Meeting Minutes

PROJECT:	Lower Grand River Watershed	**MEETING DATE:**	April 15, 2004
SUBJECT:	Technical, Rural, and Urban Subcommittee Meeting	**MEETING START:**	10:30 a.m.
MEETING SITE:	FTC&H	**MEETING ADJOURN:**	Noon
PREPARED BY:	Mr. Jason E. Buck	**PROJECT NO.:**	G02408

ATTENDING:
Mr. Robert Zbiciak - Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)
Ms. Janice Tompkins - MDEQ
Mr. Steve VanHoeven - Ottawa County Road Commission
Mr. Scott Conners - City of Walker
Mr. Doug Powless - Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Ms. Renee Hargrave - City of Kentwood
Mr. Ron Carr - City of Grandville
Ms. Laurie Beth Nederveld - Grand Valley State University (GVSU), Annis Water Resource 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
Mr. Daniel J. Fredricks - FTC&H

1. Welcome and Introduction

Introductions were made, and the agenda and attendance sheet were distributed.

2. Status of Lower Grand River Watershed (LGRW) Planning Project

Ms. E. Wendy Ogilvie gave a brief update on the LGRW project and the tasks on the work plan that have been completed. The Rural, Urban, and Technical Subcommittees have been working toward the completion of an extensive list of Best Management Practice (BMP) recommendations for urban and rural areas. These spreadsheets were compiled into a master list of structural, managerial, and preservation BMPs. The Information and Education Subcommittee has been developing a public education and outreach strategy for implementing the Watershed Management Plan. A BMP selection tool was developed to assist communities and watershed groups to create an action plan to improve water quality, based on the master list of the BMPs.

3. Watershed Planning Tools

Ms. Ogilvie offered a concise description of each of the Watershed planning tools being developed for the LGRW project. Ms. Ogilvie also discussed how this project would be integrated into the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Storm Water Regulations and the Statewide Stormwater Education Campaign.

- Watershed Assessment Matrix (WAM) - As research and data was collected, it was sorted by subwatershed and added into a spreadsheet. This spreadsheet contains information about water

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quality and watershed studies, land use, water quality sampling, governments, volunteer groups, and regional planning agencies in each subwatershed. The WAM serves as the data repository for the LGRW project, and is linked to many of the tools.

- Watershed Information Tool (WIT) - The WIT is an online resource guide to watershed planning. Three major target audiences are identified for different areas of the WIT: governments, watershed planners, and teachers (kindergarten through 12th grade).

- Watershed Interactive Map (WIM) - This online mapping software can be accessed from any computer without the need for expensive geographic information system (GIS) software. Users can find graphical interpretations of the data contained in the WAM and can make queries of the data to create printable maps.

- Watershed Action Plan (WAP) - The Rural, Urban, and Technical Subcommittees presented an overview of the BMP selection tool and other tools being developed for the LGRW project. The WAP guides the user through the process of selecting BMPs that protect or restore water quality based on user defined goals and designated uses. This tool offers brief explanations of the recommended BMPs and provides links to websites with more detail.

4. Watershed Information Tool

Ms. Abigail Matzke offered the attendees a tour of the online WIT. The finished product will be located on the LGRW website. This tool was tested with teachers in Kent and Ottawa County. They found the resources that were provided very useful for conducting a variety of water quality lesson plans for kindergarten through 12th grade. There are lesson plans, handouts, and maps that are organized by the strands and benchmarks set forth by the Michigan Department of Education.

The other users of the WIT are expected to be watershed planners and local government. It is expected that the combination of the WIT and WAP will be able to provide enough information for developing a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Initiative for the NPDES Phase II Storm Water Regulations. Many of the resources on this website will provide the user with text and illustrations of the water resource concepts that are relevant to the LGRW.

5. Watershed Interactive Map

Ms. Matzke also demonstrated the use of the WIM, which is being temporarily housed on the GVSU server. Ms. Matzke led the audience through the process of finding a subwatershed, extracting all the available data, and viewing different map layers. She explained that every subwatershed would have varying amounts of available data and map layers. The example used, Sand Creek, had more data than the average subwatershed, since it was used as a pilot project area.

Ms. Matzke provided a handout with information about the WIM, and asked that the attendees would experiment with the website over the next few weeks. She would like suggestions and comments before the final product is listed on the LGRW website. The WIM can be found temporarily at the following web address: http://148.61.56.211/website/WITproject/viewer.htm.

- Mr. Robert Zbiciak commented that the wealth of data available in the WIM would be overwhelming to the average user. He suggested that “pop-up” windows could be added to the software that would give directions to the user on how to perform tasks or answer certain questions.

6. Watershed Action Plan (WAP)

Ms. Ogilvie and Mr. Dan Fredricks presented an example of how the WAP would be used by watershed planners to select BMPs for their watershed. The examples they used were the Reeds Lake and Lake Creek Watersheds.

The first time opening the WAP software, the user will be greeted with a map of the LGRW. Once a subwatershed is clicked with the mouse, the program generates a cover page that gives details on the watershed's characteristics and other information that may be available on the internet, from the MDEQ, or local libraries. Some example cover pages are attached. This information is linked to the data stored in the WAM. After the cover page is printed, the user is taken to the BMP selection tool.

The BMP selection tool asks the user questions about designated uses, pollutants, and types of BMPs that are desired. Along the way, the software generates "pop-up" windows that pose additional questions or other concerns about water resources. Once the user has answered all the questions, the software asks the user to prioritize the importance of designated uses, pollutants, and pollutant sources. Once finished, the user is able to print out a summary sheet of all the recommended BMPs with estimated costs for implementation. An example BMP summary sheet is attached to the minutes.

- Ms. Ogilvie noted that a workshop would be offered on June 3, 2004. This workshop will give additional training on using the watershed planning tools. It is expected that Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System communities, water resource managers, and watershed organizations would be interested in attending this workshop.

- Mr. Zbiciak noted that this tool would make it possible to select BMPs without the user ever setting foot in the field. Ms. Janice Tompkins supported this concern. Both felt that a disclaimer was needed that would inform the user that this software was not designed to replace detailed field investigations.

- Ms. Tompkins asked others in attendance if they would be willing to use this package in their operations. Mr. Scott Conners commented that some parts of the tool would be very useful for communities when selecting BMPs. He also concluded that it would give property owners a tool for understanding the City's hydrologic engineering problems.

- Mr. Zbiciak asked if information about wetland maps could be made available in the WAM and under the preservation BMPs in the WAP.

- Mr. Doug Powless suggested that a button could be added to the WAP that would allow users to add notes to the BMP summary sheet. These notes would be used to document how the user answered questions to complete the WAP exercise.

- Ms. Tompkins asked if there would be any more development on the costs and pollutant removal efficiencies. Mr. James E. Smalligan, P.E. remarked that the weakest link in the BMP selection tool was the lack of this information. He acknowledged that this information is often the most critical criteria when selecting BMPs; however, this data has not been developed for most of the BMPs in the WAP. Mr. Smalligan also noted that when this information is available, it is often contradictory and depends on soils, pollutants, climate, etc.

7. Next Meetings

Mr. Smalligan asked if any additional meetings would be needed since most of the tasks in the work plan have been completed. Ms. Ogilvie commented that the workshop would require a number of trained individuals to provide small groups with directions on using the planning tools. A meeting will be held in

May 2004 to provide this training. The date, time, and location will be sent to the Rural, Urban, and Technical Subcommittees with an e-mail asking for volunteers.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at Noon

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Attachment
By e-mail

Distribution:

Attendees
Mr. Aaron Bodbyl-Mast - Ottawa County Planning and Grants
Ms. Angie Latvaitis - Kent County Drain Commissioner's Office
Mr. Brad Boomstra - Kent County Drain Commissioner's Office
Ms. Connie Smith - Fruitport Township
Mr. Dan Czarnecki - City of Grand Haven
Mr. Frank Wash - Alpine Township
Mr. Jim Beelen - Allendale Township
Mr. Jim Beke - City of Kentwood
Mr. Larry Silvernail - Byron Township
Mr. Richard Edmonds - Tallmadge Township
Mr. Jim Miedema - Jamestown Township
Mr. Ryan Teelander - Cannon Township
Mr. Mike Chesher - City of Grandville
Mr. Mark Rambo - City of Walker
Mr. Shawn Wessell - West Michigan Environmental Action Council
Ms. Elizabeth Robins - Ionia County
Mr. Doug Kadzban - City of East Grand Rapids
Mr. Ken Feldt - City of East Grand Rapids
Mr. Eric E. Swanson - RMT, Inc.
Mr. Geoffrey Habron - Michigan State University
Mr. Ed Hanenburg - River Ridge Farms
Mr. Fred Steketee - Thornapple River Watershed Council
Mr. Gregory Ransford - Robinson Township
Mr. Jeff Auch - Muskegon Conservation District
Ms. Mary Ledford - Wright Township
Mr. Myron Erickson - City of Wyoming
Mr. Tom Doyle - Barry County Drain Commissioner
Mr. Rich Bowman - Trout Unlimited
Mr. Vito Palazzolo - Ottawa County Health Department
Mr. Aaron Karg - Ottawa County Drain Commissioner's Office
Ms. Arleen Spaulding - Ionia County/Morrison Lake Improvement Board
Ms. Melissa Eldridge - Ionia Conservation District
Mr. Bryan Jennings - Premarc Corporation
Mr. John Hardy - Maple Row Dairy
Mr. Andy Bowman - Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC)
Mr. Don Stypula - GVMC
Mr. Russ Henckel - City of Wyoming
Mr. John Koches - GVSU, AWRI