

Regional Planning Stormwater Advisory and Educational Subcommittee Annual Meeting

Date: November 4, 2021

Location: Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster, OH

Attendance: **Jonathan Ferbrache** (Fairfield SWCD), **Chad Lucht** (Fairfield SWCD), **James Mako** (Regional Planning), **Josh Troyer** (Fairfield SWCD), **Jeff Austin** (Liberty Township), **David Hague** (Coyote Run), **Glen Hacker** (City of Pickerington), **Don Rector** (City of Pickerington), **Eric McCrady** (Fairfield County Engineers Office), **Todd May** (Fairfield County Engineers Office), **Greg Butcher** (City of Pickerington), **Greg Sanders** (Ohio EPA), **Dick Miller** (City of Canal Winchester), **Austin Lynch** (City of Canal Winchester), **Tony Vogel** (Fairfield County Utilities), **Nathan Ralph** (Franklin County Public Health), **Nikki Drake** (Fairfield SWCD), **Steven Wellstead** (City of Lancaster), **Denise Crews** (City of Lancaster), **Tommy Springer** (Fairfield SWCD)

Via teleconference: **Pete Thomas** (Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow), **Ed Drobin** (Violet Township), **Amanda Wolin** (Village of Lithopolis), **Marshall Cooper** (Ohio EPA), **Valerie Klingman** (City of Pickerington)

Fairfield Department of Health was not represented at this meeting

Meeting called to order at 2:01 p.m. by subcommittee chair, Jonathan Ferbrache. Jonathan reviewed the meeting agenda, gave a brief description of the responsibilities of the subcommittee, and outlined subcommittee voting rights.

Voting rights were described as follows:

Violet Township- 2 members (Chad Lucht is their designee when one is not present)

Liberty Township- 1 member

City of Pickerington- 2 members

City of Lancaster- 2 members

Soil and Water Conservation District- 1 member

County Utilities- 1 member

County Engineer- 1 member

Village of Lithopolis- 1 member

City of Canal Winchester- 1 member

Minutes from the meeting held on October 20, 2020, were reviewed. Amanda Wolin made a motion to approve the minutes. Glen Hacker seconded. Vote was taken. All in favor. Motion passed.

Jonathan opened the floor to public comments. No members of the public attended the meeting; however, Jonathan presented public comment (see attached Exhibit "A") that was received in advance of the meeting via email from Kathy Jerbic, a resident of Violet Township.

Jonathan requested an update from Marshall Cooper on the Ohio EPA MS4 Permit and Construction General Permit as they relate to Fairfield County and adjacent communities.

Ms. Cooper gave an update to the MS4 Permit renewal. The permit renewal was issued April 21, 2021. All Notices of Intent (NOIs) and annual reports will now be submitted to Ohio EPA digitally. Updated Stormwater Management Plans (SWMPs) are required to be submitted within one year of the new permit's issuance. Comprehensive stormwater mapping is now required for the location and type of all post-construction BMPs within jurisdiction. Updates to any ordinances are also required within one year of the new permit's issuance. It is recommended that checklists be used for inspections and plan reviews and that all correspondence is being documented. Enforcement protocol is also required, including enforcement escalation plan/policy. Ms. Cooper provided a brief example of an enforcement escalation scenario. Ms. Cooper also outlined new Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements included in the new permit as it relates to each of the six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) in the permit.

The MCM requirements are as follows:

MCMs #1&2: Public Outreach & Education and Public Participation & Involvement

- Target each TMDL pollutant identified in Appendix A at least once to satisfy the minimum of 5 stormwater themes or messages over your permit term. Marshall explained that there is only one TMDL pollutant listed for which the permittees attending this meeting are responsible: E. coli.

MCM #3: Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination

- Requirement to notify Ohio EPA of high priority illicit discharges within 24 hours. Examples of high priority discharges include sanitary sewer cross-connections, leaking/broken sanitary lines actively contributing sewage to the MS4, etc. A form is available to report these types of discharges.
- For communities listing TMDLs of phosphorus, nitrogen, ammonia, E. coli, bacteria, or dissolved oxygen and organic enrichment, these communities are required to provide an annual employee training on illicit discharge detection and elimination targeting the TMDL pollutant listed in the community.

MCM #4: Construction Site Runoff Control

- Requirement to increase inspection frequency for sites with specific compliance issues to once every fourteen days. Qualifying compliance issues include commencing construction without an approved SWPPP, failure to install sediment basin(s), failure to implement any sediment and erosion controls on-site, or dewatering activities resulting in a turbid discharge.

MCM #5: Post-Construction Stormwater Program

- Communities that have TSS, sediment, siltation, or nutrient TMDLs are required to provide educational opportunities highlighting Table 4b (Construction General Permit)/Green Infrastructure practices, including one of the following types of projects: retrofit peak discharge stormwater practice during the permit term, restore a channelized stream, require Table 4b practices and/or green infrastructure practices, or install a Table 4b practice to treat an acre or more of impervious surface that was developed before 2003.

MCM #6: Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping

- Any maintenance projects completed in the MS4 (ditching included), ensure those areas are seeded according to the timeframes outlined in the Construction General Permit.
- Salt storage needs to be covered, and brine tanks need to have bollards and/or secondary containment protection.
- For communities with TMDLs listing TSS, nutrients, E. coli, bacteria, metals, DO, or organic enrichment, one of the following needs to be implemented: street sweeping program, catch basin cleaning program, or a leaf/yard waste disposal program.
- Perform and document inspections for facilities that require stormwater pollution prevention plans but not industrial stormwater permits.

The floor was opened for questions for Ms. Cooper. Denise Crews inquired about E. coli issues relating to combined sewer overflow (CSO), which is not covered under the MS4 permit. Ms. Cooper responded by stating that E. coli only pertains to those portions of the storm sewer that have been separated from the sanitary sewer system. Greg Sanders reiterated that MS4 regulations only pertain to separate storm sewer system and recommended seeking clarification from John Matthews with Ohio EPA.

Jonathan mentioned issues with construction sequencing on construction sites, particularly as it relates to the installation of sediment basins. Greg Sanders and Jonathan emphasized the need to install sediment basins early in the construction sequence. Mr. Sanders further emphasized the importance of discussing this requirement during the preconstruction meeting and escalating enforcement in non-compliance scenarios.

Jonathan asked James Mako to give an update on Regional Planning Commission's efforts to update the county subdivision regulations. Mr. Mako mentioned efforts to create design manuals for technical aspects of the regulations and associated public review of these documents. The design manuals are still in process and will need to be finalized before public comment hearings can be scheduled. Jonathan added that updates to the county subdivision regulations coincide and overlap in part with updates being implemented by individual MS4 communities. The target timeframe for completion of these updates remains April/May 2022.

Jonathan initiated a discussion by providing a summary of ongoing and future efforts to monitor water quality in the Sycamore Creek watershed, including precipitation monitoring lead by Fairfield SWCD. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) reached out to county partners (EMA, City of Lancaster) to discuss low-cost stream gauge systems. USGS has indicated a willingness to partner with Fairfield County communities to install monitoring equipment as part of a community monitoring program. Jonathan is proposing to MS4 partners in Violet Twp, Fairfield County, and City of Pickerington to include some portion of the startup cost for stream monitoring in the next 5-year stormwater permit to support the USGS gauging program and continue precipitation monitoring efforts into the future. Jonathan also mentioned that discussions have been had with Fairfield County Parks about developing a macroinvertebrate monitoring program at Sycamore Creek watershed facilities (Coyote Run, Zeller Park in southern Violet Twp, etc.) to better understand what lives in the streams and engage community members. Additional conversations have occurred with local wastewater treatment operators Glen

Hacker (City of Pickerington) and Tony Vogle (Fairfield County Utilities) about integrating routine wastewater monitoring efforts/data into a larger monitoring effort.

Greg Butcher asked Jonathan to clarify the focus of the proposed monitoring efforts. Jonathan reiterated goals to collect precipitation and macroinvertebrate data, both of which can be collected in a relatively cost-effective way and provide insight into localized weather patterns and overall stream health. Mr. Butcher also asked about any plans to address dams (logjams) in the Sycamore Creek watershed. Jonathan agreed that stream debris is a concern and conversations around addressing logjams should be included in the 5-year plan for the watershed.

Jonathan mentioned that a public notice has been issued by the Natural Resources Conservation Service for dam rehabilitation of Hunters Run Conservancy District Dam #9 (Rockmill) and Dam #4 (Stonewall Cemetery Road). Jonathan asked partners to help spread awareness of this project. Jonathan also mentioned last year's efforts between the Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District and the Fairfield County Department of Health to study HSTS aerator systems that are tributary to Greenfield Lake, Rock Mill Lake, and Buckeye Lake. The results of the study indicate a substantial percentage of non-compliant aerators (~25-30%); however, most failing systems were brought into compliance within one year of initial assessment.

Jonathan highlighted efforts by the Walnut Township trustees and partners to carry out multiple stormwater/drainage projects between the South Fork Licking River and the toe of the Buckeye Lake dam, as well as efforts to improve drainage in Fairfield Beach. Jonathan also highlighted efforts by the City of Pickerington to organize a successful Earth Day stream cleanup and litter pickup event benefiting Walnut Creek, Sycamore Creek, and Blacklick Creek. Jonathan also commended Liberty Township via Basil Fire for executing a successful litter cleanup event benefiting Poplar Creek.

Jonathan initiated a roundtable discussion. James Mako mentioned that there have been minimal revisions recently to the FEMA flood hazard panels and the current workload has been keeping RPC very busy. Jonathan mentioned the overlap among FSWCD and local zoning officials concerning zoning and housing permits, and FSWCD encourages zoning officials to refer to the best available floodplain data to determine whether floodplain permits should be issued for particular land uses and improvements.

David Hague asked whether updated cost estimates are available for the proposed Sycamore Creek monitoring efforts. Jonathan stated that once USGS has completed their initial evaluation of potential gauging sites between Tollgate Road and Zeller Park, and after additional financial support has been factored in, an updated cost estimate will be circulated to the MS4 partners. Mr. Hague also wanted to acknowledge the City of Pickerington's efforts for their litter pickup event held in April.

Glen Hacker highlighted the stream cleanup event held by the City of Pickerington.

Todd May mentioned that water quality concerns regarding retention/detention basins in subdivisions are largely related to geese.

Don Rector echoed previous comments regarding the City of Pickerington's litter pickup and stream cleanup event that was held on April 22, 2021. Mr. Rector also acknowledged the work of city crews to help control litter on a daily basis. Mr. Rector mentioned efforts by the city to work collaboratively with Ohio EPA to provide expertise and make recommendations on several stormwater basins throughout the city.

Greg Butcher added to Mr. Rector's comments by further describing the city's desire to do the right thing as motivation behind the advent of the annual litter pickup and stream cleanup event. Mr. Butcher mentioned the outstanding level of participation among city employees and the general public, and that the removal of 1000s of pounds of trash and litter is the primary goal of that event. Mr. Butcher also mentioned the city's efforts to reduce nuisance geese populations.

Greg Sanders mentioned that with the tremendous growth that central Ohio is experiencing, Ohio EPA has received an enormous number of complaints and that the number of angry complainants is on the rise. Mr. Sanders also reinforced the importance for communities to follow enforcement plans in response to non-compliance scenarios.

Austin Lynch summarized the City of Canal Winchester's annual macroinvertebrate stream sample, reporting that all four sampling locations in the city achieved an "excellent" rating.

Dick Miller emphasized the role of agriculture-related sediment in the overall impairment of streams in Ohio.

Tony Vogel stated that Fairfield County Utilities is planning to install a stream gauge on Blacklick Creek in early December 2021. The gauge will contribute data to the USGS stream gauge network.

Nathan Ralph highlighted efforts by Franklin County Public Health in assisting the Franklin County Engineers Office in locating HSTS related to three petition ditches in Franklin County. Mr. Ralph also mentioned the Department of Health's partnership with Franklin SWCD in creating and maintaining a database of HSTS throughout the county.

Nikki Drake gave an update on Fairfield SWCD's efforts to hire an Urban/Resource Technician in 2022. Ms. Drake also gave a brief description of the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow (CoCoRaHS) Network and ongoing citizen science monitoring efforts coordinated by Carrie Brown with the OSU Extension office.

Denise Crews reported that she will be moving into an environmental engineer position with the City of Lancaster on January 1, 2022, and that her stormwater management responsibilities will transfer to Steven Wellstead. Ms. Crews also mentioned that the City of Lancaster now has an active USGS stream gauge. The gauge is installed on S. Columbus Street. The City of Lancaster was also awarded funding for a Fetter's Run stream restoration project. Funding will be available starting in 2023.

Tommy Springer outlined Fairfield SWCD's plans to establish a volunteer macroinvertebrate monitoring program based on the ODNR Scenic Rivers data collection protocol. Mr. Springer asked representatives from the City of Canal Winchester to lend any insights from their 14 years of macro monitoring to help launch this program.

Jonathan highlighted efforts to collect data related to public perception of urban pollutants through various surveys published on the Web and social media.

Jonathan initiated the process for electing Subcommittee Chair and Vice-Chair by opening up the floor to nominations. Greg Butcher nominated Glen Hacker for Vice Chair. Chad Lucht seconded. Mr. Hacker indicated a willingness to accept the nomination. A vote was taken. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chad Lucht nominated Jonathan Ferbrache for Chair. Ed Drobina seconded. Mr. Ferbrache indicated a willingness to accept the nomination. A vote was taken. All in favor. Motion passed.

Jonathan motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Exhibit A

I wholeheartedly support the proposal for the Low-Cost Alert System for Sycamore Creek. In the last five years, the creek branch that flows across my property experienced significant flooding from extreme storm events. Our bridge deck is 14 feet above the stream bottom and storm waters surged to just a foot below the deck. Flooding encompassed the first bench and approached the second bench of the waterway nearing a 500-year flood mark. Collection of on-site data is critical for future planning efforts by both the township and County. In the spirit of a public-private effort, I commit to providing \$500 this year for the operation and maintenance of these sites and also \$500 next year. I will also volunteer, as a private citizen, to monitor one of these sites.

Please give serious consideration to a watershed study for Sycamore Creek. Violet Township has undergone tremendous development and baseline studies of the existing environment can aid future decision-making as part of an updated Land Use/Comprehensive Plan currently in progress. Various neighborhoods and individual residents are experiencing repeated flooding from storm events perhaps made worse by adjacent developments over the last 10 -15 years. Such sites should be identified as well as potential corrective/mitigation measures.

Lastly, what opportunities exist for studies establishing the connections between surface water and ground water? This is also important for decisions on future development to know the status of the aquifers and what they can and cannot support.

Cathy Jerbic

Member, Citizens Steering Committee, Violet Township Comprehensive Plan Update

Toll Gate Road, Pickerington