

**Nov. 14, 2006 Opequon Project Team meeting notes 6:00-8:00 p.m. Action items in RED**

James Rumsey Technical Institute's Conference Room

(Times noted are approximate)

Facilitator: Alana Hartman, WV Department of Environmental Protection

**Also present:** Jared Bartley, Mary Beth Bennett, Sandra Bernardi, Tanya Borisova, Richard Demoske, Ron & Cindy Gunderson, Jim Lawrence, Sharon Lee, Todd Miller, Mary Palmer, Scott Rodeheaver, George Snider, Bonnie Stubblefield, Diane Sylvester, Ted Wachter, Ken & Sherry Wilkins, Bill Zinner

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**Handouts:**

6:00 –Introductions: heard from Ted Wachter, property owner at mouth of Opequon Creek; interest in monitoring and possibly offering equipment (landscape trailer and small backhoe) for future projects.

6:15 –financial report as stated in agenda

6:20 - Upcoming activities: reviewed these and added USGS water study presentation to Berkeley County Commission, Nov. 15 from 7-8. This 4 pp document will be used as a reference when zoning ordinance is developed. Will be available online.

**New business:**

1. Award and Watershed Celebration Day: Sandra Bernardi discussed her experiences at the event and enjoyed networking with other WV groups.

2. We discussed having a website dedicated to OCPT, expressed a desire to have a local college student design it (**possibly – Alana will investigate**) and to have an OCPT volunteer be trained to maintain it for free. Keep in mind RC&D might be willing to fund the start-up cost.

3. Coliscan training. 7 people from OPCT have now attended the training and are interested in doing this, by forming 4 teams of 2 (**Ron needs a partner from somewhere around Martinsburg – anyone else want to learn?**). ICPRB willing to fund the first year, including up to 4 incubators so each group would maintain its own incubator and read its own plates. **Alana is pursuing this with Jim Cummins from ICPRB.** Ted wondered if there is testing available for orchard chemicals; Mary suggested HydroChem in Shenandoah Junction. Scott suggested the State lab in Kearneysville.

4. Stone Bridge and RR trestle debris – landowner didn't attend so we **tabled this for now.**

5. Ted suggested having a boat RACE on the creek as an awareness event.

**Old business:**

1. Rain Barrel workshop – Alana pledged to find out whether Coca-Cola in Hagerstown could provide the barrels – learned their “production” unit no longer in operation, so they don't generate the drums anymore. **If we use the local seller from Valley Trader, will need him to fill out paperwork with DEP in order to be paid out of that account, but that is ok. Alana suggests having participants make out the checks to OCPT or RC&D next time to make it easier to access the revenue.**

[Old business/project updates were continued after Jared's portion of the meeting.]

**Jared Bartley, CVI: Step #3 of Subwatershed Prioritization**

-Jared showed slides of data he acquired since last meeting, using TMDL disc from TetraTech

-split into two groups to rate subwatersheds by 1) increase in development and 2) heterogeneity of land use

-entered our rankings in real-time using Jared's laptop and projector, and preliminarily chose Mill Creek and Tuscarora Creek as top priority subwatersheds. **See Tanya's summary below for more detail.** Also, Jared will provide OCPT with a report, including the calculation matrix.

### **7:45 Project Updates, continued**

2. Tuscarora Creek tree planting, about 150 yards, was weeded by Creekside Anglers and Bonnie from our group, Nov. 4 – 2 hours of work. Tree of heaven growing quickly – requires special tools (long, narrow planting spade) to uproot effectively. Should plan another workday to do this in spring.

3. logo/brochure/tabletop display: **Sandra sent thank you notes to Angela Faulkner and WVU for their help with the tabletop and rain garden displays.**

4. Judicial Center rain garden – see agenda for remaining tasks. We heard that trash blowing around tends to collect in the garden. People have been good about stopping by to check on it. Still pursuing an informational sign, barrier stones and watering hydrant.

5. War Memorial Park – see agenda

6. rain garden at Orchard View Intermediate – Master Gardeners have this on their agenda for spring, and teacher is making progress by partnering with Toll Brothers and local companies developing adjacent lands.

7. Opequon Creek Assessment – still one reach to go. (WV line to Martin Payne Road)

8. Opequon Watershed (VA and WV) Targeted Watershed Grant update – Jim Lawrence gave us print summary of Hedgebrook Floodplain wetland project, which will begin week after Thanksgiving; said Isco monitors will be installed at water quality swales and pothole wetland to show effect of these innovative BMPs. Learned that a Bunker Hill development done by Greenway Engineers might be a possibility to monitor other BMPs.

10. landowner mailing to Jefferson County creekside residents – group agreed we should finish the Jefferson Co. database, consider including LT of the EP brochure in mailing.

11. Monitoring: fecal coliform monthly monitoring has begun, see Coliscan notes above – no plans for biological monitoring in 2006, but should table for another meeting.

12. Tour of Berkeley Co. PSSD Wastewater Treatment Plants – visited Baker Heights plant, Inwood plant, and 2 side-by-side “package plants” in a development. Made contacts with other local stakeholders. There is interest in having this occur again for people who couldn't make it. **We should send a thank-you to Clifton Browning for conducting the tour.**

=Adjourn 8:00

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Note: The following notes were compiled by Tanya Borisova informally; the formal report of this process will be forthcoming from Mr. Bartley of Canaan Valley Institute.

About 20 people attended the meeting.

There were representatives from

- WV DEP (Alana and Sherry Wilkins (WV stormwater permitting section)),
- CVI (Jared and his colleague how works with watershed organizations in the counties of Potomac's North / South Forks),
- WVU (university and local extension agent).
- Jim Lawrence (Opequon Incorporated, VA)
- Creekside Anglers – local watershed organization working in Tuscarora Creek
- Several local landowners and residents.

Overall outcome of prioritization (incomplete):

Opequon Tributary	Rank
Mill Creek	1
Tuscarora	2
Hopewell Run	3
Middle Creek	3
Sylvan Run	3
Turkey Run	6
Torytown Run	7
Silver Run	9
...	...
Goose Creek	10
...	...

The team decided to focus there efforts on the two creeks with the highest priority ranking – Mill Creek and Tuscarora Creek.

Some reservations about the prioritization procedure:

- large part of the watershed was classified as “Opequon main stem” and was not considered in the prioritization procedure. This was partially justified by the fact that there was no sufficient information to consider this part of the watershed anyway.
- Among pollutants, only Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Habitat were considered. No information about sediment / bacteria impairment was examined.
- One of the proxies used to judge the impact of a tributary on Opequon’s main stem was the distance from the confluence to the mouth of Opequon. **What about pollution decay?**

Advantages of the approach:

- allows to perform relatively quick prioritization
- relies on community involvement, and hence, lead to high level of acceptance by the community.

Brief description of the procedure:

The team reviewed the prioritization criteria and their ranks (defined on Aug 8 meeting).

Criteria	Rank
Level of Tributary Impairment	1
Impact on main stem	2
Stakeholder involvement	3
Homogeneity of land use (as a proxy of the probability of success)	4
Amount of existing credible information	5
Landscape change	6

Jared described “weights” assigned to each criteria, which were derived from the criteria’ ranks.

Next, the team evaluated each sub-watershed for each criterion. Sub-watersheds were assigned values from 1 to 3 (according to the significance of the issue described in each criterion for the specific watershed).

The values for two of the criteria – “impact on Opequon main stem” and “amount of credible information” were assigned by Jared. Impact on main stem was linked to 1) subwatershed drainage area (proxy for the volume of discharge) and 2) the distance from the confluence to the mouth of Opequon (as a proxy for the length of Opequon main stem affected by tributary’s discharge). Mill Creek and Tuscarora Creek had the largest drainage area, while Silver Spring was the farthest from the mouth of Opequon. Scoring was from 1 (“least”) to 3 (“most”). Bonnie pointed out that if we focus on the distance from the point of confluence, then all team’s efforts would be concentrated on the boarder with Virginia. But she also agreed that the final result of sub-watershed prioritization will be determined by the combination of all criteria.

The level of credible information for each tributary was assessed by Jared. He based this on all the information that he found in the process of preparation for the prioritization procedure.

The criterion “Level of stakeholders’ involvement” was discussed by the team for some time. The team agreed that there is no sufficient information to rank each sub-watershed based on this criteria. Jared suggested the number of schools in the watershed as an indicator of possible stakeholders’ involvement. He also mentioned that he tried to find the information about the number of homeowners’ associations in each subwatershed, but this information was not available. And the team confirmed that this information is hard to find. Another person suggested linking this criterion to the number of people using the specific tributary (e.g., there is a public recreation area War Memorial Park in Tuscarora watershed, and there is a place with public stream access and some new creek-side development in Mill Creek watershed). Still another person suggested examining the number of responses the OCPT received for its mailing to local landowners. However, the team decided that these responses cannot be easily linked to specific sub-watersheds. Bill (Creekside Anglers) suggested conducting more comprehensive mailing to landowners in the whole watershed, and analyzing the number of responses received from each sub-watershed. But Alana pointed out the team may not have funding for such mailing. The team also mentioned that Tuscarora Creek should be ranked high due to the activity of the Creekside Anglers there.

Then, the team agreed to proceed with ranking based on available information, and then – if the overall prioritization result seems unreasonable – see how this specific criterion affected the final outcome.

So, Tuscarora Creek and Mill Creek were assigned values of “2”, and the rest of the watersheds – values of “1” (least).

Homogeneity of land use and landuse changed were evaluated based on maps with information from WV Opequon TMDL team. The maps were printed by CVI. Land use cover was based on 2000 GAP + 911 emergency response (2003 data). The team divided into 2 groups, one focusing on homogeneity, and the other focusing on landuse change.

(was not able to record results for homogeneity)

It was assessed that Tuscarora creek had the most development (assigned the value of “3”), Dry Run and Silver Run also had significant development (value of “2”), an all the rest of the sub-watersheds were assigned the value of “1”.

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