

April 11, 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: Jared Bartley, Sandra Bernardi, Tanya Borisova, Richard Demoske, Frank Rodgers, George Snider, Bonnie Stubblefield, Sherry Wilkins, Bill Zinner

Handouts: April 29 Tree planting event flyers, draft of our Stream Partners grant application

6:00 – Discussed the 3 projects Alana put into the Stream Partners proposal in addition to hiring Jared to do a subwatershed prioritization with us. All seemed to agree with the 3 ideas in general, but discussed the relative importance of each, if we need to reduce the amount we're applying for in the grant. When two OPT members pledged \$100 each toward the cost of the projects, we were able to bring our request down below \$4500, allowing us to ask for \$500 for Potomac Headwaters RC&D to administer the grant.

Within this discussion, we talked again about how much and where we want to monitor for fecal coliform bacteria. If we get this grant and begin monitoring at 4 sites, we will be better able to write a formal monitoring plan because we'll know better what we can handle, and how variable our results are.

We decided we would like to plant trees and shrubs at George's property to stabilize the creek bank better, but we'll need to talk more about whether to use tree tubes (prone to being lost during high water) and how to reduce losing plants to herbivores.

Discussed some of Tanya's suggested edits to improve the overall content of the proposal. Emphasize that the Opequon clean-up is a 4-county, bi-state effort and include our participation in WVU survey development and our contact with the VA TMDL implementation folks. Also, we can explain why the 4 activities we propose are the next logical steps in our growth as a project team, if we outline our history properly. I.e.: began with land use analysis, assessed extent of monitoring in the watershed, discussed BMPs, with emphasis on buffers for ag land and rain gardens for urban land, plus performed 2 litter clean-ups. Brainstormed sites for the \$5000 project to be spent by end of April 2006. Then we engaged citizens with a mailing and documented the WVU survey results. Now we are poised to select a priority subwatershed, do a small riparian planting, extend our citizen mailing to Jefferson Co., and try our hand at bacterial monitoring.

7:00 – Details about upcoming activities:

1. April 29 tree planting event at Tuscarora Creek, directions and times are on the flyer...take some to distribute to friends and neighbors. Bill Zinner and Frank Rodgers also talked about the extent of the partnership, possibility for community service hours for H.S. students, and the types of trees we'll plant.
2. June 3 canoe/kayak trip, directions and times are on the postcard we plan to distribute.
3. May 16 is our next meeting, 5:45-8:00 pm in this same conference room at James Rumsey. We're trying to make it a joint meeting with Jefferson Co. Watersheds Coalition since we chose their meeting night again. Also TOW will have a representative here to tell us what they're up to and look for partnering opportunities.

7:15 – Next steps on other projects:

1. "Wildlife Walk" will be held in June at Greystone On The Opequon, conducted by Rebecca MacLeod of NRCS. Open only to residents; teaches them about water quality + habitat improvement practices they can do on their property. Would like to repeat elsewhere.
2. Knouse Foods might be a potential business contact in Inwood. Alana has spoken to their environmental affairs manager and the plant manager. Both are interested in stormwater management practices. Inwood was poised to have a stormwater management project but it recently broke down. Berkeley County Commission is now supposed to look for \$ to help their flooding problem.
3. Opequon PT has been invited by NRCS and Potomac Headwaters RC&D to help with a project at Dupont soccer fields parking lot near Spring Mills exit of I-81. Something about impervious surface reduction technique and planting. Alana will try to learn more. Our role would probably just be with publicity and sharing this info with folks who want to do something similar in future.
4. Rain Barrel pilot project – can we buy or find just 5 or 10 barrels to demonstrate how we make them into rain barrels and what can be done with them? Then next year we can use the pilot project info to write a grant for a big distribution project/fundraiser. Action item: find out about the 30 gallon ones available from Pepsi bottling plants for free, and do a workshop this summer where attendees get to take one home with them. Anyone want to lead this?
5. Need to investigate good places to sample for fecal coliform...definitely above and below Scrabble Road Bridge, perhaps Inwood, private property we know of, and/or places WVDA is sampling for other Bay-related parameters.
6. Rain Garden demonstration in Martinsburg – Sherry Wilkins and Alana Hartman told about a demonstration project that DEP has backed with \$2000 and City of Martinsburg might match. Looked at possible sites earlier today with Bryan Seipp of Potomac Conservancy and City of Martinsburg staff. Best site likely to be the southwest corner of new county judicial complex. Will be meeting with Howard Strauss and pursuing this.

Richard Demoske knew of another area (Spring St.) prone to flooding from impervious surfaces that could use a rain garden. He sent more info about location and problems to Sherry and Alana after the meeting. Will keep on record as possible future project, but might be too big of a problem for our group?

7:45 - Brainstormed ways to publicize our upcoming events and kept list on flip chart:

mailing to science teachers; OPT's master e-mail list; "press," including Journal, Herald-Mail, DEP press release; specific scouting groups; Fed agencies e-mail lists like ATF, Air National Guard, IRS, Coast Guard, VA, Customs, NCTC, base in Frederick (Action item – does anyone have this contact information for any of these agencies?); Potomac Calendar online by ICPRB; WRNR interviews

7:50 - Summarized our OPT's first year of accomplishments on flip chart. Will be needed for WV Watershed Network's annual awards application.

Adjourn 8:00