



Sustainability Committee
Monday, May 10, 2021
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Minutes

Zoom

1. Attendees:

Dan Taber	Greg Madura
Wendy Ogilvie	Ari Henson
Rachell Nagorsen	Jillian Ashton
Jessie Schulte	Senci Pace-Monasterski
Carrie Rivette	Elaine Sterrett Isely
Jerry Miller	Cliff Walls

2. Dan Taber reviewed the Goals of the Committee and asked if any revisions were needed.
- Goal #1 - Assist partners in promoting sustainable agricultural best management practices and preserving high quality farmland.
 - This Goal is currently being met through conversations and updates on the RCPP project in Indian Mill and Rogue River Watersheds.
 - Goal #2 - Provide information and technical assistance on green stormwater infrastructure and low impact development practices through education and demonstration projects.
 - This goal has not been directly included in the work of this committee. Wendy mentioned that the Technical Committee does work on the standards for implementing green infrastructure and the SWOrd Committee addresses it as well. The Committee members agreed that we could drop this goal from this Committee charge but keep it in mind as we are discussing the next goal related to the natural Connections Map.
 - Goal #3 - Update information and implement preservation and conservation practices illustrated in the Natural Connections Map.
 - The update of the Natural Connections Map is being conducted through the work of the Watershed Resilience Plan. The link to the map is here: <https://www.lgrow.org/green-infrastructure> (scroll down to view Story Map). Wendy explained that the Resilience Plan will be creating action plans for each subwatershed to be more resilient and that work will be to update the map with areas which should be preserved or protected.
 - Goal #4 - Develop a nationally recognized Water Trail for the Grand River.
 - The Committee through this was an important project on which to focus our efforts and will continue to help with providing input and assistance in completing the plan.
3. Review connection to Strategic Plan (attached). Wendy reviewed LGROW's Strategic Plan in terms of how this Committee's work fits within the plan and in meeting the overall goals. Rachell reminded the Committee that Goal #1 was in place before the RCPP funding was awarded. Discussion ensued about how to continue partnerships to address agricultural

conservation practices after the RCPP and what we need to put in place to promote sustainability. Jessie explained that they have developed a stronger relationship with the Kent County Drain Office. She also mentioned that coordinating some work with the Farm Bureau's environmental education committee might be beneficial. Elaine mentioned that WMEAC is working on a project that will define some of the economic drivers that help promote sustainability, and that some of that work will include agricultural issues. Jerry asked if LGROW had a policy statement on DEI. Wendy responded that this past year the board and staff worked to incorporate DEI principles into all aspects of the Strategic Plan and included statements in LGROW's values as part of its Guiding Principles.

4. RCPP Project Updates

- a. Jessie stated that NRCS and District staff are bus finalizing the applications and contracts for the new sign up and others as the deadline for the last sign up of 2021 approaches. Wendy will reach out to Katie to ensure that all approved sites for BMPs have been shared so they can be evaluated for their water quality benefits so as to add stream monitoring sites if appropriate.
- b. Jessie promoted the upcoming field day on June 22 to showcase a grassed waterway and other practices and services the District provides. Partners will also be participating in a tree planting effort at Kent City High School on May 15.
- c. Dan asked what the role of the Committee could be and Jessie responded that anyone is welcome to attend the monthly meetings to talk about the RCPP 319 and Environmental Education grants and help promote the availability of funding for these practices.

5. Water Trail

- a. Dan pointed out the links to the Middle and Upper Grand River Water Trail Development Plans:
 - i. Middle: <https://mitcrpc.app.box.com/v/MGRWTDevelopmentPlan>
 - ii. Upper: <https://www.co.jackson.mi.us/DocumentCenter/View/6067/Upper-Grand-River-Water-Trail-Development-Plan?bidId=>
- b. Wendy explained that with the help of LGROW's interns this summer, the Google map will be completed and the drafts of the sections for the Lower Grand's Plan.
- c. Wendy spoke about the mapping project about to get underway with [Terrain 360](#). This would pick up on the work from the Upper and Middle Grand, starting at the Lyon's Dam all the way to Grand Haven. Wendy will be discussing the mapping with Ottawa County to gauge their interest. Cliff talked about how they have used the mapping to help new paddlers get a sense of the river. They have had over 20,000 views on their website. Elaine stated that this would be a good resource to help know where access sites are and what side of the river to paddle to be able to get to the access site. This should also be incorporated into the Water Trial Development Plan, where issues about wind and weather can also be described. Wendy asked for any thoughts about potential funding to offset the costs and Eline suggested the Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Cliff stated that the most challenging part of the plan was to get the communities along the river more engaged.
- d. Dan reminded Committee members to review the plan and think about how they can help

6. Watershed Resilience

- a. Wendy reviewed the results form the trial run of the community mapping exercise in the Rogue River during an Earth Day event. River Network is helping to develop these

tools to engage the community in voicing their concerns and observation of the impacts of changing weather patterns.

- b. Wendy commented that a meeting with PinPoint has been set for Wednesday to develop a crowdsourcing tool to collect that data.
7. Wendy reminded everyone about the Grand River Spring Forum, from June 10-20. Registration is open and everyone is encouraged to sign up for activities.
8. Meeting was adjourned at 2:31 pm. Dan review the schedule for the upcoming meetings:
 - a. July 12
 - b. Sept 13
 - c. Nov 8