



Lower Grand River Watershed Project

Rural Subcommittee Minutes

Date: February 17, 2004

Location: Wyoming Clean Water Plant

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Prepared by: Laurie Beth Nederveld

In Attendance:

Mr. Jason Buck – Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc. (FTC&H)

Mr. Myron Erickson – Wyoming Clean Water Plant

Mr. Dan Fredricks – Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc. (FTC&H)

Ms. Laurie Beth Nederveld – GVSU Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI)

Mr. Doug Powless – Land Conservancy of West Michigan (LCWM)

Item 1: Introduction of Members

Rural subcommittee members made introductions.

Item 2: Lower Grand River Watershed Project Update

a) Schedule of Remaining Tasks by Project Subcommittee

Ms. Nederveld passed out copies of the project schedule to committee members for their review. The project schedule indicates when the remaining project tasks are slated for completion. It also indicates which committee is responsible for each task. Ms. Nederveld reviewed the rural subcommittee's tasks to be completed prior to June 30, 2004. She indicated that during the next two months the committee would be focusing on task 5c: Identifying needed BMPs in Rural Subwatersheds.

b) Products to be Developed

Ms. Nederveld provided an overview of the three main products to be developed during the remaining months of the project: 1) Lower Grand River Watershed (LGRW) Management Plan, 2) Watershed Management Plan (WMP) Guidebook, and 3) Watershed Interactive Tool (WIT). The LGRW Management Plan will be completed before June 30, 2004. It will be similar to the Management Plans developed for the Sand Creek and Buck Creek Watersheds but will provide a more broad brush approach to watershed management due to the large size of the LGRW. The WMP Guidebook is a module developed for LGRW communities to assist in the development of their own watershed management plans. Specifically, this module will help communities identify local designated uses, watershed pollutants, pollution sources, needed Best Management Practices, and BMP costs. Mr. Jason Buck noted that FTC&H is considering a future LGRW project that would involve the development of a model that would allow communities to estimate specific pollutant loads for their watershed. The information would be added to the current module (WMP Guidebook) and assist communities in their selection of BMPs.

c) Subcommittee Updates

Ms. Nederveld provided updates on the activities of the Technical, I&E, and Evaluation Subcommittees. The Technical Subcommittee is currently researching content information for the Urban and Rural BMPs that have been recommended for the LGRW. The Evaluation Subcommittee has completed their focus group session for each committee as of last month. The results of these focus group sessions, which evaluated the first year of the project, will be used in the project evaluation being prepared by Kelly Dubay of Tetra Tech, Inc. Mr. Buck provided an update on the activities of the urban and visioning subcommittees. The urban subcommittee is currently reviewing the format of the WMP Guidebook and the visioning subcommittee has been holding a series of task force meetings regarding the vision strategy of the LGRW.

Item 3: WMP Guidebook

a) Review of Guidebook Process

Mr. Dan Fredricks presented and demonstrated the functionality of the WMP Guidebook. The module allows the user to pick from a list of options in order to determine a number of WMP requirements: impacted designated uses, watershed pollutants, pollution sources, needed Best Management Practices, and BMP cost/unit. The module also allows the user to rank the selected watershed pollutants and sources. The information entered into the module can also be printed out as a hardcopy in a usable format. Committee members indicated that the module would be helpful to communities and that the format was appropriate and user friendly as a finished product.

b) Selection of Rural Demonstration Area

Ms. Nederveld explained that project staff intend for the WMP Guidebook to be tested in two demonstration areas, one rural and one urban area in the LGRW. The urban subcommittee has selected the Reeds Lake subbasin as the urban demo area. The rural subcommittee is considering a subbasin of the Lake Creek watershed. Committee members were asked if they knew of any individual currently involved in the Lake Creek Watershed Organization, but they indicated that they did not. Ms. Nederveld agreed to contact Arleen Spalding, member of the Morrison Lake Improvement Board, to determine whether active members of the Lake Creek Watershed would be interested in this opportunity. The WMP Guidebook and outcomes of the two demonstration projects will be the focus of the workshop for area communities in April of 2004.

Item 4: Lower Grand River Watershed Management Plan

At this time copies of the rural managerial and structural BMP spreadsheets were handed out to members. Members were asked to discuss, within their realm of expertise, the BMPs they would recommend for rural subwatersheds in the LGRW. These recommendations will be incorporated into the existing list of rural managerial and structural BMPs. Mr. Doug Powless, of the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, discussed several specifics regarding conservation easements. The process of land donations and land acquisitions were addressed. Mr. Myron Erickson, of the Wyoming Clean Water Plant, discussed the proper field application of biosolids as a fertilizer. He explained the subsurface injection method of biosolid application and the additional BMPs that should be in place during application. In addition, Mr. Erickson addressed the implementation of Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) by municipal operations and the involvement of the Michigan Water Environment Association (MWEA) in promoting this initiative. Encouraging treatment plants to join the National Biosolids Partnership, which encourages the implementation of EMSs, was also addressed.

Item 5: Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 15, 2004. The meeting time and location are TBD as committee members requested that a "survey" be sent out to committee members to determine preferred meetings times and locations.

Item 6: Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 10:30 a.m.