



Lower Grand River Watershed Project

MEETING MINUTES

Project: Lower Grand River Watershed Project Meeting Date: September 4, 2003
Subject: Steering Committee Meeting Start: 11 a.m.
Meeting Site: Walker City Hall Meeting Adjourn: 1:30 p.m.
Prepared By: Mr. Jason E. Buck Project No.: G02408
Attending: Ms. Kristen Huizen - Frey Foundation
Mr. Brian Donovan - City of East Grand Rapids
Mr. Corky Overmyer - City of Grand Rapids-Environmental Protection Services
Ms. Erica Rosebrook - Kent County Administration
Mr. Andy Bowman - Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC)
Mr. John Koches - Grand Valley State University (GVSU) - Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI)
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

2. Approval of Minutes

3. Subcommittee Updates

a. Information and Education (I&E)

- The newsletter insert is in draft form and is being reviewed by the I&E Subcommittee. The insert is scheduled to be printed in mid-October.
- A strategy for reviewing I&E materials has been developed by I&E Subcommittee members. This strategy will be used to determine the target audience and the delivery methods and messages for any future I&E publications.
- The tasks of developing an I&E strategy for the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) is underway.

b. Rural

- The physical inventory of the Sand Creek Watershed is complete.
- Rural Subcommittee members have reviewed and approved a draft outline of the Sand Creek WMP.
- The Rural Subcommittee will develop a list of rural Best Management Practices (BMPs) by soliciting input from the Sand Creek Group and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



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c. Urban

- The Buck Creek Watershed inventory was completed with help from the Kent County Road Commission interns, Mr. Shawn Wessell of the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, and Ms. Mary Sievert, an intern with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.
- The Grand City Watershed inventory is nearing completion.
- The Millennium Park Watershed inventory will begin next week in the City of Walker.
- A tour of urban BMPs will be held September 12, 2003.

d. Technical

- Technical Subcommittee members reviewed an evaluation of urban BMPs developed for the City of Grand Rapids.
- FTC&H will be researching pollution removal efficiencies for each of the urban BMPs. A comparison chart will present the cost per unit of pollutant removed to let municipalities determine what BMPs will be the most cost effective for their communities.

e. Vision

- The Vision Committee has reviewed vision statements developed at the February 20, 2003, Grand River Forum (Forum) meeting.
- The Vision Committee members will be developing objectives and action items to meet the vision goals. The Vision Committee has not yet determined how far ahead they will plan for the future in developing action items.

f. Evaluation Team

- The Evaluation Team had their second meeting in June 2003.
- Project evaluation types:
 - Is the planning process effective?
 - Are the products effective?

g. Next Meetings

- I&E - September 16, 2003, 10:45 a.m. to Noon, at the Wyoming Clean Water Plant.
- Rural - October 21, 2003, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., at the Wyoming Clean Water Plant.
- Urban - October 2, 2003, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., at FTC&H.
- Technical - October 2, 2003, 10:30 a.m. to Noon, at FTC&H.
- Vision - September 16, 2003, 2:15 p.m., location to be determined.



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4. Watershed Organizational Structures

a. Review of last meetings brainstorming session

- The brainstorming session was used to develop criteria for selecting an organizational structure.
- The results of the brainstorming session were used by the Steering Committee to create questions for a discussion panel being hosted by the Rogue River Watershed Council and the Lower Grand River Watershed (LGRW) project.

b. Watershed Organization Discussion Panel

- The Rogue River Watershed Council is at a point where they are deciding what type of organization they will become. The LGRW Steering Committee is grappling with the same questions and will be assisting with the discussion panel.
- Panelist's will be asked questions developed by the LGRW Steering Committee, the Rogue River Watershed Council, and the Forum.
- The discussion panel will be held September 30, 2003, at the Algoma Township Hall, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

c. Questions for Discussion Panel

- Steering Committee members used the organization structure criteria list, developed at the last meeting, to create a list of questions for the discussion panel.
 - What is your organization's focus, and what have you done to reach this goal?
 - Does your organization perform an annual evaluation, and how is success measured?
 - How do you receive funding, is the funding adequate, and are staff affordable?
 - How does your organization select and prioritize projects that need funding?
 - How broad are your organization's connections, and what other organizations are your partners?
 - Is your organization a member of any professional societies?
 - What are your geographic boundaries, watershed based or government based, and how does this influence your tasks?
 - Do your jurisdictional boundaries create or limit success? If boundaries are based on governmental jurisdictions, how does the political alignment influence your success?
 - How does your organization classify stakeholders, how broad is your scope, and has the stakeholder group evolved since your organization's conception?
 - How does your organization meet the needs of other nested constituencies or smaller watershed groups within your larger jurisdiction?



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- Is your organization municipal or citizen driven?
- Would your organization have done anything different in the past or would you make any changes to your organizational structure?
- What other organizations have been models for your development?
- Additional questions were raised by Mr. Corky Overmyer for the Steering Committee.
 - What watershed organizations exist outside of Michigan that have been successful at improving water quality, and is there an outstanding example in Michigan?
 - What criteria determine a successful watershed organization, name recognition or water quality protection, and restoration?
- Role of the Forum
 - At the next Forum meeting, on September 11, 2003, attendees will join small group discussions to develop additional questions for the watershed organization discussion panel.
 - Steering Committee members will serve as facilitators for the small group discussions.

5. Future Funding Opportunities

a. Section 319 Request for Proposals

- A request for proposals from the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Program will be released September 15, 2003. The deadline for applications is December 1, 2003.
- To be eligible to receive implementation monies, there must be a Section 319 approved WMP. The approved WMPs in the LGRW are:
 - Rogue River
 - Plaster Creek
 - Bear Creek
 - Coldwater River
 - Stegman Creek
 - York Creek
 - Crockery Creek
 - Spring Lake
- The LGRW project's Pilot Project Areas (PPAs) will need their WMPs completed and approved by December 31, 2003, to be eligible for Section 319 funding.

b. Prioritization Process

- The Steering Committee reviewed a spreadsheet showing the completed WMPs and the PPAs to determine what projects would have the highest priority.



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- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had determined that the following programs are priorities for 319 funding:
 - Long-term watershed improvements
 - Innovative Urban BMPs
 - Innovative Rural BMPs
 - Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) investigations
- Mr. Overmyer suggested that watershed projects fall into three categories: protection, restoration, and preservation.
- Mr. John Koches reminded the group that it would be important to consider cost benefit analysis. The example Mr. Koches gave was the York Creek Watershed. This would take a considerable amount of money to repair, and would only provide a benefit for a small area and a limited population.
- Ms. E. Wendy Ogilvie pointed out that all of the watersheds with approved WMPs had a TMDL. Ms. Ogilvie suggested that pulling the common problems together might result in funding a solution to problems that are common throughout the LGRW.
- Mr. James E. Smalligan, P.E. recommended that the Steering Committee should submit a grant application for studying either impaired fisheries and *E. coli* contamination.
- Mr. Brian Donovan suggested that the Forum should be offered the opportunity to decide the priority focuses and that the Steering Committee would determine where the grant money would be allocated.

6. Watershed Tour

- a. A tour of Urban BMPs will be offered September 12, 2003. The tour will leave from the Grandville Department of Public Works building on White Street, just west of Wilson Avenue at 1:30 p.m.
- b. The tour will focus on many of the innovative storm water strategies employed at the Rivertown Crossings Mall, Bliss Creek, and the City of Wyoming.

7. Next Meeting

- a. Steering Committee - October 9, 2003, at 11 a.m., at the Frey Foundation office on Pearl Street in the City of Grand Rapids.
- b. Grand River Forum - September 11, 2003, at 9:30 a.m., at the Eberhard Center auditorium at the downtown GVSU Grand Rapids campus.

8. Adjourn

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Distribution:

Attendees

Mr. Tom Doyle - Barry County Drain Commissioner
Mr. Chris Kenyon - City of Ionia
Mr. Jim Beelen - Allendale Township
Mr. Jim Holtvluwer - Georgetown Township
Mr. Paul Geerlings - Ottawa County Drain Commissioner
Mr. Scott Conners - City of Walker
Mr. Jim Oosting - Coldwater River Watershed
Mr. Tom Leonard - West Michigan Environmental Action Council
Mr. Don Stypula - GVMC
Ms. Abigail Matzke - AWRI
Ms. Laurie Beth Nederveld - AWRI