



Lost Nation-New Landing
River Conservancy District of IL
205 Cuyahoga Drive, Suite A
Dixon, IL 61021



TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Attendees:

Steve Larry – President, LNNLRCD

Karen Rivera –Region 1 Streams Biologist, IDNR

Aaron Seim – District Conservationist, Lee County NRCS

Bob Vogl – President, PPSOC and RRRRAEP

Frank Ostling – Ogle County District Wildlife Biologist, IDNR

Mike Reibel – Ogle County Planning and Zoning

Sonja Vogl - VP., PPSOC and RRRRAEP

Sharon Hartzold – Resource Conservationist, NRCS

Rebecca Breckenfelder – Administrative Manager, LNNLRCD

Rebecca Olson – TAC Group Facilitator

David Meisenheimer – Soil Conserv. Tech, Ogle County NRCS

Dan Pierce – Soil Conserv. Tech, Ogle County NRCS

Marty McManus – IL Dept of Agriculture

I. Introductions - Dan Pierce – On April 1, the Clear Creek Watershed Planning Committee, of which there are about 12 members, met for the first time. The Clear Creek watershed consists of 10,000 acres that drains into Lost Lake. The guests here today have been invited to participate in a technical advisory committee that would provide the skill and knowledge that the Watershed Planning Committee (WPC) might need if they came up with resource concerns like excessive erosion, invasive species and lack of wildlife. It usually takes 1-2 years for a group to come up with a watershed plan, however, the group here that the Lost Nation- New Landing RCD (LNNLRCD) is a part of is more aggressive than others. The reason that the NRCS strives for a watershed plan is because as money gets tighter for special projects and cost sharing on projects in the watershed, the different agencies want groups with an organized plan. Sharon Hartzold is an employee of the NRCS and covers 19 counties as a resource conservation planner and has been involved in this type of group before.

II. How did we get here? - Steve Larry – In the past year or so that Steve has been a part of first the RCD's Lake Management Committee (LMC) and then as an RCD board member, he has looked at what the RCD is trying to do in terms of preserving the lake and would like to see them become proactive vs. reactive in their preservation efforts. They participate in a variety of programs such as wildlife management, lake stocking, VLMP, maintaining their properties and facilities, periodic dredging, the installation of a silt basin on Clear Creek, and maintaining docks. A couple years ago they hired Joe Rush as a lake manager and he has provided them with a lot of information from various studies. Last year they hired Rebecca as a grant manager and now as a watershed planning coordinator. They have another creek that empties into the lake, Babbling Brook, that doesn't have a silt basin and they are looking at building a silt basin on that creek. The RCD realized that the lake affects everything downstream as well and so implemented a Phosphorus Free Community program. The shorelines of the lake itself need to be stabilized and so this year the RCD will offer a shoreline stabilization rebate program to private property owners around the lake to have the RCD fund half of their stabilization efforts up to a certain amount. They developed an SOP to help in doing this. They wanted to think beyond the lake and so they

contacted other stakeholders in the watershed and formed the WPC. The RCD is paying for the services of Rebecca Olson and Joe Rush and they have the Lake Court Center available as a meeting place. Steve will not be a full time member of the TAC, rather he is a full time member of the WPC. They got to this point after several meetings with the NRCS. Rebecca added that they have a grant that they wrote for 319 funds from the IEPA and in that grant they asked for watershed planning money that can be used to hire other consultants to gather information that they don't have or putting together a plan and going through the nine steps of watershed planning.

III. Why is watershed planning is important and what are the incentives for watershed planning? – Dave

Meisenheimer, NRCS – Dave presented a slide show which explained the Nine Step, 3 Phase Process of watershed planning. The planning committee will be identifying resource concerns within the watershed and they have a meeting the 22nd of June to do that. Then the TAC will have another meeting to review that and pool their resources to help them with their resource concerns, with the ultimate goal being a documented watershed plan to address them. Dave said that if the participants here have other people in their organizations that are well suited to identify a particular concern that they are invited as well. Steve said that much of the data that they need for the watershed plan has already been done, for example, when they were looking at designing the silt basin, one of the engineering firms hired by the RCD did a study that tells them how much silt is flowing into the lake, there is data from Joe Rush on the biological make up of the lake, and there is data that Bill Kleiman from the Nachusa Grasslands can provide. Rebecca explained what is in the packet that she supplied the TAC. She compiled GIS system data and included general maps (if more detailed map information is needed, it is in the system and she can provide that). Sharon said that for a watershed plan, the information that a TAC would typically provide would be a write up of the historical basis of the resources (soil, water, plants, and animals) and what it looked like, for example, the percentage of native plants, type of trees, animal species, population, and how was it managed, basically, what was the general ecology of the watershed what does it look like today. As a technical expert, a TAC member would identify the problems and opportunities facing the resources within the watershed. The planning committee will identify what their concerns are and what their perspective on those concerns and what their objectives are. The TAC will determine whether they are on target with their resource concerns (are they identifying a resource concern that truly exists out there and can we give them an idea of what the scope of that concern is). Are there resource concerns that a TAC member might identify that the planners are missing and should they make the WPC aware of it? The planning committee will ultimately decide what they want the watershed to look like and as technical advisors they can take it from where it is now to what the WPC's future vision is.

IV. What is involved in the planning and advisory process– Sharon said that the TAC would be asked:

- A. To gather whatever historical data they can on the watershed or Ogle County. Having the information in electronic format, e-mailed to Rebecca would be ideal.
- B. As technical experts, what do they currently know about the watershed or Ogle County?
 1. Issues with aquatic species, are there water quality issues in the county, are there 303D listings, fishery information from the IDNR,
 2. # of automobile or chronic wasting disease deer kills, what is the current wildlife here, what are the current problems or opportunities of the resources within the watershed for the future? Are there challenges due to fragmentation of the habitat that has occurred?
 3. Are there challenges because of the amount of agriculture that is here compared to the past or have we overcome that because we have gone back to some of the grasslands in the watershed and farming practices have changed from intensive plowing to more no-till methods? What are the current zoning regulations that exist, for example minimum lot size if someone were going to separate an agricultural area down for development. Are there regulations on storm water management?
 4. What are the primary invasive species in the watershed and where are they located? Do they see new invasive species that have been pinpointed but have not spread yet?

The members of the TAC all come at the watershed from their own perspective of information and they would like to take that information and give it to the planners in writing so that they can have more of a broad base

understanding of the watershed. Historical information and current baseline with some keynote opportunities, challenges, and resource concerns. Much of that information can be gathered individually and provided to Rebecca to share with the planning committee. The bulk of the workload will occur once the planning committee identifies resource concerns and that future condition and then the TAC would have an opportunity to get back together to share their information so that they can recognize how the watershed is defined based on their knowledge and what the watershed planning committee wants it to look like. Then they can map out some ways and give them some alternative of how to get there and give them information as to how it will look in the future if they don't make any changes. Someone asked if Lost Lake has goose problems and Steve replied that they have a goose control program in place where they keep track of the method of disposal and the amount of nests and eggs that are involved and it has been quite effective to the point that the LMC has recommended that they need not implement it next year.

V. Who would like to be involved? – Steve stated that the members gathered here have to figure out if they feel that having a TAC is worthwhile, whether they are interested in being involved, and how they would be organized. Initially, Rebecca would be the facilitator of the group to keep it going but eventually they will morph as operating units with their own chairpersons and secretary to take minutes of the meeting. For the time being, the RCD will provide Becky's services as an administrative assistant to keep a repository of the information that is gathered, however, she won't be attending all the meetings to take the minutes because the committee will operate independently.

Questions: Bob Vogl said that he was surprised at the amount of people that were here from the different agencies and he suspects that the demands on their time are great and so he wondered how many formal meetings they would have and how much could be accomplished through e-mail. Steve said that they can decide how many meetings they will need to have, although he doesn't see them as needing to meet once a month or anything and he agrees that a lot could be handled via e-mail.

Everyone agreed that it was a worthwhile endeavor and there was an overall agreement that those present would be able to be on the committee.

Karen Rivera said that the creation of Lost Lake has resulted in a huge loss in fish migration when you talk about fish migratory patterns and fragmentation. She sampled Clear Creek above the lake and it has a fairly nice minnow population but nothing else can get there like suckers. There is an opportunity to maybe create a habitat for small mouth bass that come out of the lake. Rebecca said that they need those comments. Karen said is the goal to keep the lake and keep the silt out of the lake or is there something overall for the watershed and the fish species in that watershed – to keep that viable they would have to get rid of the lake. Sharon Hartzold said that the planning committee will decide what they will choose to address in the watershed, but they need to know those resource issues and if they don't get rid of the lake, are there other ways to mitigate or other things that can be done, otherwise, at you can let them know that these are the type of species that will exist in the upper streams because there is no other connectivity to change it.

Steve said that the watershed committee's goal will be much more than just the lake, they are going to look at water quality in the lake and the watershed, they will look at stopping erosion of the stream banks within the watershed, fish population, field cultivation to avoid soil loss and the reintroduction of native species throughout the watershed. Sharon suggested that in Karen's write up she may want to say what if the lake wasn't here and what the negative impact of the lake on the stream species in the watershed upstream and downstream of the lake.

Sharon said that the planning committee will have to be made aware that the TAC will provide to the planning committee with factual information on the watershed for them to make an informed decision on and they will ultimately choose which resource issued to address.

VI. When is the next meeting? – The next meeting will be held on Monday, July 27th from 10-Noon.