

Big Pine Creek Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee Meeting Summary
February 26th, 2015 4 pm Benton County Government Annex Building

Attendees: Jason Carlile, Angela Sturdevant, Sara Peel, Mani Phengrasmy, Jon Charlesworth, Kent Wamsley, Macy Fawns, Deb Lane, Gus Nyberg

Next Steering Committee Meeting will be held on March 24th, 2015 from 4-6 p.m. at the Pine Village Fire Department 206 S. Main Street Pine Village IN, 47975.

Watershed Management Plan:

The group has been working to address edits suggested by both IDEM and EPA. Angela and Sara have put in a considerable amount of time leading this effort. At this meeting we looked at the criteria we are using to determine which subwatersheds will be listed as the top priority subwatersheds for each of the pollutant categories (N,P,Sediment, e.coli and natural habitat). As more information has been gathered it has become evident that these critical subwatersheds will need to be reconsidered. For any given pollutant, some subwatersheds will drop off of our list of critical areas and some subwatersheds will be added. The tentative changes were discussed and everyone seems to be in agreement that the data and observations need to determine the critical subwatersheds. We will work on refining these changes via teleconferencing and report back to the group at the March meeting.

IDNR Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) grant applications:

We have put together separate applications for White, Warren and Benton Counties (and they were successfully submitted on 1/30/15). In total, we are seeking \$94,000 to be used primarily for cost-sharing on conservation practices. For White County we requested \$18,000 to be used in the Roudebush ditch subwatershed, For Warren County we requested \$26,000 to be used in Hogback hill and Pine Village segment of BPC, and for Benton County we requested \$50,000 to be used in Big Pine Ditch, Little Pine Creek, Brumm ditch and Owens ditch. We discussed the possibility of switching out Owens ditch and replacing it with Darby ditch. When we are asked for edits by LARE, we can revisit this issue based on our revised critical subwatersheds. We should know by late March/early April if our applications are being seriously considered as they will ask us to make revisions. IDNR/LARE will make final decisions by August 1st as to which groups will be funded

Cost Share on Conservation Practices (Round 2):

At the January meeting we ranked the applications that we had on hand for second round cost share for best management practices. The top four ranked applications have been offered funding and all have tentatively accepted. We intend to fund these four projects:

- A Drainage Water Management project including 22 tile water control structures.
- A project involving streambank stabilization and 14 acres of Oak Savanna ecosystem development.
- A grassed waterway reconstruction.
- 40 acres of forest restoration.

Publicity and Getting out the message:

- Jon has been working sporadically at developing a website for the watershed group. The Benton County SWCD is paying for the web hosting service and the domain reservation for the first year. The website will be for the Benton County SWCD with a tab leading to pages discussing the

watershed project. The domain has not been reserved but Sara noted that Bentoncountyswcd.org (and .com) are both still available.

- We discussed having a spring 2015 field day. Gus has offered to host a field day at the forest restoration site. The tentative date for this field day is May 9th from 9 to noon. This will be an opportunity for interested parties to learn about invasive removal and other practices to improve the health of forest stands.

Other Topics

Water Monitoring: We have 3 hydrolabs that will be placed in the water to continuously sample water quality. At this point Deb is waiting for the water to thaw and then these devices will be put in place. Deb, Chad, Mike and Kent attended a training session last fall to learn about the operation and maintenance of these testing devices. Deb is also taking grab samples at the testing sites and having them evaluated for nitrate, ammonia, e.coli and phosphorus levels.

Greg Bright with Commonwealth Biomonitoring has given us a bid of what it will cost to have 10 sites monitored at high water flow and normal water flow for this year. We will attempt to include this cost into a Conservation Innovation Grant proposal that Chad and Kent will be authoring. Michelle Scherer at the Benton County SWCD does water quality testing through the Hoosier Riverwatch program. It was suggested that Michelle pass on the results of her testing to Deb Lane so that these results can be compiled along with our other testing results in the watershed. Currently, Michelle tests twice per year in numerous locations around the county. It was agreed that we could probably obtain even more useful data if we collect these riverwatch samples three times per year (early April, July and late October). We would also like to see if we can group in Warren County to start back up with the Hoosier riverwatch sampling. The water monitoring committee will work on making this happen.

Meeting Adjourned