

Region of the Great Bend of the Wabash River Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting 4: October 6, 2009 4:30 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, West Lafayette, Indiana

Attendees: Sara Peel, Dan Dunten, Art Remnet, Joe Payne, Linda Prokopy, Crystal Rehder, Linda Schmidt, KD Benson, Ashley Hountz, Steve Murray, Crystal Joshua, Joe Rund

Provided comments in absentia: Laura Bowling, Phyllis Hunt, Megan Benage, Ron Turco

Committee/Project updates:

- Sampling Blitz and Monitoring Program
 - Sara passed around posters containing sampling blitz results and explained the blitz effort. A spring blitz is tentatively scheduled for May 14th. There may be some changes in parameters; but overall the spring blitz will follow similar protocols.
 - Sara also passed around preliminary results from the monitoring probes or sondes installed at our three monitoring stations. The probes are monitoring turbidity, dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH, and conductivity every 15 minutes. Over the next few months, the monitoring committee will be working to determine the differences in data collected and attribute those differences to specific items or occurrences at each site. To participate in this effort, attend the next monitoring committee meeting which will occur on November 11th at 4:30 pm at the Depot.
- Education and Outreach
 - Linda Prokopy explained that the education committee will be organizing a bus tour for community members on November 21. The tour will focus on things that you can do on your property to improve water quality and also highlight things that the cities and/or county are doing to work towards this same goal.
 - Linda also highlighted the other committee efforts including a canoe float trip/event, green business practice certification, and development of an educational website. Other activities will be considered in the future as well. To participate in the education and outreach planning efforts, attend the next education committee meeting which will occur on November 5th at 4:30 pm at the Depot.
- Project and report review
 - Sara indicated that the next draft of the watershed management plan had been posted to the website and thanked those individuals that have already provided comments. To review the report, visit www.wabashriver.net or contact Sara for a copy. Comments are due to Sara no later than November 4th.

Concerns review and prioritization:

- The concised list of concerns was reviewed and reorganized as indicated below. Concerns were grouped into four main categories: education and outreach, conservation practices, regulatory items, and recreation.
- As part of the process, several concerns were combined or rewritten to better express overall consensus. Others were determined to not be relevant or were deemed to not be under the purview of the watershed planning process.
- Additional concerns may be added as data review continues. Concerns may also be modified or removed in the future based on the results of data review and reporting.

- During future meetings, potential sources for each concern and solutions to address those sources will be identified and listed. All potential source or solution should be listed. A review of the original list of concerns was suggested by Art as a good starting point for solutions to the concerns listed. That list is available at <http://www.wabashriver.net/steering-committee/> as the final bullet under the August meeting handouts.
- All steering committee members are encouraged to begin developing a list of potential sources and solutions for those concerns that are of interest to them. This will serve as a starting point for our next meeting (December 8th). If you develop a list, please provide the concern name, source list, and solution list to Sara by December 1st so that it can be combined with others input and broadcast to the steering committee.

Concerns List (as of 10/6/09):

Education and Outreach Concerns:

- The public does not feel a sense of ownership for the river or its watershed.
- The public lacks knowledge about the river and its tributaries' water quality.
- Partnerships between existing organizations are under-utilized.

Conservation Practices:

- There are too many locations where animals have access to watershed streams.
- Agricultural best management practice methods should be utilized more within the watershed.
- Individuals use too much fertilizer and pesticide.
- Too much physical waste is entering the river and its tributaries.
- Too much medication and too high of pharmaceutical concentrations are entering the river.
- Individuals are unaware of implementation options; demonstration sites should be available for education and outreach opportunities and to include management practice implementation.
- Private landowners are unaware of their obligations related to streams running through their property (snag clearing, who to contact for permit assistance, etc.)
- Nutrient and algae concentrations are too high within the Wabash River and its tributaries.
- Sediment and erosion control is needed.
- Buffers and transitional natural areas are needed along the Wabash River and its tributaries.
- Green or low impact development (LID) practices and LEED certification possibilities are underutilized.
- Invasive and exotic species are present throughout the watershed and we do not have a plan to eliminate or reduce their presence or spreading.

Recreation:

- Density and diversity of fish in the Wabash River is lower than historical levels.
- Natural and wildlife areas should be created.
- There are not enough trails along the Wabash River.
- Access to the Wabash River is limited by lack of parking, publicly-available boats, and boat ramps or access sites.

Regulatory:

- Industrial permit requirements are not enforced thus industrial inputs are too high.
- Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) within Lafayette and West Lafayette need to be corrected.

- The regional plan should be revised and/or re-evaluated to address development in the watershed.
- Too much untreated stormwater enters the Wabash River.
- Septic systems are not efficient enough or maintained correctly and regulations relating to them are not enforced.

Items of concern which will not be addressed under the watershed planning process:

- There is not a good inventory of plants or animals within the watershed.
- The Wabash River floods more than what occurred historically.
- The Wabash River has odor problems that need to be corrected.
- Fish consumption advisories limit eating of fish from the Wabash River and its tributaries.

Next meeting: December 8, 2009 4:30 p.m.