



Lower Grand River Watershed Project

MEETING MINUTES

Project: Lower Grand River Watershed Project **Meeting Date:** July 30, 2003
Subject: Steering Committee **Meeting Start:** 11:30 a.m.
Meeting Site: Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc. **Meeting Adjourn:** 1:30 p.m.
Prepared By: Mr. Jason E. Buck **Project No.:** G02408
Attending: Ms. Kristine Huizen - Frey Foundation
Ms. Erika Rosebrook - Kent County Administration
Mr. Brian Donovan - City of East Grand Rapids
Mr. Scott Conners - City of Walker
Mr. Corky Overmyer - City of Grand Rapids Environmental Protection Service
Mr. Jim Holtvluwer - Georgetown Township
Mr. Jim Oosting - Coldwater River Watershed
Ms. Janice Tompkins - Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)
Mr. John Koches - GVSU, Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI)
Ms. Laurie Beth Nederveld - AWRI
Mr. Andy Bowman - Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC)
Mr. Don Stypula - GVMC
Mr. James E. Smalligan, P.E. - Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc. (FTC&H)
Ms. E. Wendy Ogilvie - FTC&H
Mr. Jason E. Buck - FTC&H

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Mr. Andy Bowman introduced Mr. Don Stypula to the Lower Grand River Watershed (LGRW) project Steering Committee. Mr. Stypula has accepted the Executive Director position at GVMC.
- b. Ms. E. Wendy Ogilvie introduced Mr. Jim Oosting and welcomed him to the Steering Committee. Mr. Oosting is currently the chair of the Bowne Township Planning Board and the Coldwater River Watershed Council. Mr. Oosting also serves on the Vision Subcommittee.

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. The minutes from the last Steering Committee meeting were approved.

3. Pilot Project Areas

- a. Urban Subwatersheds
 - Ms. Ogilvie and Mr. Jason E. Buck are conducting the nonpoint source pollution inventory in the Buck Creek Watershed. Kent County interns are performing outfall screening for the Illicit Discharge Elimination Plan in the Buck Creek Watershed. While the interns are screening outfalls, they are also identifying nonpoint source pollution sites.

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LAURIE BETH NEDERVELD
(616) 331-3979
nedervla@gvsu.edu



ANDY BOWMAN
(616) 776-3876
bowmana@gvmc.org



WENDY OGILVIE
(616) 464-3915
ewogilvie@ftch.com



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- FTC&H will partner with the MDEQ and the West Michigan Environmental Action Council to complete the inventory in the Millennium Park and Grand City Watersheds.

b. Rural Subwatersheds

- Physical inventory of the Sand Creek Watershed will begin in August.
- Past and current studies are being reviewed.
- Designated uses and their impairments are identified, and a table showing the uses and sources of pollutants was distributed.

4. West Michigan Strategic Alliance (WMSA) Watershed Meeting Summary

a. Mr. Corky Overmyer gave a brief synopsis of the Watershed Meeting that occurred on Thursday, July 17, 2003.

- Mr. Overmyer noted that most attendees left the conference with a realization that all West Michigan watersheds are connected to Lake Michigan and they need a central coordination agency to help with inter-watershed communication.
- Ms. Janice Tompkins noted that there is a need to foster cooperation between these watersheds to eliminate competition for grant funding and to work together to solve common problems.
- Two types of watershed projects were represented at the meeting: Municipal and Citizen. The LGRW represents a municipally driven project. There are advantages and disadvantages to each type. Municipal projects typically have more stability; however, they do not have the sense of public ownership like citizen driven projects.

b. Role of WMSA in Watershed Planning

- The Green Infrastructure Committee has a Watershed Subcommittee led by Mr. Arn Boezhaart of the Community Foundation for Muskegon County.
- The WMSA could be considered for coordinating the LGRW organization that will be developed after the planning phase of this project.

5. Watershed Organizational Structure

a. The Steering Committee reviewed the spreadsheet and fact sheet (enclosed) containing information on watershed organizations located in Michigan. The Steering Committee will revisit the information contained in the spreadsheet at the next meeting.

b. Brainstorming Session

- Mr. John Koches suggested that before selecting an organization structure, the Steering Committee needs a vision of what the watershed organization would do for the communities involved in this project. The tasks assigned to the watershed organization will define its structure.

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LAURIE BETH NEDERVELD
(616) 331-3979
nedervla@gvsu.edu



ANDY BOWMAN
(616) 776-3876
bowmana@gvmc.org



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- The Steering Committee brainstormed the following defining categories
 - Organization's function - What tasks will be the organization's responsibility?
 - Geography - Will the organization be defined jurisdictionally or by watershed boundaries?
 - Membership/Ownership - Who will be involved and how will they become involved?
 - Funding - How will this organization be developed and sustained?
- A table of the above questions and possible solutions is enclosed.
- Outcomes of brainstorming session
 - Mr. Scott Connors suggested that representatives from the Steering Committee should meet with members of the Upper Grand River Watershed Steering Committee to become more aware of their project and proposal to develop an Upper Grand River Watershed organization.
 - Mr. Jim Holtvluwer recommended that the Steering Committee should be very cautious on how existing watershed organizations are addressed. Some may take offense to a larger project trying to incorporate programs that have been in existence for a longer period and have local ownership.
 - The table, generated during this session, could be presented to a panel of watershed organization experts. This panel could offer insight on what type of organizational structure would best fit the LGRW project's mission.
 - The Grand River Forum could be a possible venue for this panel.
 - Mr. Overmyer requested that additional information is needed on the existing watershed organizations in Michigan. He would also like to see information on the budgets, staff, and geographic area of each organization.

6. MDEQ Request for Proposals (RFP)

- a. Ms. Tompkins informed the Steering Committee that the RFP would likely be out September 1, 2003.
- b. Grant funding priorities
 - Planning initiatives on land use.
 - Demonstration sites for innovative best management practices.
 - Monitoring programs.
 - Watershed management plan development.
- c. Grantees would be notified in December 2003 and grant awards would be made in June 2004.

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Laurie Beth Nederveld
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nedervla@gvsu.edu



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- d. The next Steering Committee should focus on what types of projects need special attention for these funding and alternative funding sources.

7. Other Business

a. Grand River Forum

- Forum meeting scheduled for September 11, 2003, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the Eberhard Center in Grand Rapids.
- Invitations
 - Need to make the invitations interesting.
 - A flyer containing key information on the topics to be discussed would be useful to peak interest in the next Grand River Forum meeting.

b. LGRW Project Binders

- Three ring binders with the project logo on the front cover are available from Ms. Laurie Beth Nederveld. Please contact her at (616) 331-3979 if you would like a binder or other information, and education brochures or fact sheets.

8. Future Meetings

- a. Urban Subcommittee - August 7, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., at FTC&H.
- b. Technical Subcommittee - August 7, 2003, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., at FTC&H.
- c. Rural Subcommittee - August 19, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., at the Wyoming Clean Water Plant.
- d. Information and Education Subcommittee - August 19, 2003, from 10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., at the Wyoming Clean Water Plant.
- e. Steering Committee - September 4, 2003, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Walker City Hall Commission Chambers.

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Enclosures

Distribution:

Attendees

Mr. Chris Kenyon - City of Ionia
Mr. Jim Beelen - Allendale Township
Mr. Tom Leonard - West Michigan Environmental Action Council
Mr. Paul Geerlings - Ottawa County Drain Commissioner
Mr. Tom Doyle - Barry County Drain Commissioner
Mr. John Hardy - Maple Row Dairy
Ms. Abigail Matzke - AWRI

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