

DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup
Meeting Minutes
Lombard Village Hall
October 30, 2013
9:00 – 11:00 AM

1. Approval of minutes from the August 28, 2013 meeting (Attachment 1)

Motion to approve minutes made by Nick Menninga, seconded by Dennis Streicher; unanimously approved.

2. Efficient and Effective Winter Maintenance: Getting it Done with Less Impact

Winter maintenance is a complex process that requires the balance of competing areas which include budget, safety and the environment. To get this balance right it is necessary to identify the level of service an agency wants to provide. Setting a level of service involves assessing road types, traffic volumes and policy decisions such as recovery time. Once the level of service is identified an agency can make informed decisions about deployment, materials and equipment. Advances in equipment, weather forecasting and a wealth of additives means that attaining prescribed levels of service has become easier and cheaper than ever before.

Speaker: Wilfrid Nixon, Ph.D., P.E., Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of Iowa

Dennis Streicher asked if 5 gallons/ton per is helpful for deicing, would it be more effective with 6 or 7 gallons /ton. Professor Nixon replied that under some conditions increasing the gallons would prove more effective. He further described the use of slurry (nicknamed incontinent cow) which appears as trucks release brown sludge on the roads when being run upwards of 40 gallons per/ton.

Stephen McCracken asked Professor Nixon if there was a recognized standard for documenting salting operations. Professor Nixon replied there was not. They also discussed the level of refinement such a system should entail– is it every 100 yards or 1 mile? Keep this in mind for your data collection efforts.

Larry Cox asked Professor Nixon what changes he might predict will happen in winter operations over the next 50 years. Biology is much more sensitive to chlorides than we thought; though we keep using them as roads are not going away. Professor Nixon added that climate change is challenge we face, and declined to guess how it might impact winter operations, but noted that it adds a level of unpredictability. There is much room to improve efficiency and levels of service in winter operations to reduce the impact of salt on the environment. Nano technology incorporated into filters is under development to remove salt from water. This technology would be used primarily to remove salt from sea water for drinking water, but is also a tool that could be potentially used to remove chlorides from rivers and streams. While this option is not cost effective, Professor Nixon suspects that it has the potential to become more so over the next 20 years. Keeping that in mind, we should continue reduction efforts to make cleanup as small as possible.

Dan Bounds asked what Professor Nixon thought of pavement materials that resist the snow/ice bond. Nixon is aware of a product Cargill markets that is mixed with road overlays to act as a “sponge” to keep salt in. There is some freezing, but it gives more cushion time in the beginning. Other products make roads water-repellent and may provide the groundwork toward making ice-repellent surfaces. This is challenging because the product(s) must withstand being driven over by trucks, etc. and be cost effective. Professor Nixon stated that he is not writing anything off that prevents the bond from forming.

Jim Knudsen asked if Professor Nixon foresees increased regulations imposed by Illinois EPA or US EPA for chloride TMDLs. Professor Nixon referred to what is happening in Canada where salt management plans are imposed on local government operations. We are nowhere near that yet but such regulations do exist in the US (for example, no salt areas in Massachusetts). Professor Nixon would be surprised if something like this occurred at the federal level, rather he anticipates it being based on needs on a state-by-state basis. For example, Iowa’s chloride concerns are different than those in Illinois. Regulations may also mandate minimum storage design. It is a challenge to make everyone play by the same rules, how much and who applies salt (cities, counties, Wal-Mart parking lots, Tollway, etc.).

Stephen will send other questions related to storm severity indexes in relation to the Tollway project after the meeting. Karen Daulton-Lange asked about resources regarding chlorides and winter operations. Stephen directed her to the DRSCW website where Professor Nixon’s presentation, phase diagrams, video links and other resources are available. The winter management page is being redesigned to make it more user-friendly. When completed, model ordinances and calibration information will be added. Larry Cox asked about testing the Google searchability for our webpages. Dan Bounds added that more attention is being paid to chlorides at the federal level and also inquired how high DRSCW’s website is on the search for chloride information.

Stephen added that some large industries are being flagged for chlorides in their effluent permits and stated creating chloride offset programs might be a less expensive option to reduce chloride loadings.

3. DRSCW Database Portal

The DRSCW contracted Geosyntec Consultants to build and populate a relational database during 2012. During the last 6 months, Geosyntec has designed and built a map based portal which allows data to be retrieved via searches using queries based on spatial, temporal, and parameter information.

Speaker: Mark R. Willobee, Senior Engineer, Geosyntec Consultants

Larry Cox suggested adding a default “all” so users would not have to enter a date range. This would help those who are not familiar with DRSCW data. This will be added.

Lindsay Birt asked if an executive summary would accompany the portal that would explain when and where data was collected so users know what data is available. Stephen said that it would.

Jennifer Hammer asked if a feature to query data by watershed can be added. Mark and Stephen thought this would be possible.

Jedd Anderson asked whether data referenced HUC codes. Only some data references a HUC code. Stephen said all data includes the lat/long and physical description. Only the reference sites would have a different code.

Rob Swanson asked if the DRSCW planned to ask users to identify themselves to track who is accessing the data and why. He also asked if photos can be added to the dams feature. Stephen said that we have a number of photos of each structure but will need to investigate how to link them in the database.

Jim Knudsen asked if users would be able to drill down to find certain types of information. For example, would a user be able to show all sites that include a certain type of mussel? Mark Willobee replied that the main purpose of the application is to allow users to query data and export it to excel. After exporting the data, a user will be able to refine their searches. Stephen added that while the database does not include mussel data, users will be able to search a geographical area for an individual fish species.

Lindsay Birt asked if it would make sense to add a feature that would convert the cvs files to kmz files. This would allow users to overlay the data in the form of a shape file. Stephen will investigate this idea.

James Luckey stated that the Illinois Natural History Survey has geo-reference sites in the East and West Branch DuPage Rivers and asked whether the DRSCW planned to make other available data accessible through their portal. Stephen stated that other data (MWRD-GC, Illinois EPA, etc.) will be added and will contact him with details.

Ron Hursh asked if bike trails and parking lots would be included in the database. Stephen responded that the DRSCW's database was created to make its previously unavailable data accessible to end users. Bike trails and parking lots are widely available via other resources.

On the subject of continuous DO data Nick Menninga asked how much of the data is vetted and what kind of disclaimer might accompany the searches. Stephen stated that all data is always under review and while QA/QC does occur, a disclaimer is a good idea. Stephen said the DO data is not yet available because DRSCW began collecting saturated DO data for the first time last year. This additional parameter requires new formatting in the database. Changes are being made to import all DO data. Stephen though Nick raised a valid concern given the inherent messiness of the continuous set.

4. White Paper Update

- **IEPA Update**
Things have been positive. While we have not had official written communication, DRSCW's POTWs are not seeing a numeric Phosphorus limit of 1mg/L in their permits this cycle.

Gary Smith asked if Illinois EPA is considering a lower total phosphorus limit than had been discussed in the past (1 mg/l). Nick Menninga stated that we have not heard that. He said that The Fox River Study Group is seeing 1mg/L in their POTW permits, which they have accepted/ justified because it could be lower.

Larry Cox noted that there are two issues being discussed: one is the statewide standard and one is which limit will be included in permits (1.0, 0.5, 0.6). The variation of limits is based on what is appropriate based on technology with and without tertiary filters. If an agreement with Illinois and US EPA can be reached, DRSCW members would not see a numeric limit within the first permit cycle.

Nick added that it would take some time for a statewide standard to be implemented as it must be approved by the Pollution Control Board and US EPA. It was mentioned that in the Fox River basin, the City of Geneva's draft permit includes 1mg/L.

Larry stated that the DRSCW drafted special condition language which will be distributed to the general membership soon. The Board and environmental advocacy groups will refine the language first.

Jim Knudsen asked for more information about the lawsuit US EPA filed in Florida for not implementing a phosphorus limit. Nick responded that nutrient standards are in flux across the country. There has been no agreement with US EPA and internal stakeholders. This is an opportunity for DRSCW members to control their destiny – because of our investments to gather data and analyze our streams, we are in a unique position.

Larry added that the cost savings is important as it frees up resources to go after what we have identified as problems.

Dave reminded members that the permit special condition makes these concerns a shared responsibility. This is why DRSCW has been transparent and actively approached wastewater and stormwater communities to ensure there would be no surprises.

- Resolution of support update

Jim Knudsen encouraged members to complete the resolution of support for the white paper proposal and the PAH MOU. As we look to get Illinois and US EPA on board with our data driven approach, we need to show a unified membership. The discrepancy between membership and executed resolutions and MOUs indicates that we are not sufficiently supporting our own efforts.

Dave Gorman added that while presenting at the DuPage Mayors and Managers Council, many were asking why they had not yet seen these documents. The group asked a number of wide-ranging questions, not just about the finances, but also about the methodology. This is a good time for you to follow up for support and execution of the resolution of support. DMMC sent a sample resolution of support to those DRSCW members who had not yet submitted theirs. Dennis Streicher will follow up with agency contacts. The PAH MOU was written for public works departments, removing or reducing the need to send it up the flagpole.

Stephen stated that while a number of communities are in the process of executing these documents, some have simply forgotten. It is important that individual communities show their support for DRSCW goals not only for regulatory agencies like Illinois and US EPA, but also for environmental advocacy groups like the Sierra Club. It shows that we are willing to do and make investments in things we believe will result in improved water resource quality even when we are under no obligation or requirement to do so.

- Funding update
We are still waiting for the release of funds from a capital improvement bill and have no update at this time.

5. 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.
- East Branch DuPage River Basin Assessment 2011 – The Report has been sent to East Branch members and monitoring committee members for review.
- DO sonde deployment for 2013 has been wrapped up.
- Database Development Update.
- Chloride sampling at all Salt Creek POTWs is complete.

6. Projects Committee (old business)

- Oak Meadows Project update - Sediment data has been supplied to IEPA for review.
This full stream restoration project is moving ahead. If we receive Illinois EPA approval for the white paper proposal, we can help provide funding.
- Fawell Dam fish passage study update
V3 and Inter-Fluve are creating a number of plausible concepts. These will be discussed with DuPage County Stormwater Management and then brought to the DRSCW projects committee.
- PAHs – Coal Tar Sealant MOU
Please be sure your community has this signed and submitted to Tara.

7. Chloride Reduction (old business)

- Workshops Update
We had very successful workshops this fall. A big, “thank you” goes to John Kawka and his staff for their help executing the workshops. John Kawka and Scott Weber both help provide technical support as Stephen visits communities with regard to the Tollway chloride offset project. There have been encouraging developments from the Parking Lot & Sidewalk deicing workshop. Three past participants reported management changes for the winter operations. One example is The Morton Arboretum; P. J. Smith reported a 75% reduction in their use of salt. The Chloride Committee will discuss other developments. It would be interesting identify where attendees are from on a map.

Stephen stated that US EPA is looking at a new chloride standard with a chronic threshold <200 mg/L which would increase the spread between where we are and where

we where we need to get. We need watershed-wide support and actions to achieve reductions in both the private and public sector.

Dennis Streicher asked about promoting the workshops in Cook County. Tara Neff responded that outreach was conducted primarily in DuPage County and all DRSCW members. Larry Cox stated that potential DRSCW-eligible communities like Western Springs, who may not necessarily have a wastewater treatment plant, might become more involved if a representative sees value in what we do – this would broaden our reach. Ron Hursh stated that the Salt Creek Watershed Network would be able to help promote the workshops next year.

Steve Zehner encouraged the DRSCW to reach out to DuPage Mayors and Managers Council, and other councils like them, throughout the region.

Stephen McCracken stated that DRSCW coordinates with McHenry and Lake Counties. We are in contact with and attended workshops in McHenry County and coordinate with Lake County, as they also contract with Fortin Consulting, Inc.

Jennifer Hammer added that coordination through MWRD-GC may be a good option to engage communities in Cook County, especially their DOT. The Lower DuPage River Watershed Coalition executed two workshops this year which opens opportunities to expand chloride reduction efforts into Will, Grundy, Kane and Kendall Counties.

Steve Zehner asked when model ordinances will be available. Dan Bounds responded that they have not yet begun, but that it will not take too long. Stephen's search in the area returned only one, and Dan Bounds anticipated the model ordinances would include tweaking existing ordinances found on the West Coast.

- Total Attendance (participants/ staff, presenters and guests)
 - Parking Lot & Sidewalk 65 (55/ 10)
 - Public Roads 118 (105/ 13)
- Tollway MOU and scope update
We received the signed copy of the MOU from the Tollway. After reviewing current practices in the Tier 1 communities, some basic recommendations have been formed. Some communities have yet to reply (i.e. Schaumburg).
- Member offset update

8. Watershed Permitting Update (old business)

No update

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

Jedd Anderson reported that they convened a Spring Brook meeting yesterday.

10. Business Items

- **2013-2014 Membership Dues - Attachment 2**
 - Welcome to the City of Warrenville, DRSCW's newest agency member
We received an associate membership application from Wellspring Management. This will be sent to the Board for approval.
- **Accounts Update – Attachment 3**
- **Grant Management Update**
- **Other Business**
Dave Gorman reminded attendees that each meeting is the equivalent of 1 PDH and to sign in at each meeting. PDHs are awarded at the end of November.

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

- 10.08.2013 – The DRSCW (Stephen McCracken) presented a session on stream restoration to support ecological integrity at WEF TEC. John Oldenburg (Forest Preserve District DuPage County) and Beth Wentzel (Inter-Fluve) also presented.
- 10.16.2013 – Dave Gorman and Stephen McCracken presented the White Paper framework at the October Conference Business Meeting for DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference.
- 10.23.2013 – Several members of the DRSCW presented information at the Lower DuPage River Watershed Coalition's chloride reduction workshops in Shorewood, IL: Stephen McCracken, TCF/DRSCW; Jim Huff, Huff & Huff, Inc.; John Kawka, DuPage County Division of Transportation; Scott Weber, Village of Hanover Park; Wade Jacobi, Village of Bolingbrook.

12. Workgroup Meeting Schedule

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