

Blackberry Creek Watershed Planning Meeting
Tuesday, April 19, 2011- 2:00 PM

Hosted by:

Waubonsee Community College,
Academic and Professional Center- Rm. 258
4S783 Illinois Rt. 47 in Sugar Grove

1. Attendance/Introductions

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| Tim Loftus | – CMAP |
| Hala Ahmed | – CMAP |
| Megan Elberts | – CMAP |
| Tara Neff | – TCF |
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| Ken Anderson | -Kane County Environmental Management |
| Megan Andrews | -KCSWCD |
| Jennifer Duncan | -North Aurora River District Alliance |
| Jerry Elliott | -Sugar Grove Water Authority |
| George Hauser | -Prestbury Citizens Association Board |
| Scott Jesseman | -Sugar Grove Drainage District #1 |
| Dan Lobbes | -TCF |
| Robert McMillan | -Property Owner |
| Dan Nagel | -Sugar Grove Township |
| Krysti Noble | -City of Yorkville |
| Mary Ochsenschlager | -Kane County Soil and Water Conservation District |
| Don Pfeiffer | -Sugar Grove Water Authority |
| Martha Price | -Cannonball Trail Civic League |
| Eric Schoeny | -City of Aurora |
| Dale Willerth | -Waubonsee Community College |
| Lori Wolf | -TCF |
| Angela Zubko | -Kendall County |

Tara Neff informed the group that Bob Rung, IDNR, is interested in getting landowner access to any special interest areas to conduct a fish survey, tentatively scheduled for July 19 and 20. This is with regard to the dam removal at the mouth of Blackberry Creek. Bob mentioned that it would be especially helpful to gain access to a couple more sites in Kendall County. A representative from the Prestbury Citizens Association expressed an interest in providing access for surveys in Kane County.

2. Recap of previous meeting and project timeline

Tara Neff requested assistance getting on appropriate agendas to present information about the watershed planning process to local governments. Hala Ahmed gave an update of the process to date. The planning process began last year in October. The plan is due in December of this

year. The Introduction Chapter was reviewed at the last meeting. Today we will review the Watershed Resource Inventory.

Blackberry Creek is on the 303(d) list of impaired streams. The creek is impaired for the designated use: primary contact recreation, i.e. swimming and/or water skiing. The cause is fecal coliform and the source is unknown. The plan will include projects and recommendations to improve the water quality in an effort to improve water quality in the watershed.

3. Discussion on Modeling Process, Megan Elberts, CMAP

This presentation can be viewed on the FREP website:

<http://foxriverecosystem.org/blackberry.htm>

As one of the 9 elements that must be included in our watershed plan, we must select a model to apply to the Blackberry Creek Watershed, to estimate pollutant reduction loads expected from implementation of plan recommendations. The creek is a major tributary of the Lower Fox River which is impaired for a number of other uses, causes including excessive loadings in total Phosphorus, Total Nitrogen, and Total Suspended Solids. For the purpose of this plan, we will attempt to address these pollutants in addition to fecal coliform. As the state works on developing standards for these pollutants, the plan may place the watershed in a more proactive position to address the pollutants using current plan resources. There is a standard set for Fecal Coliform in addition to guidelines for recommended for Total Nitrogen, Total Phosphorus, and Total Suspended Sediment/Solid. Standards are enforceable (TMDL), while guidelines are not. Megan discussed various levels of the four criteria (Fecal coliform, total nitrogen, total phosphorus and total suspended solids) that the U.S. EPA, Illinois EPA and other watershed groups have been using. The group discussed CMAP's recommendations.

Megan also presented a look at various modeling software that we can use for this watershed plan. The goal is to present the current and future water quality conditions in the creek so we can understand the types and amount of best management practices to recommend in the final plan. The HSPF model was used by the Fox River Study Group for the Fox, but the data that it is based on for Blackberry Creek is outdated. Conditions have changed somewhat significantly since then, specifically the decommissioning of 2 wastewater treatment facilities that used to discharge into the creek. CMAP also ran preliminary data through the L-THIA software. Jerry pointed out that, at a workshop he attended about L-THIA, it was stated that this software may not be suitable at the scale of an entire watershed. Most of the models for watershed planning have various shortcomings and do not answer all questions. Megan also discussed the STEP-L modeling software, though preliminary results are not yet available. Our plan will include our recommendations and we are required to quantify load reductions (one of the 9 required elements required by USEPA to qualify the plan for funding). The model we select will be used in the future to estimate pollutant load reductions. These estimates are not intended to set future standards for the watershed. The Watershed Plan will become a tool that local governments can use to create/revise ordinances to improve water quality as they see fit, and to pursue funding.

Existing water quality data that was used to determine impairments has just been received by CMAP and will be presented to stakeholders during upcoming meetings. The group also discussed the need for data collection in the future to both calibrate the model and to measure the progress that future efforts will have.

We need to decide if the Blackberry Creek Watershed plan will include Total Nitrogen, Total Phosphorus, and Total Suspended Sediment/Solids, in addition to Fecal Coliform. While there is no perfect model, we will need to determine which model we will apply.

4. Discussion on distribution of Class B Biosolids on farmland, Jerry Elliott, Sugar Grove Water Authority.

Jerry's presentation and handouts can be viewed on the FREP website at

<http://foxriverecosystem.org/blackberry.htm> or by clicking the following links:

<http://foxriverecosystem.org/WatershedPlanning/Blackberry/Presentations/BiosolidsPresentation-Elliott-4-19-11.pdf>;

<http://foxriverecosystem.org/WatershedPlanning/Blackberry/Presentations/BiosolidsHandout-Elliott-4-19-11.pdf>;

<http://foxriverecosystem.org/WatershedPlanning/Blackberry/Presentations/FoxMetroTour-Elliott-4-19-11.pdf>)

Jerry compiled information from Fox Metro Water Reclamation District, Kendall County Health Department; USEPA; and IEPA pertaining to Fecal Coliform and how Class B Biosolids contribute to this pollutant loading. Jerry's conclusions were that human sanitation processing and wildlife feces are the predominant contributors to fecal coliform in Blackberry Creek; that USEPA Part 503 and IEPA Section 319 rules do not agree and neither measures fecal coliform; he believes that removing or reconfiguring drain tile systems can be reckless when infringing on drainage statutes (that farming areas are targeted for punitive measures).

Comments from the presentation included clarification of the role of Soil and Water Conservation District. The SWCD have no authority for enforcement or regulation. One concern expressed was with regard to the SWCD's role in development projects. The SWCD supplies information, by way of natural resource inventories, that can be used as another tool to make good decisions. Additionally, Jerry presented various recommendations.

In response to the recommendation concerning drain tile systems in the Nippersink Study, the group agreed to include the proper language in the Blackberry Creek Watershed Action plan where it may address drain tiles.

In response to how recommendations in the Plan may be applied punitively and the 303(d) listing: The Clean Water Act became an Act in 1972 to make waters swimmable and fishable. Water has value in a number of different ways. A stream is placed on the 303(d) list because it failed to meet standards. The result is to get together to make a plan to try and address the problem. The goal is to get the stream delisted by addressing the impairment.

5. Review of Watershed Resource Inventory Chapter

Hala has received some comments - thank you! If there are any language or grammar comments, please e-mail them to Hala. It's important that stakeholders provide comments on the written chapters to the plan, even if it's after it was reviewed at the watershed meeting. We reviewed the Watershed Resource Inventory Chapter page by page to accept comments. CMAP will submit a draft to IEPA by May 1st. Hala will incorporate the changes agreed on during the meeting in the next Watershed Resources Inventory draft. The next step is to identify potential project ideas and locations. Stakeholders are invited to submit suggestions. Currently, there are 2 proposed projects, one along Cannonball Trail in Yorkville and the other at Prestbury Creek Subdivision, along Hanks Road. Additionally, and to address the fecal coliform impairment, we may propose BMPs for livestock operations. Such information may be further obtained from zoning maps.

6. Meeting Adjournment

You are all invited to attend the FREP Noon Network on May 18th at the Dick Young Forest Preserve, Nelson Lake, west of Batavia. Drew Ullberg, Forest Preserve District of Kane County, and Jason Pettit, Kendall County Forest Preserve District, will guide us on a tour of the preserve. They will highlight various ecological features, and discuss the importance of open space and the impact it has on our watershed. They will also give some examples of how Dick Young impacted our watershed in both Kane and Kendall Counties.

Please Note: To accommodate attendance at the FREP Noon Network, our next meeting will be held on **Wednesday**, May 18 from 2PM-4PM at the Batavia Public Library.