

March 14, 2006 Opequon Project Team meeting notes 6:00-8:00 p.m.

James Rumsey Technical Institute's "conference room"

(times noted are approximate)

Facilitator: Alana Hartman, WV Department of Environmental Protection

Also present: Mary Beth Bennett, Sandra Bernardi, John Dzienis, Shawn Dzienis, George Snider, Bonnie Stubblefield, Bill Zinner

Handouts: Fact sheets about Saturday's SOS workshop and SOS workshops planned by Blue Heron Environmental Network, Inc.

6:00 Decided some things about our monitoring efforts this year: we should choose 1 or two places to sample invertebrates (SOS) and do it once in spring and once in fall. Alana advised against e-coli monitoring at this time, because the state standard is for fecal coliform, which is different. We can look into the cost of fecal coliform monitoring by a nearby lab, though. Bonnie reiterated this should be done above and below wastewater treatment plant outfalls we are concerned about, e.g. the one at Lights Ford Bridge/Scrabble Road. Try to make it at same place DEP sampled in past.

Shawn Dzienis is proposing to be our IWLA contact, and if he is still interested after the training on May 13, he might be able to commit to arranging monitoring days regularly, & recruiting IWLA help.

We will tell Sherry Evasic to expect several folks from Opequon Project Team/IWLA to attend her May 13th SOS training.

We discussed our reasons for sampling. Getting a sense of the variability of the Opequon. [later Alana remembered one big reason is to hopefully track progress as we install practices and educate the community to pollute less.]

6:15 Our mailing to "landowners-along-the-Opequon-in-Berkeley-County": we received even more postcards while Alana was on leave. There are "hotspots" of landowner interest along the creek. Maybe we could target one of the developments for a "wildlife walk" as suggested by Rebecca MacLeod (NRCS). Greystone is a possibility.

Another possible use of this info: contact those who were interested in rain gardens, and ask them if they have an appropriate spot on their property where one could be installed. Since they are all along the creek, it would have immediate effect on Opequon water quality.

6:30 Another use of the response info is to invite the kayak/canoe-interested people to a purely fun kayaking event on the creek. This would be to draw attention to the fact that the creek is a useable and valuable resource. **George will organize.** Tentative date – June 3rd. **John Dzienis will research possible kayak rental company,** since IWLA wants to do something like this, themselves (on a different day).

6:45 Discussed potential rain garden sites, since WVDEP has expressed an interest in helping to fund a rain garden demo in WV somewhere. Alana had just visited Orchard View Intermediate School to determine whether it is an appropriate site...it probably isn't [suggestion is to have the teacher talk to Bryan Seipp of Potomac Conservancy – rain garden expert!]. We were unable to think of an appropriate site at this time, so that rules out "rain garden implementation" as a possible use of potential Stream Partners grant. **Alana will ask Kristin Alexander of PVAS about the rain gardens they have installed at local schools.** We discussed the need to involve the students and parents and

landscaping staff, so that the plantings don't get cut by accident. [also, Sherry Wilkins has asked Steve Knipe to suggest sites within City of Martinsburg. He will ask his engineers to consider this.]

Other possible use of Stream Partners potential grant: pay Jared Bartley to help us prioritize a subwatershed to work in first/most (showed the group the map CVI made for us). If we do this, we'd want a map we could show the public. We could use this at public events to tell farmers there are voluntary options for cleaning up nutrients/sediment/bacteria from agriculture – thus avoiding having Nutrient Management Plans imposed on them from regulatory agency. Also, we'd want a definite priority #1 to come out of this – not ambiguous. Also it would be great to get a digital database (GIS) out of this, and one that is compatible with the one Matt Mullenax is making for Berkeley Co. The group did wonder if the WVU team that has been working with us could do this prioritization for free (have a student help us).

Bonnie's preliminary ideas about what our decision factors would be:

1. what is the land use in each of the watersheds? We might do projects in representatives of all the major land uses.
2. where are the concerned citizens/potential project sites
3. where are the pollution hotspots, e.g. Tuscarora is hotspot for sediment

7:00 Informed group about progress on spending the \$5000 from Chesapeake Bay Program funds (through WVDEP). Bill Zinner and Alana told group about the project, which is now going to occur on Tuscarora Creek. As part of a larger fish habitat improvement project and possible landowner fencing agreement, on **April 29th we will be planting 12 species of trees and shrubs along 1000' of the creek, about 1.5 miles west of King St. exit of I-81. Volunteers needed!** Bring shovel/gloves. Creekside Anglers will supply some food.

7:45 Discussed what we should apply for Stream Partners grant money for. Jared Bartley can help us with CVI's Watershed Restoration Template – which things do we want to rate, etc.? There was much discussion about this; eventually agreed to write Jared's plan of work (total \$2700) into the grant proposal. **Sandra will help Alana prepare the proposal.**

Adjourn 8:00