



**Sustainability Committee**  
**Monday, February 11, 2019**  
**2:00 PM – 3:00 PM**  
**GVMC**

**Minutes**

1. Welcome and Introductions

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|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Tori Graves      | j. Nurya Love Parish |
| b. Carrie Rivette   | k. Jerry Miller      |
| c. Elaine Isely     | l. Wendy Ogilvie     |
| d. Courtney Cromley | m. Aaron Bodbyl-Mast |
| e. Rachel Frantz    | n. Matt Belanger     |
| f. Rachell Nagorsen | o. Kyle Hart         |
| g. Jessie Schulte   | p. Alyson Mabie      |
| h. Dennis Cole      | q. Greg Madura       |
| i. Carlos Calderon  | r. Shany Viars       |

2. Water Trail

- a. Designation status:
- Both MGROW and UGRWA are now designated and listed on the DNR water trail website. LGROW is still working on the full proposal. Ottawa has a plan. We will need some funding to get the plan together to submit to state.
  - Elaine: we are pulling together the results from the Kent and Ionia, Matt is looking to give an update soon and will be focusing on this next month. The Ottawa County report is finished and the Kent and Ionia County reports are coming soon. Matt went through the past work by Natalie, many components exist, just need to be combined to create a cohesive plan. Parts of this can be used for the plan. The WMEAC inventory report will be ready in March 2019.
  - Aaron stated that although the Ottawa County Parks Heritage Water Trail has its own identity, it would make sense to work together with LGROW to create Lower Grand River Water Trail designation. We should include the Potawatomi tribes in the heritage Grand River areas, there was no tribal contact during the heritage water trail process. But they will be actively engaging with tribes during Ottawa County Parks greenway construction.
  - Wendy: Upper and Middle made plans, Wendy asked what it cost to create; Upper Grand paid ~\$10,000 to consultant to get plan together.
  - With WMEAC's existing plan and Ottawa County's existing info, we should determine how much of an effort it will be to create a plan using existing information. What about the 4 miles in downtown Grand Rapids that people cannot paddle? Should we create the plan with plans in place to make that area suitable for a water trail. There is a lot of support from river edge communities.

- vi. What does it mean to be state designated water trail? We can self-designate.
- b. Grand River Expedition (GRE) 2020
  - i. Loretta Crum with MGROW is coordinating a meeting third week of March, 9:30-10:30, location TBD. An agenda will be out before the Quiet Water Symposium (QWS), March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019.
  - ii. Many positions are still open on board for GRE. Regional coordinators will be appointed by Wendy Ogilvie. If anyone is interested in helping with this event, let Wendy or Rachell N. know. The steering committee needs members, as well as a chair and municipality leaders.
  - iii. LGROW, MGROW, and UGRWA will each have a table at the QWS and will be there discussing the Water Trail.
- 3. Sustainable Agriculture
  - a. Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant update
    - i. Jessie brought the 2018 Kent Conservation District (KCD) annual report, five landowners were contacted, 65 acres, pollinator habitat. February 15<sup>th</sup> is the next application deadline, KCD has been going door to door, handing out information. Still under \$100,000. The next lunch and learn is Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at Sparta Hunting and Fishing Club. Cover crops will be presented on including an annual rye grass demonstration.. KCD received funding to hire one farmer to handle communications with other farmers. RCPP panel discussion at the Michigan Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society Seminar, March 6<sup>th</sup> will be focusing more on the economic benefits rather than the water quality.
    - ii. Added two practices, Forest Management Plans and Wildlife Habitat Plans. The practice list has been updated with average installation prices.
    - iii. So far all applications have been in the Rogue River, none in Indian Mill Creek. Engaging the Agricultural community in the Indian Mill Creek watershed has been difficult.
    - iv. Plainsong Farm is applying for funding for brush management, pollinator habitat, and other stuff. This will be a demonstration site available to show other farmers these practices.
    - v. There are a couple big potential projects that would use up a lot of funding;
      - 1. Daylighting stream (Highlands Gold Course, Indian Mill Creek Watershed)
      - 2. Wetland restoration (headwaters Rogue)
  - b. Local Farms, Local Food
    - i. Celebration event schedule April 24<sup>th</sup> 6-8pm at the Bluff Banquet Center on 28<sup>th</sup> St. Tickets are \$25, more information coming soon, register on eventbrite. Protecting Farmland in Kent County, Kent County is the State's largest producers of apples. We need information and outreach to the citizens of Kent County about the importance of farmland. This will raise money to potentially match funds to protect lands.
    - ii. This will go to the public a public millage to protect farmland.
    - iii. Annual Meeting March 13 FREE food.

4. Natural Connections

a. Rachel and Courtney gave an update on the natural connections map.

i. Comments:

1. Fema information for hazards and steep slopes
2. Move plan for the future before what is natural connections
3. Take a look at different color greens, add outlines?
4. Web soil survey add to prime farm layer

b. Lower Grand River Watershed Resiliency Report

i. With SAW funding, we contracted with Alyson Mabie, who is working on watershed resiliency report. We have recently made some good connections with other groups who are doing this, for support. We are hoping to have a subwatershed focused recommendations to become more resilient and deal with higher temperatures and increased rainfall. More action oriented as opposed to what is happening (doom). This will provide documented support to subwatershed groups to implement actions and leverage funding.

5. Adjourn

**2019 Meeting Schedule:**

April 1, 2019

June 3, 2019

August 5, 2019

October 7, 2019

December 2, 2019