

Ferson-Otter Creek Stakeholder/Landowner Meeting Tuesday, September 21st; 2:00 p.m.

Attendance

Tim Loftus	-CMAP
Hala Ahmed	-CMAP
Erin Tuttle	-The Conservation Foundation
Anita Anderson	-Resident
Ken Anderson	-Kane County
Megan Andrews	-Kendall County SWCD
Matt Bardol	-Geosyntec Consultants
Jim Campbell	-Blackberry Oaks Golf Course
Andrea Cline	-The Conservation Foundation
Jennifer Duncan	-North Aurora River District Alliance
Bill Grabarek	-Village of Elburn
Dan Lobbes	-The Conservation Foundation
Marie Moulton	-Local HOA
Dan Nagel	-Sugar Grove Township
John Nevenhoven	-Village of Elburn
Krysti Noble	-City of Yorkville
Mary Ochenschlager	-Kane-DuPage SWCD
Jason Petit	-Kendall County FPD
Michele Piotrowski	-Engineering Enterprises Inc.
Marge Roe	-Prestbury
Eric Schoeny	-FRSG/City of Aurora
Laura Schraw	-City of Yorkville
Louise Sherman	-Townes of Prestbury
Jim Slowikowski	-Illinois State Water Survey
Tom Stefancic	-Prestbury
Tori Trauscht	-Integrated Lakes Management
Dale Willerth	-Waubensee Community College
Lori Wolf	-The Conservation Foundation
Richard Young	-Sugar Grove

Agenda

1. Introductions

- a. **The Conservation Foundation**-Erin Tuttle shared a brief overview of TCF's mission to preserve natural areas and open space, protect rivers and watersheds, and promote stewardship of our environment. She also gave a summary of TCF's experience with watershed planning efforts around the Tyler Creek, Blackberry Creek, Aux Sable Creek, DuPage River, and others. Erin will be the local watershed coordinator for the Blackberry Creek planning process. Please contact her with any questions: 630-428-4500 x 41 or etuttle@theconservationfoundation.org.
- b. **Fox River Ecosystem Partnership**-Becky Hoag explained that FREP was formed in 1996 to address ecological concerns of the Fox River Basin, which is home to 11% of the state's population and includes portions of eleven Illinois counties (including Kane and Kendall). FREP strives to balance all the uses and demands on the Fox River Basin, while

preserving and enhancing a healthy environment. FREP will be responsible for designing and maintaining the website for the Blackberry Creek planning process.

- c. **Fox River Study Group**-Eric Schoeny spoke on the hydrologic and water quality simulation models being developed for the Fox River Study Group by the Illinois State Water Survey. This model will be used to estimate watershed-pollutant loads in this planning process.
 - d. **Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning**-Tim Loftus introduced the work of CMAP as the official regional planning organization for the northeastern Illinois counties of Cook, Dupage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. CMAP provides technical assistance to local governments and private organizations working to develop and implement watershed-based plans. CMAP was also responsible for writing the *2007 Guidance for Developing Watershed Action Plans in Illinois*, a resource for locally-led watershed planning initiatives, which will be the primary guide for the Blackberry Creek planning process. Based on direction and input from the stakeholders, CMAP will compile a watershed-based plan as well as a comprehensive watershed resource inventory which will include the natural, human, and man-made resources in the watersheds.
2. **A Watershed Approach to Planning**-Tim Loftus explained the watershed planning process as a “bottom-up” approach to solving issues of nonpoint-source pollution (pollution that cannot be traced to a single source, like stormwater runoff). While a more regulatory or “top-down” approach has worked well in dealing with point-source pollution (pollution that can be traced to a single source, like a pipe), a more flexible and collaborative (or “bottom-up”) approach is necessary for addressing the ongoing nonpoint-source threat. We hope this process of planning to be a more comprehensive approach to environmental protection, as well as an approach that is grounded in sound science, innovative solutions, and broad public involvement. As well, we hope to take a look at issues like the availability of safe drinking water, ground water overdraft and depletion, and maintenance of abundant water supplies.

3. **Blackberry Creek Watershed**-Hala Ahmed explained the particulars of our project:

In accordance with section 305(b) and 303(d) of The Clean Water Act, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is required to report on the quality of Illinois surface and ground water resources, compiling a list of those waters which are deemed “impaired.” Impaired waters cannot be used for their “designated uses,” which are recognized as beneficial uses of a waterbody. Illinois waters are designated for various uses including, but not limited to, drinking water, aquatic life, and primary contact recreation (e.g. swimming). (More on Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act can be found [here](#). You can also see the 2010 [Integrated Water Quality Report](#).)

The Fox River is divided into 17 segments, 14 of which are listed as “impaired.” These impairments are caused by sedimentation, high levels of total suspended solids, phosphorus, and pH, mercury and PCB, as well as fecal coliform. Possible sources of these pollutants are agricultural and urban runoff, combined sewer overflow, and municipal point-sources.

Blackberry Creek is in full support of the Aquatic Life designated use but in nonsupport for Primary Contact, due to fecal coliform. While the source for this impairment is unknown, runoff from urban storm sewers and from forest/grassland/parkland may have contributed to surface water contamination. The watershed also has a history of severe flooding. Following a major flood event in July 1996, the Blackberry Creek Watershed Resource Committee was formed to develop a watershed management plan which was followed by the 2003 Blackberry Creek Alternative Futures Analysis. These

studies evaluated recommendations for land use and best management practices for stormwater management. More assessment and study is needed in the watershed to determine further actions needed to eliminate impairments, address current physical problems, and inform us on ways to improve water quality.

Some further statistics include:

- a. The Fox River Basin**
 - i. Third-largest tributary to the Illinois River
 - ii. The river runs 185 miles from Waukesha, WI –Ottawa, IL
 - iii. The watershed covers 2,658 sq. miles
 - iv. The watershed touches 11 Illinois counties and contains 11% of Illinois' population.
 - v. 2,300 rivers & tributary streams (IL)

 - b. Blackberry Creek Watershed Description**
 - i. 32 miles long
 - ii. 73 sq. miles
 - iii. Watershed touches Kane & Kendall Counties
 - iv. Aurora, Elburn, Montgomery, North Aurora, Sugar Grove, and Yorkville
 - v. 25,374 population
 - vi. 56% agricultural
- 4. The Watershed Plan**-Hala introduced a tentative timeline for the watershed planning process. She reminded those in attendance that they will form the Stakeholder Committee, responsible for determining the priorities, providing any data they may already have, and making decisions along the way.
- 5. Open Discussion and Questions**-There was discussion about the following:
- How will former Blackberry Creek Watershed Plan (*Alternative Futures Project*) be utilized in this process? Some assessment will be done to see if the previous plan's implementation efforts have been working.
 - A resource inventory will be conducted as one of our first steps, so we can start our planning process with an accurate account of the watershed's attributes.
 - Stakeholders wanted to assure that Ag. contacts have been kept abreast of this planning process. Erin said that she had sent letters to representatives from the Kane and Kendall County Farm Bureau.
 - Stakeholders and Landowners were encouraged to share their "anecdotal data," as it provides invaluable accompaniment to other information gathered about the watershed. As well, any comprehensive plans, maps, reports, or previously-collected data, would be welcome assistance in the development of the watershed plan.
- 6. Next Meeting Announcement**-At the next meeting we will begin determining our goals and objectives as a group. The meeting will take place at the Yorkville/Bristol Sanitary District.
- 7. Meeting Adjournment**-The meeting was adjourned around 12:00 pm.