Southeastern Wisconsin
FOX RIVER COMMISSION:
An Overview of Its Structure, Functions
and Implementation Plan

Fox River Summit
March 20, 2015

James (Jim) Pindel
SEWFRC, Secretary/Treasurer
Town of Waterford, Commissioner
Who, Why & Where is the SEWFRC?

- The Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission (SEWFRC) established in 1997 by Wisc. Act 27
- In response to citizen & community concerns over water resource problems in Fox River System
- Jurisdiction covers 36.5 mi stretch from North limit of City of Waukesha down to Waterford Dam.
- Tributary drainage area (watershed) includes 364 square miles
What is the FRC supposed to do?

- **Statutory Mandates:**
  - Selective Dredging of the Fox River Waterway & clearance of debris jams
  - Surveys & research projects to gather data on surface & groundwaters
  - Liaison with Federal, State and other agencies & organizations to protect, rehabilitate and manage water resources in the Fox River System
  - Public informational & educational programs for the surface and groundwaters of the Fox River System
  - Automate Waterford Dam Operation
What is the FRC supposed to do?

  - Improve Water Quality and the scenic, economic and environmental value of the Fox River Water System
  - Protect & Enhance Recreational use of Navigable waters
  - Coordinate & integrate Programs & Projects to make improvements to Navigable waters
  - Create advisory committees as necessary
  - Promulgate rules to implement duties & powers of FRC
    - Written Cost Share Agreements
    - Project Acceptance Criteria
What is the SEWFRC doing?

- SEWFRC project fall into the following categories:
  - Complete – Active - Future

- Stormwater Abatement 9 7 4
- Erosion Control 13 5 5
- Environmental Education 4 1 1
- Wetland Restoration 3 - -
- Boat Launches & Pub Access 5 1 -
- Dredging 2 1 1
- Surveys & feasibility Studies 2 - 1

- Dam removal & Well Abandonment
Membership:

- **Counties**
  - Racine and Waukesha

- **Municipalities**
  - City of Waukesha (1)
  - Village of Waterford (1)
  - Village of Big Bend (2)
  - Village of Mukwonago (1)
  - Town of Mukwonago (1)
  - Town of Vernon (3)
  - Town of Waterford (3)
  - Town of Waukesha (1)

- **Ex Officio**
  - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (1) (per § 33.55(1), Stats.)
  - Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (1)
Proposed Expansion

- Boundary and Commission established by Legislature pursuant to Subchapter VI, Chapter 33, Stats.
  - Legislative action would be required to amend Chapter 33 provisions
Additional Members require to reach Illinois border:

- Kenosha County-Approved MOU
- Village of Rochester-Approved MOU
- Town of Burlington-Approved MOU
- City of Burlington-Approved MOU
- Town of Wheatland-Approved MOU
- Town of Salem-Approved MOU
- Village of Silver Lake – Approved MOU
Partnerships with other Organizations

• Counties and Municipalities
  • Waterford Waterway Management District
  • Waterford Sanitary District No. 1
  • Waterford Drainage District No. 1

• Special purpose units of government
  • Memoranda of Understanding
    • Kenosha County & New Municipalities (WI)
    • Fox Waterway Agency (IL)

• Other governmental bodies
Partnerships with NGOs

- SE Fox River Partnership
- Fox River CAUSE (Citizens Against Underwater Sediment and Erosion)
- Mukwonago River Partnership
- Friends of the Mukwonago River
- Pewaukee River Partnership
- Friends of the Vernon Marsh
- The Nature Conservancy
- Land Trusts
Funding Issues

• SEWFRC has been funded historically through direct appropriations administered by WDNR

• Legislature envisioned funding by the counties (and/or municipalities); SEWFRC also may be grant eligible
  – Received 1\textsuperscript{st} County Budget Allocation ($10,000)
Present Funding Situation

- SEWFRC functions as a conduit for State Grant Funds to counties, municipalities, NGO’s, organizations, individuals
- In total received $1,475,000 in Grant Funds
- In 2012 & 2013 received $200,000 Grants
- At this moment hold $60,000 in available Grant Funds
- Have need of much higher Funding
We are not just about Money

- Membership has its rewards (exposure)
  - Environmental issues
  - WDNR regulations
  - Municipal, State, Federal regulations
  - Computer Technology
  - Native Plants & Invasive species knowledge
  - Advice regarding all phases of Project Life
  - Legal issues
  - Agricultural prospective & concerns
  - Exposure to relative information Presentations
  - Meeting & Networking with Knowledgeable People
WHO IS THE SEWFRC?

The Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission (SEWFRC) was established in 1997 by Wisconsin Act 27 (1997 - 1999 Budget Bill) in response to citizen and community concerns over water resource problems in the Fox River system. Under the 1997 Wisconsin Act 27, the SEWFRC was given the authority to carry out a number of programs and measures designed to improve water resource conditions in the Fox River system within the identified planning area.

The area of jurisdiction for the SEWFRC consists of the tributary drainage area to the 36.5-mile-long reach of the Fox River between the Village of Waterford dam in Racine County and the northern limits of the City of Waukesha north of Moreland Boulevard. The tributary drainage area for the implementation planning area ranges from approximately 119 square miles at the upper end of the planning area to approximately 312 square miles at I-43 and to about 364 square miles at the Waterford dam.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission was charged with developing an Implementation Plan on behalf of the SEWFRC in 1997. The plan was adopted in March 1998, updated in September 2011 and still serves as a dynamic guide in assisting the Commission to conduct its work.

WHAT DOES THE SEWFRC DO?

The Commission has supported numerous projects within the planning area and has contributed approximately $1.25 million to projects that help improve the Illinois Fox River basin.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission does the following:

- Initiate and coordinate surveys and research projects to gather data relating to the surface waters and groundwater of the Illinois Fox River basin

- Maintain a liaison with Federal, State, and local agencies and other organizations involved in protecting, rehabilitating, and managing water resources

- Develop a public informational and educational program on issues related to the surface waters and groundwater of the Illinois Fox River basin

- Develop and implement plans or projects to:
  - Improve water quality and the scenic, economic and environmental value of the surface waters and groundwater of the Illinois Fox River basin
  - Protect or enhance the recreational use of the navigable waters of the Illinois Fox River basin
  - Perform water quality studies and monitoring
  - Rehabilitate stream banks
  - Improve stream and shoreline habitat
  - Address other water-related needs and issues within the planning area

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN
Al Sikora
262-354-3906
asikora@wdtweb.com

SEWFRC
ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:
- Feasibility Studies
- Construction Projects
- Rehabilitation
- Navigation Aids
- Channel Dredging
- Planning Area Boundary Map

http://sewfrc.org/
Thank you for your Attention

Please visit our Table Top Display
Please visit our Website

SEWFRC
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SEWFRC Project Categories
- Dam removal
- Storm water abatement
- Erosion control
- Environmental education
- Boat launches
- Surveys & feasibility studies
- Wetland restoration
Selective dredging of the Fox River Waterway and clearance of debris jams

- Accomplishments
  - Grand Drive Channel Enhancement Feasibility Study
  - Waterford Impoundment Sediment sampling & Analysis
Streambank erosion protection; maintenance, protection and improvement of shorelines
Water use, recreational access and facilities, water safety and regulations
Culvert removal on the Mukwonago River to improve recreation & fish passage
Fox River Shoreline Erosion and Invasive Species Mapping
Waukesha and Racine Counties

January 2014
Prepared for
Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission
Waterford, Wisconsin

Prepared by

GRAEF
125 South 84th Street, Suite 4001
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53214-1470
414-259-1500
414-259-0037

Project Manager: Geoffrey Parish, M.S., P.G., P.H.
geoffrey.parish@graef-usa.com
Project scientist: Ron Londre, M.S., C.E.
ron.londre@graef-usa.com

Project No.: 2013-0430.00