

DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup
Meeting Minutes
Lombard Village Hall
August 28, 2013
9:00 – 11:00 AM

1. Approval of minutes from the June 26, 2013 meeting (Attachment 1)

Motion to approve the June 26, 2013 meeting minutes made by Nick Menninga, seconded by Fred Maier; motion carried unanimously.

- 2. East Branch Basin Bioassessment 2011.** The DRSCW's Biological and Water Quality Assessment was carried out in the East Branch Basin in 2011. The assessment includes fish, macroinvertebrate, habitat, and water chemistry data plus analysis of loadings discharged by wastewater treatment plants and impacts from other sources such as dams, habitat alterations, and stormwater runoff. The analysis also focused on any apparent trends in biological conditions, habitat, and water quality for this watershed in relation to the 2007 baseline assessment, including special focus on assessing the effect of the Churchill Woods Dam removal in February 2011. The final East Branch Biological and Water Quality Assessment report will be available in September 2013.

Presenter: Chris O. Yoder, Research Director, Midwest Biodiversity Institute

Antonio Quintanilla asked about the gap between the 2007 and 2011 scores in the lower part of the basin. Additionally what would it take to reach the top score? The deviation between the 2007 and 2011 scores seem to be a function of the effects of increased pollutant loading.

In terms of meeting the fIBI threshold, Chris Yoder stated that a large part of the issue is due to connectivity. Chris stated principally that this is due to the Channahon dam, which is very unlikely to be removed. It is a huge barrier for fish movement and the number of fish species declined precipitously as we moved upstream of that structure. This finding may also help the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County look for potential fish species for the Urban Stream Research Center

Jim Knudsen asked whether we needed to reprioritize projects based on the results of the Churchill Woods project. Chris Yoder stated that dams are straightforward and that reprioritizing is not necessarily in order. The location of the project suggest that that if the Churchill Woods project had been further downstream, the positive results would have probably been greater. Headwaters typically have in the worst biological condition. This bodes well for the two modification projects being researched by the DRSCW.

Shirley Burger, Bloomingdale, stated that due to permit changes for DO, they added aeration during this period (2007 – 2012). Shirley asked if this change, in addition to other POTWs that added aeration, could have contributed to the changes to DO in headwaters. Chris Yoder stated that the DO sonde data indicate the increase is algal.

Chris Yoder stated that Illinois EPA added Chlorophyll A as a parameter. The DRSCW should consider adding this too. Stephen McCracken added that all sections of the report will be reviewed by members with expertise in the topic or intimate familiarity with locations. Larry Cox said that for him the reported results raise many questions. What would make Nitrate concentrations change so much in such a short time? POTWs are not currently systematically sampling for these parameters, this outcome suggest that we should be.

Stephen McCracken voiced his concern that that we be careful when identifying a “normal condition.” That is an empirical condition, not simply the one that we found during our first sample round. Here the 2012 results are being compared to the 2007 results, which may have been unusual.

Nick Menninga agreed and stated that all ammonia is converted to nitrate and discharged at around 20 mg/l (at DGSD). Sue Baert added that Wheaton Sanitary District was also monitoring for nitrites and nitrates. Rick Federighi said that Addison also monitored and the concentration totals in /out was around 20 mg/l.

Daniel Griga, FPDDC, asked if stream sediment ammonia levels are tested. Chris Yoder stated the sediments are mainly tested for metals and organic compounds, he thought that it was unlikely that there were there anaerobic sediments in the stream. The most upstream site is totally background and nitrogen spikes as we pass the outfall for the first outfall. This observation is reinforced by contrast between tributary concentrations (non-effluent) and main stem concentrations (effluent dominated).

Antonio Quintanilla stated that we don't have effluent data and it may be worth making this a regular part of our data collection. Larry Cox asked whether this issue was seen in our other watershed data. Chris Yoder stated that it has not yet, but MBI is looking for it.

Chris Yoder stated the IPS had suggested a threshold for nitrogen (as TKN). For nitrogen the water supply standard is 10 mg/l but effects on biology can be observed as low as 2-3 mg/l. You typically see an increase as streams get larger. Highly elevated nitrate/nitrite have been recorded downstate on the Illinois River (where it's agriculturally derived), high concentrations did not always exclude such sites from supporting healthy aquatic assemblages.

Nick Menninga stated that Downers Grove Sanitary District may have been de-nitrifying in 2007. Chris Yoder added that everything was a more elevated in 2011 when compared to 2007. He continued that the casual analysis (based on 2006 & 2007 data) did not find Phosphorus as a proximate stressor (one of the 9 stressors that correlated well with aquatic assemblage distribution). Of course, that does not mean that it is not important. In-stream above 1.0 mg/l is a concern. There was no significant change in P between 2007 – 2011, one might even make the argument that it is lower. In the analysis, everything gets lumped together. National surveys don't look at pollution gradients in main stem analysis. He concluded that whatever Illinois does with nutrient standards, it should include DO and chlorophyll A.

Chris Yoder stated that Ohio uses six indicators fish/bugs/Nitrate/Phosphorus/benthic chlorophyll and DO DIEL). A site can fail to meet the chemical standards but must meet both biological criteria to be in compliance.

Michael Marchi asked where the sample point upstream of Bloomingdale is located. Stephen McCracken will send him the data point. Stephen McCracken stated that the report did confirm that management actions undertaken by the DRSCW had a detectable positive impact.

- 3. Oak Meadows Restoration Plan.** Oak Meadows Golf Preserve Master Plan Phase II of the Oak Meadows Golf Preserve Master Plan, prepared for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC), focused on verification and validation of the concepts and goals set during the Phase I Master Plan period. Goals that were established from Phase I include; ensuring golf course flood resistance, improving water quality and habitat in Salt Creek, enhancing and expanding onsite wetland and naturalized upland areas, and providing additional stormwater storage onsite. This phase has produced a preliminary plan with enough detail to determine proposed increased floodplain storage volumes, wetland creation and enhancement, river restoration, Best Management Practices (BMPs) and golf course features. The presentation will provide an update of tasks performed, summary of improvements and the next steps.
Presenters: John Mayer (Project Manager), and Erin Pande (Director with Ecological Services), Engineering Resource Associates, Inc.

Mitch Patterson asked how the IDOT plans to change a culvert to a bridge at 290, changing 100- year flood crest, will affect this project. John Mayer stated they are working with IDOT to get the hydrologic report and marry the two projects. It remains to be seen whether this will facilitate the project or make it more difficult.

Stephen McCracken asked about velocity with respect to erosion and restoration. Noting that while we are trying to keep flows down, heterogeneity of flow was important to restoration (and high flows linked to better ecological success). Erin Pande replied that extensive Huff & Huff modeling will be performed during the design phase of the river restoration. Appropriate stabilization and restoration practices will be proposed based upon the H&H modeling. The two aspects, scouring control, and flow for ecological support, would be married during this phase.

Noting the scale of the project, Dennis Streicher asked about the funding sources. How confident are they that the project will be funded. Erin Pande stated the FPDDC has funds set aside; they applied for 319 funding; they applied for IGIG funding; they will submit to DuPage County's Water Quality Program; there are also other interested parties. Stephen McCracken stated this is also listed as a priority project (based on the Slat Creek DO study). The DRSCW has been funding some of the initial survey and engineering. If the White Paper is accepted, more funds for this project would become available.

Shannon Burns, FPDDC Commissioner, stated the Board is fully committed to making this project happen. Stephen McCracken suggested the Workgroup and FPDDC walk the site pre- and post-project. This idea was well received.

Jim Knudsen asked whether additional studies would be necessary for pre-post conditions. Stephen McCracken stated there are two sample sites (fish, macro, habitat, water column and sediment data). There was also a continuous DO site within the project area (upstream of the dam). On the post-project side, we want an additional sample year to capture changes, especially for macros.

Tom Richardson stated this section of stream is part of the water trail system and asked if this had been considered in the project's design. Erin Pande stated the project allows for passage for paddlers.

Sediment samples were taken in May and the results were unofficially sent to Illinois EPA. Stephen McCracken is cautiously optimistic – bar one parameter, none of the values seemed too high and he hopes to keep moving forward. When we receive feedback the results will be shared.

White Paper Update (old business)

- Illinois EPA Update
There has been no update from Illinois EPA.
- Resolution of support update
Please return your resolution of support for the White Paper proposal as soon as possible. Currently, we have received three with two more in the works and the promise of 7 additional agency member resolutions of support. This helps indicate member support for the proposal.
- Reply to environmental groups comments on white paper
We received feedback from these groups earlier in the year and plan to submit a written response, which is being drafted.

4. State Funding Update (old business)

Larry Cox stated that the DRSCW's proposal (SB2018) to return a portion of NPDES permit fees to local government agencies for project implementation passed the Senate 57-0-0 two years ago. Illinois EPA was not able to support this proposal because these permit fees were being used to fund their agency staffing. The Governor's staff proposed funding the proposal by allocating \$2.5M of capital improvement funds, already approved for Illinois EPA, to the DRSCW. While this would not create the continuous stream of funding the DRSCW intended, it was a solution that would not affect Illinois EPA negatively. The DRSCW stopped the push for SB2081. Recently the DRSCW was informed by the Governors staff that the staff that had negotiated the compromise \$2.5M did not have the authority to dedicate these funds to the DRSCW.

The DRSCW met with Darlene Sanger, who sits on the pension committee, earlier this summer to ask for her support with the Governor. DuPage County staff helped facilitate County Board Chairman Cronin raising this funding issue with the Governor. David St.

Pierre, MWRD-GC, also raised this funding issue in meeting with the Governor. The DRSCW is seeking the best measure(s) to get the promised funds released. This proposal was made prior to the proposal outlined in the White Paper and is a separate issue. In this proposal 3-4 projects from IPS tool were identified and local match is required.

5. Tollway MOU and Scope Update (old business)

The MOU with the Tollway and DRSCW has been drafted. As this is a groundbreaking agreement, a public signing event with Dave Gorman and head of the Tollway for publicity is proposed. Dave Gorman thanked Bryan Wagner and Reed Panther for setting the bar on this and other projects.

Bryan Wagner said that they have been working with Jim Meyer, Illinois State Geological Survey, to develop an ambient monitoring program. Stephen McCracken added that the monitoring program will serve as backup to the reported decrease in tonnage, by reporting ambient conditions. Stephen thanked Bryan for getting the monitoring program included because it will provide empirical evidence for whether the chloride “trading” system is working.

6. Monitoring Committee (old business)

- 2013 Salt Creek basin assessment update. Water column chemistry and one round of biological and habitat sampling are complete. Sediment sampling is proceeding. *MBI is about to start the second round of fish, macroinvertebrates and habitat assessments. SLI completed the water column chemistry sampling. Tara Neff is in the process of completing the sediment sampling, with the help of The Conservation Foundation interns.*
- East Branch DuPage River Basin Assessment 2011 – The Report will be reviewed by members next month.
- DO sonde deployment for 2013 will be wrapped up in mid-September. *Mary Dressel, DuPage County, is working on the last deployment of the season.*
- Database Development Update. Product should be available by October 2013. *The scope of work was extended to complete a website interface for members to access and query DRSCW datasets.*
- Chloride sampling at all Salt Creek POTWs is underway. *Last year, the DRSCW collected chloride data up and downstream of East Branch DuPage River POTWs. This year the sampling is being done on Salt Creek. This will probably not be an ongoing project because the observed concentrations have clustered well. Illinois EPA has expressed quite a bit of interest in this chloride loading data and it is also good information for us to have. The data indicates the effluent chloride levels are well below the current standard.*
- The Lower DuPage River Coalition has purchased 3 sondes under the HACH agreement. *The purchase of 2 DO sondes for the Lower DuPage River Coalition (LDRC) was included in the DRSCW’s purchase/maintenance agreement with HACH. Because of this cost savings, the LDRC was able to purchase three sondes. This helps to produce better high resolution datasets (i.e. Channahon dam Chris Yoder mentioned).*

The next iteration of IPS stressor analysis can include this data and increase confidence. LDRC has earmarked some funds to expand the IPS scope to include their data. The DRSCW is also interested in adding high quality reference reaches into the model – this is missing from our datasets. We have data for poor to moderate streams. Potential savings for intensive sampling may be to expand the scope with Suburban Laboratories for water column chemistry and sediment chemistry and one DO sonde.

7. Projects Committee (old business)

- Oak Meadows Project- Sediment data has been collected at the site and reviewed.
- Ammonia Mass Balance Study update has been sent to the projects committee for review.
- Fawell Dam fish passage study.

West Branch analysis in 2006 and 2009 indicated the Fawell Dam distorts fish passage. In order to eliminate projects that are not viable, Stephen McCracken proposed increasing this line item from \$10K to \$11K to have a structural design engineer determine if this dam can be modified while still operating as a flood control structure.

Motion made by Nick Menninga to release \$11K to determine if the Fawell dam can withstand structural changes while still operating as a flood control structure, seconded by Jim Knudsen, motion carried unanimously.

- PAHs – Coal Tar Sealant MOU.

8. Chloride Reduction (new business).

- Workshops Update (Attachments 2 & 3)

The workshops will be held September 26 (Roads) and October 3 (Parking Lots & Sidewalks). Cost is \$35 for DRSCW members to the roads workshop and \$25 for the parking lots and sidewalks workshop (both include a hot buffet breakfast).

We have heard a lot about chlorides from regulators during the last 6 months. There are new recommendations for ambient chloride levels under development by the feds, Illinois EPA has requested chloride data and information on chloride BMPs. Illinois EPA seems to be revisiting the chloride TMDLs. Stephen McCracken encouraged members to have their staff attend the workshops. It signals to Illinois EPA that we are treating this issue with the seriousness it deserves.

Antonio Quintanilla stated that US EPA is looking for chloride comments to Illinois EPA for the Des Plaines.

Dan Bounds stated that each year the public roads workshop includes a presentation that addresses the impact of chlorides and operations on our streams. Dan will present information on the new regulations coming down the pipeline. It is important to continue municipal education.

Professor Wilfred Nixon from the University of Iowa is speaking at the Public Roads workshop. He is a nationally recognized authority on winter highway maintenance, ice management on roads, and managing technological advances in the area of

winter transportation and has been working with the Tollway to offset their loadings from the Elgin O'Hare Western Access project. The Tollway is covering his time and Stephen thanked them for that support. .

The public roads workshop agenda also includes a panel of 3 local agency anti-icing (municipal, County and State) programs and will cover how they moved their program from point A to B.

The parking lots and sidewalks workshop is important and private contractor attendance has been historically low. Stephen McCracken challenged members to get at least one group from the public sector (school, library, etc.) or a private contractor to attend the workshop.

9. Watershed Permitting Update (old business)

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

Bryan Wagner announced that the proposed wetland mitigation in Lake County for the Elgin-O'Hare Western Access project does not meet all mitigation needs. The Tollway is working with FPDDC at their St. James Farm reserve to construct in-stream habitats on Spring Brook into Blackwell with the potential to assist with wetland restoration.

Stephen McCracken stated that this project was submitted as project in White Paper as a priority project and that he had suggested the project as it was outside the FAA buffer and more advanced than other potential projects. Shannon Burns, FPDDC Commissioner, stated that the FPD was fully supportive of this project

11. Business Items

- **2013-2014 Membership Dues** (Attachment 4)
- **Accounts Update** (Attachment 5)
- **Grant Management Update** – The final report and reimbursement request for FAA 3191008 and has been filed with Illinois EPA.
All funds available through this agreement were expended. Illinois EPA allowed the DRSCW to rollover some funds from other line items to put towards developing the Oak Meadows project.
- **Other Business**
Sue George, The Conservation Foundation, was present and requested updated contact information for municipal members interested in the storm drain stenciling and/or door hanging program. The fall may bring requests from different groups to get involved and implementing this program helps your community meet NPDES reporting requirements. Available today to take back to your community - stenciling supplies for 100 volunteers.

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

- 7.26.2013 – The DRSCW presented on “Adaptive Watershed Management to Achieve the Designated Use for Aquatic Life: Salt Creek and the Upper DuPage River” at MWRD-GC’s Monitoring and Research Departments Seminar Series.
- 10.08.2013 – The DRSCW has been invited to speak at and moderate a session on stream restoration to reach ecological integrity at WEF TEC. John Oldenburg (Forest Preserve District DuPage County) and Andy Selle (Inter-Fluve) will also be presenting.

13. Workgroup Meeting Schedule

- October 30, 2013
- December 11, 2013
- February 26, 2014 (Annual Meeting)
- April 30, 2014
- June 25, 2014
- August 27, 2014
- October 29, 2014