- Parts of the river that are used for recreation that have bacteria levels that exceed targets
- Toxics PCBs – check with Big Cedar for compliance with target on fish
- Lack of livestock fencing is a big issues – can use data from windshield to support. / On site septic and fertilizer / Protection of headwater streams in areas that may become more urbanized - Livestock (all) should be fenced about the stream
- Riparian corridor protection (even if it’s just a recommendation step for right now)
- Overall loss of tree canopy loss in the watershed. Land that was in CRP and not re-enrolling it. Land that wasn’t productive in the past and then putting that into production. (perhaps having more urban tree programs would be could)
- Pastures and feedlots that are poorly managed. Stocking densities, rotational grazing, don’t limit our focus to just livestock that are adjacent to the water, but rather there overall effect.
- Recreational = opportunity for more access to the watershed. Access not is limited through private property or through businesses (canoe businesses). Creating educational programs targeting recreational groups in the watershed. How many people use the Whitewater annually (contact canoe business to see if we can get some rough estimates). Leave no trace signage campaign? (See if we can find out who is doing the mile markers – Brookville police department... Harrison as well)

Goals and Indicators

- Stay in the top 20 or may even get to the top 10 in the Ohio River watersheds
 - Put money where things are already good and keep it that way because it’s actually cheaper (can I find any data that talks about the costs of keeping a watershed clean vs. protecting it – Nature conservancy – OH state economic benefits of scenic river status. Benefit (money) of recreation uses in the watershed. Trails (high economic contributes for communities). Plans to expand bike trails? Perhaps adding environmental information at canoe places.

The next Steering Committee for the Whitewater River Watershed Project was set for 6pm on Wednesday May 27th at the Harrison Library.



Chelsea E. Tooley, Outreach Coordinator