

**DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup
October 31, 2012
10:00 AM – Noon**

Meeting Minutes

Lombard Village Hall, 255 E. Wilson Ave., Lombard, IL 60148
Equivalent of 1 PDH Recognized for Attendance

1. Approval of August 29 Meeting Minutes (Attachment 1)

Motion to approve the August 29, 2012 meeting minutes made by Nick Menninga, seconded by Sue Baert, motion carried unanimously.

2. Presentation: Ammonia Mass –Balance Update, Lower East Branch DuPage River -

The lower East Branch DuPage River has been identified as a priority site for intervention by the IPS tool. The analysis suggests that biology is constrained at the site by ammonia-nitrogen, TKN, poor substrate, channelization and lack of riffles. The aim of the mass-balance was to validate the findings related to ammonia-N and potentially identify pollutant sources. The presentation will update the group on the project monitoring and modeling results including outputs from the web-based Load Duration Curve (LDC) system.

Presenter: Lindsay Birt, Huff & Huff

Lindsay and Stephen McCracken noted that 2012 had been an unusually dry summer and locating high flows to sample had proven problematic. Both the 2007 and 2011 data recorded an ibi sag in a portion of the East Branch in Bolingbrook. The ibi sag begins around the bend on the East Branch in Bolingbrook and persists until it reaches Whalen Lake in Will County. The 2011 data also showed a slip in ibi scores generally in the lower half of the East Branch main stem. The mass balance analysis was to document ammonia nitrogen at the site to validate IPS tool outputs.

Karen Daulton-Lange stated that the downstream side might be catching polluted runoff from the golf course. Lindsay pointed out that Prentiss Creek is often dry during the summer – Stephen added that it has a number of small check dams. Albert Ettinger stated it is unclear why the dip is related to ammonia, as levels are not even close to the standard. Stephen replied that was correct, but empirical observations suggested a threshold lower than the standard was influencing aquatic life. Larry Cox stated that ammonia-N may be a proxy for something else linked to a POTW or stormwater outfall. Stephen McCracken stated further empirical study is necessary to determine the relationship between physical and chemical stressors and how they interact and influence ibis. The DRSCW needs to determine the influence and sources of any underlying chemical stressors and set out remediation actions for the sag area prior to launching any efforts to re-meander the stream. This has been a dry summer, which was problematic for getting high flow data.

The projects committee has asked that some additional analysis of the ibi sag be carried out.

- 3. Presentation: Springbrook1 Creek and Wetland Restoration Project** - The Forest Preserve District and The Wetlands Initiative are collaborating on a creek and wetlands restoration project along nearly 3 miles of Springbrook1 Creek prior to the confluence with the West Branch DuPage River. The Project envisions restoration of an historical flow channel, habitat enhancements and removal of a low head dam barrier. The goal is to achieve physical improvements within the creek system and to allow the reintroduction, survival and reproduction of certain fish and mussel species. The initial restoration project will be presented in the context of an expanded vision of best management practices and green infrastructure re-development within residential and business domains over the entire 7 square mile watershed.

Presenters: John Oldenburg, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and Paul Botts, The Wetlands Initiative

Jennifer Hammer stated that The Conservation Foundation (TCF) has been working with homeowners to encourage the use of native plants and incorporate water conservation efforts on their properties through their Conservation at Home program. TCF has been presenting information to HOAs, garden clubs, etc. to help make the shift from rip/rapp to native plants. TCF has been looking for opportunity to become more proactive and has also partnered with Faith in Place, a not-for-profit organization for environmental issues.

Dennis Streicher asked if the project plans to use conservation easements. The speakers replied that potentially, however at an individual homeowner level it may not be cost effective. John Oldenburg continued that BMPs/ Green Infrastructure will be hard to implement with 250 landowners directly adjacent to the project. They hope to develop an effective message to change landowner behaviors and are looking for creative tools to accomplish this. The project will use education materials to help change behavior and use the restoration effort to fuel that change. Education is better when the message is linked to a tangible project.

Larry Cox stated that the DRSCW advocates similar activities as cost effective alternatives to massive PTOW investments. Such investments, however, require flexibility for a period of time to find out what they are capable of achieving. This change in direction, for which there is currently no mandate, costs a fraction of the money necessary to invest in point sources. The IPS tool was developed to statistically and spatially identify these kinds of projects and the potential return on investment is tremendous. This is what we want to spend money on. Paul Botts stated that there is also the opportunity to work with private funders.

- 4. Presentation: Preliminary chloride results for the West Branch basin 2012** – Part of the 2012 assessment was to document chloride concentrations following the historically mild winter of 2011-12. During that period, local snow fighting agencies applied approximately 50% less salt than their annual average. The survey was extended to cover loadings from POTWs with effluent, upstream and downstream grabs being gathered.

Presenter: Stephen McCracken, DRSCW/TCF

The effects of the observed high chloride concentrations on aquatic biology were asked about. Stephen said that the biology results would not be available until next year. Albert Ettinger asked if all the salt found in the creek this July had been put down this winter.

Stephen said that we generally see a steady decline in concentrations through the summer, however there is evidence that salt remains on the landscape after the winter. It may reside in detention ponds, pipes, soils or other media; similar results have been noted in Lake County. These observations suggest that the effects from decreased salt application (all things being equal) would be somewhat muted. Jennifer Hammer said that a study in Canada concluded that chloride resides in sediments. Not seeing an immediate change is not unexpected from decreased winter applications. Chloride can accumulate over the years in the sediment.

Dennis Streicher stated that sodium chlorides will be weaker in the summer than the winter. He suggested that Sodium does not bond to soils as do chlorides. DRSCW water column sampling includes results for TDS and Chloride and additional testing for Total Organic Carbon and chloride in sediment samples is being looked at.

5. Project Implementation and Financing Update – meeting with IEPA staff is scheduled for after the DRSCW meeting.

6. Monitoring Committee

- West Branch 2012 Basin assessments – All sample collection is complete.
- Salt Creek Basin Assessment 2010 – Final invoice for the survey and report has been paid, we were \$8,049.45 under budget on the assessment.
- East Branch DuPage River Basin Assessment 2011 – working on report
- Database Development (DB) Update – All file templates have been delivered. All that remains to be entered for bioassessment data are data summaries. The Board has authorized \$1500.00 from the DB software budget line item to be used to increase the effort of the DB Intern.
- POTW effluent monitoring for chlorides is complete
- 2012 DO monitoring has been completed

7. Projects Committee (new business)

- The IPA Grants Management Division has allowed us to extend grant 3191008 to the beginning of 2013. The purpose of the extension is to allow us to reallocate approximately \$32,000 towards developing a new restoration project. The Projects Committee has selected the Oak Meadows Dam removal and stream restoration project as the target for these funds. A scope is being developed for both this and the Fawell Dam fish passage study.

Stephen outlined the proposed project at the Oak Meadows Golf Course in Wood Dale. The project seeks to improve the course and minimize flood damage to the site. The change would also increase the amount of riparian habitat at the site. The 2009 DO model for Salt Creek concluded that removal of the Oak Meadows Dam would result in a small improvement in DO at the site. The DRSCW would like to enhance the aquatic habitat as measured by QHEI and remove the dam at the site. This project directly affects 3 POTW members. This project would improve macro ibi scores, but probably not the fish scores. The Fullersburg Woods dam would have to be removed before we would see the fish species in this area improve.

Stephen McCracken stated ERA's Erin Pande is the lead on this project. DRSCW has a standing contract with Inter-Fluve and will extend that contract to include a topographical study and recommendations at the site.

- Ammonia study (lower East Branch DuPage River) update
- IPS outreach materials
- PAHs – Coal Tar Sealant MOU between DRSCW and members agency public works departments (Attachment 2 informational flyer). Cost comparison data is being developed.

Stephen is in the process of developing a cost analysis comparing CT based sealants to asphalt based sealants. This has not proven to be as straightforward as he had hoped. Preliminary information has been forwarded to sealant/asphalt industry representatives for review and we hope to have the analysis completed within the next two weeks.

Erin Pande requested a specification brief be made available. A policy brief is also being developed for distribution. Dave Gorman stated that DuPage County does not use coal-tar based sealcoat in their operations. Dan Cronin, Chairman of the DuPage County Board, planned to sign the PAH MOU at this meeting, which has since changed to the December 5, 2012 meeting. Other members are encouraged to sign the PAH MOU at the December 5th meeting.

8. Chloride Reduction update (old business)

- The Public Roads Workshop was held on September 26th at the DuPage County DOT facility. 101 people attended excluding staff and presenters. A huge thank you to DuDOT for providing the location and assisting with organization and logistics. *Thank you, SNI Solutions and Monroe Truck Equipment, for sponsoring the workshops.*
- The Parking Lots and Sidewalks Workshop was held on October 4th at the Arrowhead Golf Club. 33 people attended excluding staff and presenters.
- 2011-2012 Salt Use Questionnaire Update
- Elgin O'Hare Expressway Expansion Update
Stephen McCracken submitted a letter regarding the environmental impacts of the proposed Elgin-O'Hare expansion. The letter stated that costs associated with mitigating chloride loadings in the program area are shifted from the state to local governments. It included a funding proposal to assist local governments increase their use of liquids and reduce their salt use, in an effort to offset increased salt application by the expressway expansion.
- Conductivity monitoring

9. Watershed Permitting Update (old business) A DRSCW Board meeting with IEPA on nutrient management in the DRSCW program area is scheduled for the afternoon of 10.31.2012.

An update will be provided at our next meeting.

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

No updates

11. Business Items

- **Membership 2011 -2012** – Attachment 3

Welcome to the Village of Clarendon Hills, our newest agency member.

- **Accounts Update** - Attachment 4
- **Grant Management Update** – Grant extension has been awarded and a quarterly report filed.
- **Other Business-** Bruce Yurdin is leaving IEPA

Dave Gorman stated that Bruce was very influential in the formation of the DRSCW. Steve Zehner stated that Bruce showed vision and leadership and was a proponent for the DRSCW's adaptive management approach and use of the "link" document. Bruce brought municipal and environmental groups together and mediated those discussions and also served as a conduit to state funding for TMDL implementation. A motion was made by Larry Cox to order a plaque recognizing Bruce Yurdin, seconded by Kevin Buoy; motion carried unanimously.

IEPA Recommendations for Post Development Stormwater Runoff Performance Standards in Illinois

Stephen outlined the draft recommendations and stated that the recommendation came from the IEPA. Al Keller (IEPA) corrected that statement, the recommendations were being submitted to IEPA. Stephen added that the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference plans to issue comments regarding the recommendations and he suspected DuPage County would also be submitting comments. The draft comments provided a good approach, using volume control to reduce pollutants and in stream erosion, but no information on costs and benefits were supplied. If you have any other comments, please send them to Stephen soon; the end of the comment period is November 23, 2012. Larry Cox made a motion to authorize the Executive Board to submit comments, seconded by Jennifer Hammer, motion carried unanimously.

Larry Cox stated that the alternative funding from the capital bill is inching forward (we hope). Stephen summarized the list of projects the DRSCW put forward to IEPA in relation to the funding: modification of the Fawell dam for fish passage, re-channelization of the lower East Branch DuPage River, Fullersburg Woods dam modification and stream improvement and the Oak Meadows dam removal and stream improvement.

Jennifer Hammer stated that the fourth Best Management Practices - Beyond the Basics seminar will be held in March 2013 in the Woodridge area. A call for presentations was emailed last week. This year the seminar will be expanded to include not just BMPs, but also guidance on building better stormwater programs. The Springbrook Creek and wetland restoration project may be appropriate for the seminar. Jennifer also provided a reminder that the new stormwater permit will be issued in the next 1-1.5 year(s).

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

- Thursday 8th of November the DRSCW is scheduled to deliver a presentation on chlorides in streams at the Village of Arlington Heights Public Works snow fighting training day.
- Thursday 15th of November the DRSCW is scheduled to deliver a presentation on TMDLs and adaptive management at USEPA Region 5's TMDL Practitioners Workshop.

13. Workgroup Meeting Schedule (10AM-Noon at Lombard Village Hall)

- December 5, 2012
- February 27, 2013 (Annual Meeting)
- April 24, 2013
- June 26, 2013
- August 28, 2013
- October 30, 2013