

DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup
Meeting Minutes
Lombard Village Hall
June 25, 2014
9:00 – 11:00 AM

Participants introduced themselves.

1. Approval of April 30, 2014 Meeting Minutes (Attachment 1)

Nick Menninga made a motion to approve the April 30, 2014 meeting minutes, seconded by Sue Baert, motion carried unanimously.

2. Adaptive Management Plan to improve aquatic life and implement TMDLs on the main stem lower Salt Creek

– The FPDDC wishes to apply for 319 funds for the Oak Meadows dam removal and stream restoration project. US EPA stiffened the criteria for 319 funding; even if a TMDL exists, an accepted watershed plan must be in place. DRSCW agreed to support this effort by producing the plan and submitting it to Illinois EPA for approval prior to the August application deadline for 319 grants. The proposed plan would be classified as an “alternate plan” as opposed to a classic “nine elements” watershed plan. The plan draws on the DO improvement plan and IPS tool outputs developed and approved by the DRSCW during the last 5 years. Watershed buy-in is an important aspect of the plan and this presentation is to allow members to discuss the priority projects before the draft is submitted to Illinois EPA. A table summarizing the plan is attached (Attachment 2).

Presenter: Stephen McCracken, The Conservation Foundation/ DRSCW

The Workgroup is not looking at access to 319 funds; this work is to support partners implementing projects on the Lower Salt Creek. The plan is being created on a compressed timetable but draws on materials created over the last 6 years. We will send a draft to Illinois EPA for comments at the beginning of August. The Oak Meadows project is slated to start July 2015. The plan, as written, does not include a laundry list of all possible projects with little to no potential for implementation, have no funds to implement and may not make sense 5-years from now. Rather it used the priorities created by the DO model and the IPS tool, and the SC 2007 DO modeling, shortened, instead of attempting to model Upper Salt Creek.

Cost analysis is based on 2009 values.

The Plan aims to implement area TMDLs and improve aquatic life. It is written as an “alternative plan” that requires 5 minimum elements as opposed to the 9 minimum elements of a traditional watershed based plan. The projects put forward have been discussed and accepted at several of the DRSCW meetings.

All of the draft documents are open to review.

- *Executive summary*
- *Project minimum elements*
- *Oak Meadows Project*
- *Fullersburg Woods Project*

Attachment 1

- *Watershed description*
- *Dissolved Oxygen*
- *IPS Tool*
- *Appendix 1 fish species (IBI scores are meaningful, but it is also important to see individual fish species)*

Summary – efficiencies and prioritization for adaptive management.

Table 1 – dam “removal” in column 6 will be changed to “modification.”

Contents – Both projects will be presented with each of the 5 minimum elements (special thanks to Inter-Fluve and ERA for their assistance).

Oak Meadows was identified by the IPS tool as a mid-level project, not a high priority. The project is moving forward to help address the DO problem and because it was identified by the DO model for TMDL implementation. The landowner, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC), is willing to move forward and the project is shovel- ready.

Lower Salt Creek is presented in the plan from Busse Woods down to the confluence (RM 29 – 0.5). Post project monitoring will include up to three (3) years for fish and bugs. DO data will be collected at the sites comparing daily minimums and seven day and thirty day averages between years with similar temperatures will be conducted to see changes.

Qualitative Habitat Evaluation Index (QHEI) scores on Salt Creek - typically FPDDC properties have higher scores, but that is not what we observe in this graphic. Scores actually fell at the 2 project sites. Elements for QHEI include: substrate; instream cover; channel morphology; bank erosion and riparian zone; pool/glide and riffle/ run quality; and gradient. Karen Daulton-Lange inquired if higher scores were better. Stephen McCracken replied yes.

Larry Cox asked whether what has been discussed immediately upstream of the Oak Meadows is addressed in the report. Stephen replied that this future project is not included in the plan. As time was short, only the highest priority sites made it onto the list. Fish IBI scores show that 9 species drop out below Fullersburg Woods dam. At Fullersburg Woods QHEI, fIBI, mIBI will all improve. Stephen does not believe fIBI scores at Oak Meadows will be affected notably; we will wait for results.

Larry Cox asked if DO will also improve. Stephen answered that was predicted. There are recorded DO spikes and sags. High DO is not good, it is an indicator of high algae biomass (release of oxygen into water).

Stephen asked the group if there were any concerns about including these two projects. None were expressed. He also asked whether members had any issues with DRSCW submitting the plan to Illinois EPA using DuPage County Stormwater Management /FPDDC to help fund. No issues were voiced.

Larry Cox asked at what point is approval by the Workgroup necessary and at what point must that occur? Stephen replied we will file a draft for Illinois EPA to review and make

Attachment 1

comments. The plan will remain on the website under the Project Identification and Prioritization tab. At some point the Executive Board will give final approval to submit to Illinois EPA. The entire draft plan will be available for review by Friday.

Dennis Streicher mentioned that as we post and submit the plan to Illinois EPA we should ask to set up a meeting with the FPDDC. Stephen has been in contact with John "Ole" Oldenburg who had no concerns with the plan as presented. It was understood that the Fullersburg Woods project would be included. Ole will let us know if the FPDDC Board would like to discuss the project. DuPage County Stormwater Management is completing a plan for Springbrook and Stormwater Management will be preparing the plan for that project.

319 applications are due August 1st.

Larry Cox made a motion to authorize the Executive Board to submit the final draft of watershed plan to Illinois EPA by the end of July; member comments must be received by mid- July; Gary Smith seconded the motion. Dave Gorman asked if there were any votes for "no" or "abstain" regarding the inclusion of the Fullersburg Woods project. None were expressed. Motion carried unanimously.

Karen Daulton Lange asked about the nine minimum elements plan. Stephen replied that the alternative 5 minimum elements plan makes sense and was taken directly from the Illinois EPA document. Stephen has reviewed the plan elements with Illinois EPA.

Gary Smith asked if the moving forward with the plan and projects would reduce the special assessment. Stephen replied that it would not; the amounts in the special assessment are fixed up front. The 319 will however help meet the assessments hoped for 40% match.

All DRSCW members will be listed on the inside cover of the plan. The plan includes data and projects that have been approved throughout the years, and is simply a repackaging of that information. Members in the plan area will receive e-mail to refer them to the plan. WWTPs have already reviewed their related data/information, as they appear in various technical support documents.

Dennis Streicher stated that a meeting with stakeholders was held earlier this month; only Elmhurst, Addison, and Bloomingdale attended. Stephen continued that all members have reviewed the QUAL 2K model and IPS tool. Stakeholders have been involved throughout the process.

Dan Bounds stated that the DRSCW has been working on a "watershed plan" since its inception; the formal plan is just a "repackaging" of what we have been working on.

Mark Willobee pointed out that the timing is interesting because DuPage County has elevated the flooding issue by receiving flood relief funding. Tom Richardson noted that the FPDDC received a large grant for historic preservation.

- 3. Development of Ammonia Mass – Balance techniques: Web based load duration curve system and lower East Branch Analysis.** The stressor analysis in the IPS tool analysis has revealed a stretch of the East Branch DuPage River with elevated ammonia (NH₃-N). Without adequate streamflow and load characterization, sources of ammonia such as wastewater effluent, flows from stormwater retention ponds, upstream and downstream, are unable to be identified. The Web-based Load Duration Curve (LDC) system (<https://engineering.purdue.edu/~ldc/>) provides opportunities to identify the load allocation at various flow intervals. The data analysis includes grouping flow intervals by hydrologic conditions (i.e., high flows, moist conditions, mid-range flows, dry conditions, and low flows). The data can also be separated by season and wet-weather conditions (i.e., runoff events and storm flows). In addition, the data can be separated by flow regime using a base flow separator technique. The Web-based LDC will be useful for identifying potential sources and best management practices appropriate to improve water quality.
Presenter: Lindsay Birt, Huff & Huff

Stephen McCracken stated that even with the new ammonia standard this stream is below acceptable levels of ammonia, noting pH, temperature, ammonia at all locations.

Tom Richardson asked if this project started because of IBI scores. Stephen McCracken replied that the IBI sag was the starting point, but that there were a number of potential reasons for the drop in IBI scores, ammonia –N was the one mentioned in the IPS.

Lindsay noted that it would have been nice to have more rainfall during the survey; however, the study suggests that we can move forward with physical restoration efforts and not be hindered by ammonia.

Dennis Streicher inquired about sediment release. Jim Huff responded that the overall mass was not significant. Larry Cox asked whether we know how it applies to other STPs. Jim Huff responded that causal analysis identified 0.15 mg/l. What if our chronic water standard is too low? The study says the problem in this stretch is ammonia when we look at achieving the chronic standard. We were flirting with .15 in a vast majority of samples.

Stephen McCracken stated that we would expect it to look different (larger more frequent ammonia signature); but that is not what we found. There was nothing notable with ammonia in this stream segment. He continued that he remained skeptical of ammonia and TKN in the casual analysis. However in the 2010 survey on Salt Creek we saw ammonia –N concentrations drop and mIBI scores increase, so the causal analysis has some supporting empirical data.

The IPS originally identified several factors (habitat) and also the question of ammonia. Before we spend money on habitat, we needed to make sure the impairment was not caused by ammonia. We now have a level of confidence that ammonia –n is not the problem here so we need to go back and study other potential sources.

Nick Menninga mentioned that ammonia went down in 7 ponds from golf course. It didn't add to it, or it adds nitrogen. Stephen said that the IBI sag may also be due to DO. MBI has been pressing us to take samples in that area.

Karen Daulton-Lange asked to have the 0.15 mg/l explained to her. It was based on IPS analysis and is an empirical result. Larry Cox responded that based on statistical analysis of our data, there appeared to be a correlation between ammonia-N at the concentration and IBI scores.

Permits are not based on this statistical analysis. We decided to investigate further and that is what we did. We spent \$30K to collect additional data and the report will be included in the East Branch bio-assessment study this year. We can have more confidence in spending money on this reach for physical (meanders) improvements because it is not an ammonia problem. Stephen McCracken continued that this project will be addressed in the first tier of projects under the special assessment (3 miles of river corridor). Larry Cox stated that we will reexamine the area prior to starting the project.

4. Projects Committee (old business)

- Oak Meadows Project Update *This project continues to be developed.*
- Fawell Dam – Projects Committee asks for release \$15,000 of the \$40,000 authorized for this item to the Executive Board. Projects committee will be submitting scopes of work for sediment analysis and modeling work on the project. *Motion made to release \$15,000 of \$40,000 to the Executive Board for this item made by Karen Daulton-Lange, seconded by Nick Menninga, motion carried unanimously.*
- PAHs & Coal Tar Sealants (CTS) – Update on state ban legislation

5. Monitoring Committee (new business)

- The 2014 East Branch DuPage River chemistry contract was executed with Suburban Laboratories Incorporated (SLI). \$56,984.00 was budgeted and approved for this item at the February 26, 2014 Annual Meeting. The executed contract is not to exceed \$54,350.77 and sampling began June 1, 2014.
- DRSCW is negotiating reference site chemistry sampling with SLI. The Board requests the release of \$7,590 budgeted for this item. *Motion made by Larry Cox to release \$7,590 budgeted for this item, seconded by Fred Maier, motion carried unanimously.*
- The 2014 East Branch DuPage River biological and habitat assessment contract was executed with Midwest Biodiversity Institute (MBI). \$104,000 was budgeted and approved for this item at the February 26, 2014 Annual Meeting. The executed contract is not to exceed \$106,212.03. The Executive Board exercised its authority to authorize the additional funds for the contract. *The last East Branch assessment went over budget due to unanticipated additional analysis on ammonia-nitrogen concerns and DRSCW was not charged. This year, potential costs are built into the contract which is under negotiation. MBI generally completes work under budget.*
- 2012 West Branch Report under development
- 2014 DO sonde deployment update
Special thanks to Mary Dressel, DuPage County, and her staff for their invaluable efforts on this project. Sondes are located at 12-14 locations this year.

6. Chloride Reduction Committee (new business)

Attachment 1

The committee meets quarterly. We are almost ready to distribute the 2013 deicing survey, please send it in ASAP. Committee has begun planning for the workshops targeting Public Works staff and private contractors.

A draft model ordinance for salt storage (Ohio) is available on the DRSCW website. The committee is also looking at model facilities management plans (liability cap or certification requirements) in addition to ongoing water quality monitoring/reporting.

The new MS4 draft permit is out for public notice regarding deicing material management. July 9th is the deadline for comments. Initial comments included:

Minimize exposure of ...

Deicing material must be store in a permanent storage structure or seasonal tarping must be utilized – no stormwater runoff is discharged.

Why should it be only seasonal? Also note that it is impossible to have no discharge.

Larry Cox inquired about the proposed workshop for public works directors; this year provided a number of opportunities to discuss levels of service. No date has been set. Stephen McCracken stated that he had not yet had time to discuss the workshop with the chloride committee chairperson, Jim Knudsen (who was not able to attend today).

- 2014 Questionnaire (Attachment 3)
- Workshop Dates: Public Roads Workshop September 25, 2014, Parking Lots & Sidewalks Workshop October 9, 2014.
Please note the change of date: the Parking Lots & Sidewalks workshop was originally scheduled for October 2, 2014.

7. DRSCW White Paper Proposal

- The most recent iteration of the proposed Special Conditions & Implementation Plan can be found at <http://drscw.org/DRSCW.SC.zip>.
- The DRSCW signed a contract with Barnes and Thornburg for \$5300; \$40,000 was budgeted for legal review but a large part of the original scope is no longer necessary. *Signed contract with Barnes & Thornburg which is now back in the budget. We expect to go over a bit, but not near the \$40K budgeted.*

If you are POTW and need to discuss this, please contact Nick Menninga or Stephen McCracken. Stephen is out of the office through July 21st.

We sent the draft to Illinois EPA for review and they sent it to US EPA (looking favorably upon it). It appears the agencies are supporting our overall concept.

Nick Menninga saw Al Keller on Friday. Al Keller has the draft language and recognizes that the ball is in his court. Tom Richardson noted that we still seem to have support from environmental advocacy groups.

Nick Menninga mentioned that Kim Knowles at Prairie Rivers Network has gone back and forth on some points and some details would change.

8. ILR40 Draft Permit Review of changes

Rob Swanson, DuPage County Stormwater Management, drafted some preliminary comments and has shared a red line version for others to use.

Required notice of intent – by Sept 30 2013 submit for something not in effect.

Rob Swanson's recommendations include clarification of the broad term stormwater BMPs (structural?).

Required all applicable TMDL reports and TMDL plans; difficult for each permittee to do. Doing it state wide will be difficult.

Other questions included in stream monitoring – how many for each permittee? Monitoring can be quite costly (\$1300 per year up and downstream) and testing for organics makes it even more so.

Dennis Streicher questioned whether if monitoring was required after ¼” of rain quarterly? Rob Swanson replied that it was just one time per quarter. If no ¼” of rain, then permittees would not have to sample.

Stephen McCracken asked about the other impairments (organics and fecal) which could get expensive. He further questioned what data being collected could be used for; would this rather random collection answer any questions satisfactorily? Our sampling is less regular (every third year) but more intensive. He suggested adding language that permittees could put forward their own plan to be accepted by the agency and that the permit language was the default in lieu of a plan. This would mean that the plan could supply more useful data and compliment current operations.

Nick Menninga stated that nutrients give more credence to watershed groups like this.

Dennis Streicher added that the sampling regime could be applicable to all members. He stated that members then would not incur the additional expense. Stephen noted that the DRSCW did not collect fecal coliform.

Shirley Burger added that it could be raining in Addison but not in Bloomingdale – the data may not have comparison if put together. Stephen noted that sampling the first rain after a dry period would yield different results than sampling the second one. Also if you missed the storm and didn't get the next one, it could put you violation of your own permit.

Stephen McCracken asked whether members wanted to put forward the argument we already have a system in place and ask if they would they approve the plan we have, even if just for the year of the basin assessment.

Shirley Burger reiterated that additional monitoring would give no more information (when, where, how many, how much, etc.). Rob Swanson added that it is not required at every outfall. Larry Cox stated the monitoring occur at a watershed scale. We looked at wet weather flows and we didn't get into defining a monitoring system. What makes sense in the broader context?

Attachment 1

Dan Bounds cautioned that the group should be careful what it wishes for. Creating a plan is procedural; Rob Swanson is submitting comments for DuPage County Stormwater Management.

Dave Gorman mentioned members of Cook County would not be incorporated into the DuPage County comments so all the more reason for DRSCW to submit comments. Dan Bounds added that comments should be inclusive of other places. It may be that some things we tend to criticize for lack of details could work in our favor if left with a level of vagueness, allowing them to be tailored. Nick Menninga added that if they're looking for data to justify permit decisions, there is legal value to having data available, not to have a big assessment, even though it is necessary scientifically.

Larry Cox inquired to terms of the DRSCW draft, what would a wet weather program would look like?

Michael Marchi stated that another other item in the permit would be an agreement with parties that you get credit for what other entities handling.

Dennis Streicher asked Rob Swanson how soon monitoring was required? Rob Swanson responded that it must be within 48 hours, which for Salt Creek would be after flows had declined.

Michael Marchi commented regarding vagueness; most of the 32 communities are members.

Sue Baert added that POTWs had to monitor within 2 hours, for 48 hours.

Michael Marchi made a motion to authorize the Executive Board to make comments regarding the use of monitoring on a watershed basis. Larry Cox seconded; motion carried unanimously.

DRSCW will make comments by July 9th comment period. Comments will focus on water quality not the administrative side; the County will comment on that portion.

9. A list of DRSCW Activities for NPDES reports was distributed to members

10. Funding update (SB2081)

11. Watershed Permitting Update (old business)

12. Watershed Committee Updates – West Branch, East Branch and Salt Creek

13. Business Items (new business)

- The DRSCW's 2013-2014 audit is complete and was approved by the Executive Board. A copy of the audit will be available on the DRSCW's website when it becomes available.
- The process to file the DRSCW's tax return will begin in July.
- Membership Dues Update (Attachment 4)
- Accounts Update (Attachment 5)

Attachment 1

- Attachment 6 - Agreement with The Conservation Foundation for the provision of staffing services to the Workgroup will expire on June 30. The attached renewal agreement for the period from 07/01/14 through 06/30/15 has been approved by the Executive Board and is recommended for approval by the Workgroup. The Workgroup is currently paying \$10,458.84 to TCF at the beginning of each month in fixed costs. The amount in the new contract will be \$10,893.07. The net increase is accounted for by a 3% increase in personnel costs and a monthly 401(k) match of \$148.73. Both items are as set out in the budget with the exception that the 401(k) match will be \$181.00 higher than predicted over the remainder of this fiscal year. Other fixed costs remain unchanged from 2013, a savings of \$213.00 from the annual budget amount.

Motion made by Larry Cox to accept the agreement with The Conservation Foundation, seconded by Dennis Streicher, motion carried unanimously.

- Other Business

Jedd Anderson inquired on behalf of the City of Northlake about incorporating a 4300 linear foot project on Addison Creek into the Watershed Plan. Due to time constraints, the plan currently under development addresses DO and IBI scores on the mainstem of Lower Salt Creek only. This request will be considered for the next iteration, which may include Addison Creek. Larry Cox noted that the projects put forward had a definable methodology behind them. However the Northlake project could be scored utilizing the IPS tool and that funding from the Workgroup for the project is a future possibility. 319 grant funding has become more competitive with shrinking fund availability and the future of this program begs the question of what it will look like in 3-5 years.

14. DRSCW Calendar, Presentations and Press Coverage (new business)

- A summer newsletter is under development
- The FPDDC is holding an open house at the Urban Stream Research Center on August 2nd at Blackwell Forest Preserve. The DRSCW and Wheaton Sanitary District will be in attendance to answer questions about ambient and wastewater chemistry. For more information, please visit:
<http://www.dupageforest.com/Calendar.aspx?id=8374&startDate=8/2/2014%2011:00:00%20AM>

15. Workgroup Meeting Schedule

- August 27, 2014
- October 29, 2014
- December 10, 2014
- February 25, 2015 (Annual Meeting)
- April 29, 2015
- June 24, 2015