



Subwatershed Committee

Tuesday, September 19, 2019 | 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Wilcox Park

100 Youell Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions – Members present:
 - a. Ben Jordan, chair, Ottawa Conservation District/Bass River/Deer Creek/Sand Creek
 - b. Rachell Nagorsen, City of Walker/Indian Mill Creek
 - c. Rachel Frantz, LGROW
 - d. Mary Lewandoski, Coldwater Creek Community
 - e. Deanna Geelhoed, Plaster Creek Stewards (PCS)
 - f. Carrie Rivette, City of Grand Rapids
 - g. Callie Melton, Crockery Creek
 - h. Gretchen Zuiderveen, Rogue River Watershed Partners (RRWP)
 - i. Gail Heffner, Plaster Creek Stewards (PCS)
 - j. Cara Decker, LGROW
 - k. Carlos Calderon, LGROW
 - l. Aaron Vis, Friends of Buck Creek/City of Wyoming
 - m. Josh Arnold, LGROW
 - n. Eileen Boekestein, LGROW
 - o. Brenda Perry, Lamberton Creek
 - p. Gerry Konning, Rush Creek
 - q. Erv Gambee, Thornapple River Watershed Council (TRWC)
 - r. John Simmons, Flat River Watershed Council (FRWC)
2. Committee Goals:
 - a. To support and coordinate with all existing subwatershed groups in the Lower Grand River Watershed by sharing ideas and resources.
 - b. To improve public awareness, increase membership and activity and provide support for leadership in subwatershed groups.
 - c. To improve water quality in all tributaries of the Lower Grand River by implementing best management practices identified in the LGR Watershed Management Plan and influence real long term changes in land use and agricultural practices.
 - i. Someone asked if there will be grant money available to attain these goals. We will support and facilitate grant opportunities, like in the monthly subwatershed email where we identify upcoming grant opportunities, but will not necessarily apply for grants as a committee.
3. Watershed Jamboree



- a. Rachel discussed the event starting after the meeting and encouraged all subwatershed groups to visit other subwatershed group's booths to discuss activities and look for partnership opportunities.
4. Upcoming Grant Applications/Partnerships
 - a. John shared a success story from last year's meeting prior to the Jamboree. He was able to get resources from everyone's booths and took a lot of notes, which we brought back to the Flat River Watershed Council (FRWC). At the April FRWC meeting he presented all the watersheds so the board could see what is going on throughout the Lower Grand River Watershed. He said it was a great experience that has helped them.
 - b. Some grants that are always available include small grants from home improvement stores like Home Depot and Lowes which are usually good for supplies.
 - c. American Rivers offers free bags and gloves for river cleanups and can be requested at any time.
 - d. Walmart offers community fund grants
 - e. Tree planting mini grants from Friends of GR Parks, only good in the City of Grand Rapids.
 - f. Other grants are on a rotating schedule and usually release RFPs on a regular basis such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Great Lakes Fishery Trust – Road Stream Crossing Grants and 319 (EGLE) grants. When they are announced, Rachel will include the RFPs in the next monthly subwatershed email.
 - g. Ben discussed creating a document that includes rotating grants that we are currently aware of and the general timing they usually run on to disperse to all subwatershed committee members.
 - h. Gail shared other grants including the EPA Urban Waters Small grants, NOAA B-wet and other teacher focused grants. She also discussed the National Wildlife Federation Sacred Grounds Grant that Plaster Creek Stewards recently received to work on rainscaping at houses of worship in the Plaster Creek Watershed.
5. Other Discussion
 - a. Subwatershed Updates
 - i. Coldbrook Creek – Mary shared that the Coldbrook Creek Community group will have their second meeting October 13th at Coit Creative Academy. They also just put out a newsletter and now have twenty to thirty people in their group. In addition the group planted native tree species at Highland park last spring.
 - ii. Grand Rapids/Indian Mill Creek – The daylighting project at the old Highlands Golf Course is happening soon with CLWM designing this winter. The Richmond Park daylighting project is ongoing and almost complete.
 - iii. Plaster Creek – Plaster Creek Stewards have completed the Shadyside Park floodplain restoration project where they planted over 100,000 plugs and spent about \$600,000.



- iv. LGROW – have been applying for grants, recently applied for two GLRI grants for installing practices on school properties, waiting for grant award announcement.
- v. Rogue River – the RRWP recently made a new banner for events and sent out 2,000 mailers about upcoming programming. They are working on making more people aware of the group. This week they are hosting a Tuesday Talk about attracting pollinators with plants. They held a green infrastructure presentation with Dennis Cold and Kelly Goward recently. In addition Jake Lemon from Trout Unlimited/STROUD installed real time water quality monitors on the river.
- vi. Crockery Creek – Callie told the committee about this new group being formed in the Crockery Creek watershed. Their first meeting will be held October 29th at 6:30 at Cellar Brewery in Sparta. They are trying to recruit a group to start working on issues in the area and are hoping to find grant funds for drainage problems in and around Crockery Lake and community activities. Callie mentioned that sedimentation issues are present and there is an existing TMDL for *E. coli* in the watershed.
- vii. Bass River/Deer Creek – There have been 15 septic system replacements, 4,000 acres of cover crops planned, 300 acres flown on this week in high priority areas near the river.
- viii. Flat River – The FRWC is a 501c3 non-profit and have a Facebook page, website, and put out a biannual newsletter which is put into city halls and libraries. They have about 10 meetings a year. They also held a spring cleanup and do macroinvertebrate testing at three sites twice a year. At meetings they often have speakers come in. At the October meeting it is planned to have someone from the DNR come to discuss clams, invasive species, and native eels. There is a lot of fishing and hiking. They would like to add kayak launches to connect metro areas. The Montcalm Conservation District received a 319 grant to do projects over the next 3 years.
- ix. Buck Creek – There was a cleanup in August which went well. There was also a STROUD water quality monitor installed with live data on the website. As well as NOAA data. Buck Creek is currently undergoing a Watershed Management Plan (WMP) update.
- x. Rush Creek – Also held a cleanup and hosted a Sacred Grounds Workshop with National Wildlife Federation and LGROW. Trinity CRC had their own site assessment and installed a rain garden that infiltrates 6,000 gallons from the parking lot and is performing well. They will also be doing some macroinvertebrate sampling at 5 sections of the creek October 5th 9am – 2pm.
- xi. Lambertson Creek – There are teachers at KISD who are involved in stream monitoring and are involving their students and looking for grants.



- xii. Thornapple River – The TRWC is holding their annual cleanup Saturday September 21st in three sections of the river and received a grant to repair septic systems and install cover crops in Eaton and Barry counties.
 - b. Next Meeting: Grants, Education & Outreach Materials Inventory
- 6. Adjourn
 - a. Next Meeting: January – will send doodle poll to determine date. If you are interested in hosting the meeting in your watershed please contact Rachel Frantz.