

Dix River Watershed Council
June 12, 2007

Meeting Notes

Participants: Malissa McAlister, Josh Morgan, David Jewett, Heath Stone, Preston Miles, Tony White, Lee Colten, Jim Roe, Brooke Shireman, Roger Fisher, Andrea Zimmer, Bill Payne

After a welcome and introductions, participants mentioned several watershed-related activities that had occurred since the last Council meeting.

- Several area residents participating in Kentucky River Watershed Watch are conducting focused pathogen (E coli) sampling at 10 sampling sites throughout Herrington Lake. Five individual samples will be taken from the 10 sites between June 30th and July 28th.
- The CREEC (Clark's Run Environmental and Educational Corp.) organization submitted two grant applications for projects to extend the existing one-mile recreational trail beside Clark's Run.
- The bacterial source tracking project was awarded to Third Rock Consulting out of Lexington (the contract is still being processed and yet to be signed, as of this date). This project will employ a variety of sampling methods to better determine the sources of exceptionally high e-coli values found in particular streams in the Dix River watershed. Additional sampling sites will be tested for E coli values and marker identification will be used to assess whether the sources are mainly domestic animals, wildlife or humans. (Source Molecular, which is based in Florida, will be Third Rock's subcontractor for this testing.) Another aspect of the project will be to examine Boyle and Lincoln County Health Department records of existing on-site wastewater treatment systems in order to better understand human sources of the contamination problem. Most of this source tracking effort will take place in the Hanging Fork subwatershed of the Dix, but some sites are also in the Ball's Branch tributary of Clark's Run. These particular sites are being further assessed since they produced the most consistently high E coli findings during the 2006-07 intensive sampling period.
- The schedule for completion of the pollutant TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) reports is as follows:
 - Third Rock Consulting completes Clark's Run TMDL for nutrients by Winter 2007.
 - Kentucky Division of Water staff complete pathogen TMDLs for Hanging Fork and Clark's Run by 2008.
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency completes nutrient TMDL on Herrington Lake by 2008
- Funding is available to assist communities in the Dix River Watershed with Low-Impact Development Techniques. This information and technical assistance would be particularly helpful for local planning offices, engineers and other local officials, as well as developers and interested local citizen groups.
- The \$600,000 grant proposal to the USEPA for implementation of stormwater management measures in the City of Danville was not awarded. All should keep their eyes open for other funding opportunities where the application could be re-submitted.

Watershed Planning (continued)

Council members reviewed additions to the Watershed Plan that were based on discussion during the previous meeting. These sections of the plan covered “Focus Areas for Watershed Protection” and “Watershed Activities” intended to improve or protect water quality. After reviewing these topics for corrections or additions, the group discussed the topics of high growth areas and threatened areas in the watershed. The following sections summarize this discussion.

What areas of the Dix River Watershed are expected to have the highest growth in the future?

- Northern Garrard County continues to experience higher growth as people move there to commute to jobs in towns north of the county, such as Nicholasville, Lexington, Georgetown, and Versailles. This portion of the county is also likely to experience high growth due to the widening of US Highway 27 and the construction of a US27/KY34 connector.
- Lincoln County is experiencing high growth along the US 127 Highway corridor, especially around the towns of Junction City, Moreland and Hustonville.

What waterways are perceived as threatened due to rapid development, intensive agriculture, industrial plants, or other land uses?

- McKecknie Creek and Tanyard Branch in northern Garrard County will be relocated during the widening of US27 and the construction of the US27/KY34 connector. (NOTE: This project may result in the availability of “in-lieu” restoration fees to conduct stream restoration work in the watershed.)
- Mock’s Creek and Spears Creek are likely to experience development pressures from the extension of sewer lines to these areas. (southward from Mercer County along US127 and northward along KY33 from Danville to Burgin)
- Areas of western Lincoln County along US127 could be threatened by extensive residential development, and could likely be improved by the addition of a sewer line from Hustonville northward.
- Marinas on Herrington Lake are expanding, and significant home development is occurring on the lake in Garrard County. Thus, the lake will need improved protection from homeowner, boat and marina pollutant sources.

Sampling Data

Lee Colten, from the Kentucky Division of Water, announced that they have received all raw water quality sampling results from Third Rock, expect for those from the Herrington Lake sites. The quality analysis of this data is still being conducted, so none of the results are considered final yet. These results include four types of analysis; those of field data, field observations, habitat assessments and lab results.

Lee presented a proposed format for future distribution of all data to the Dix River Watershed Council. This spreadsheet included the sampling parameter, the sampling date range, the number of samples taken, the minimum, median and maximum detection levels, the number of samples exceeding a water quality benchmark, and the numerical value of this benchmark or water quality standard. In general, council members agreed that the format would prove helpful in assessing the data results.

Lee also presented three other data reporting tools. These included:

- graphs of the sampling results over time (for orthophosphate, E coli, chlorophyll a, % dissolved oxygen and nitrate-nitrogen);
- maps providing a geographic analysis of the same 5 parameters; and
- habitat assessment forms which were completed at each site at the beginning and end of the sampling year.

The maps will be created for the four separate areas of Hanging Fork, Clark's Run, Herrington Lake, and the remainder of the Dix River Watershed. Council members suggested an improvement to the maps would be using colors instead of dot size to illustrate sites with greater pollutant concentrations. The larger dots obscure sections of the maps and make them difficult to read. Another suggestion was using larger, transparent circles to flag these high pollutant sites.

Lee suggested that council members read through the sample watershed plan (from the Little Wildcat Creek Watershed in Indiana) that was previously provided to the group. This plan may provide insights as to how data was incorporated into the watershed plan format. Another example would be the Watershed Plan developed for the Corbin City Reservoir by Third Rock Consulting. Brooke Shireman from the Ky. Division of Water agreed to distribute this plan to the Dix Council. She said that they incorporated a lot of pie charts summarizing the data, as well as graphs illustrating low, middle, and high habitat scoring results.

Other

Concern was expressed that attendance has dropped at the last few council meetings. Better representation from local officials would be very helpful in developing a comprehensive, effective watershed plan. For example, input is needed from local planning, engineering and other technical staff, county judge-executives and magistrates, and the county health departments and NRCS (Natural Resources and Conservation Service) offices. Specific suggestions were also made to include Shawn Moore, a Mercer County planner, and the Mercer County Sanitation District Board.

After some discussion, it was decided that it would be helpful to send a letter updating the county Judge-Executives on the Watershed Council's activities and requesting suggested participants. Once the data assessment phase of the watershed planning process has progressed, presentations to the county fiscal courts could also encourage participation from local governments. County Judge-Executives could be requested for attendance of meetings during which local buy-in will be needed to pursue recommended watershed management activities.

Next Meeting

The next Dix River Watershed Council meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 11th at 6:00 p.m. at the Danville City Hall.