

# Summary from the Salt Creek and DuPage Rivers TMDLs Communities Meeting November 17, 2004

On November 17, 2004 in the Elmhurst City Hall Council Chambers, the Salt Creek and DuPage Rivers Stakeholder Workgroup held an informational meeting for fellow stakeholders in the watersheds of Salt Creek, East Branch and West Branch of the DuPage Rivers. Invitees included city managers and public works directors. The purpose of this meeting was to present information about the approved TMDLs in these watersheds; provide an update on the activities of the Workgroup; and ask other communities to participate in additional monitoring and implementation.

Approximately 65 people attended.

## **Presentation by Bruce Yurdin (Illinois EPA):**

- I. Explanation of TMDLs, the 303(d) list and a timeline of the Salt Creek and East Branch DuPage River (EBDR) TMDLs.
- II. Explanation of water quality and hydrologic modeling and allocation scenarios on Salt Creek.
- III. Review of the TMDL recommendations for Salt Creek and EBDR.
  - A. Salt Creek:
    - 1) Reduce effluent limits to 8 mg/L for CBOD<sub>5</sub> and 1 mg/L for ammonia-N (except at Bensenville)
    - or**
    - 2) Remove the dam at Fullersburg.
  - B. EBDR:
    - 1) Reduce effluent limits to 8 mg/L for CBOD<sub>5</sub> and 1 mg/L for ammonia-N **or**
    - 2) In-stream aeration at Crescent Blvd.
- IV. Review of the estimated costs to WWTPs:
  - A. IL EPA estimate - \$18 million
  - B. Other estimates- \$48 million
  - C. No estimates for Phase II control of VSS, dam removal, re-aeration, nutrient removal or for savings if CBOD/ammonia/nutrients are combined.
- V. Review of the 3-step Phased and Adaptive Management approach.
  - A. The plan is detailed in the hand out: "*The Link Between TMDLs and NPDES Permits for Salt Creek and the East Branch of the DuPage River: Practical Application of the Adaptive Management and a Phased Approach for Meeting the Dissolved Oxygen Standard.*" This handout was available at the meeting.

## **Questions**

Q: Would it be possible to get a copy of the Power Point presentation?

A: Yes, we can distribute via e-mail or on a CD. Conservation Foundation will email to participants.

Q: Has re-aeration on Salt Creek been considered?

A: The consultant that developed the TMDL did not specifically look at re-aeration on Salt Creek. We have consulted Dr. Richard Speece, a Professor at Vanderbilt University, on the subject of re-aeration in Salt Creek. He has indicated interest in discussing re-aeration possibilities with the group. However, he is not aware of any similar cases to Salt Creek that have been attempted.

Q: There will be other unanticipated costs related to dam removal. Have you looked at these costs?

A: An estimate of dam removal costs was not in the scope of work for development of the Salt Creek TMDL. However, the RFP that we plan to put out soon will include ask for estimates of dam removal and all necessary stream improvements that go along with it.

**Presentation by Dennis Striecher (Elmhurst):**

I. An overview of why POTWs in the watershed should get involved in this process.

- A) Stormwater is the real problem. Most dischargers are already below 8 mg/L CBOD<sub>5</sub> and 1 mg/L ammonia-N.
- B) Dam removal is the least cost solution monetarily, but has high social costs
- C) Steering Committee has representatives from all stakeholder groups in the watersheds: POTWs, conservation/citizen groups, MWRDGC, Illinois EPA, MS4 communities, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. Meetings involved approximately 20 people. The group has been meeting monthly since April 2004.

II. Accomplishments of the Workgroup

- A) TMDL and NPDES Permit Link document.
- B) Acquired funding through a Section 319 grant
- C) Began working on a monitoring program for all three watersheds to begin this spring
- D) Draft goals statement.

-Communities need to work together to improve WQ and avoid future regulatory action.

No Questions.

**Presentation by Jennifer Hammer (Conservation Foundation):**

I. DO Monitoring program

A. Short term goals:

- 1) Study dissolved oxygen in the streams. The original IEPA data were limited. The group wants to expand the number of DO monitoring stations.
- 2) Study how nutrient enrichment affects dissolved oxygen levels.
- 3) Identify stressors in individual segments and where they are coming from.
- 4) Do a complete study of stream biology. Fish and macroinvertebrate collection are planned for this summer.

- 5) Plan to have a contract with a consultant in place by January. Monitoring is to begin in April.
- 6) Also plan to put out an RFP for a feasibility study on dam removal and in stream re-aeration.

B. Long term:

- 1) Group will have to estimate costs and prioritize activities as funding becomes available.
- 2) Having more partners enables the workgroup to bring in additional information, ideas and increases the number of options available.

No Questions.

**Presentation by Larry Cox (Downers Grove):**

I. Funding opportunities

A. Short term – need money and manpower

- 1) IEPA has provided \$85,000, with required local match of \$12,000. Labor to install and maintain monitoring equipment could be counted as a ‘cost in kind’ as part of a communities match. This initial money also covers preparation of the monitoring program.
- 2) \$600,000 may be available for work over the next 2 years. Local match is \$400,000, or \$200,000 over 2 years.
- 3) At 900,000 people in DuPage County, this equates to 22 cents per capita. We think this is a very affordable alternative compared to other approaches.
- 4) These funds can be used for monitoring work as well as stream enhancement, i.e. dam removal, in-stream aeration, stream bank stabilization, etc.

B) Long term funding will be needed to continue monitoring and other projects. It is particularly important to continue monitoring due to nutrient standards in the next 4-5 years and future standards for other parameters.

II. Organizational Structure for workgroup

- A) A “request for help” in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to start.
- B) Form a 501-C-3 corporation with bylaws, as utilized by the Fox River Study Group.
- C) Council of governments
- D) Special statutory designated organization, i.e. DuPage Water Commission
- E) Serve to funnel various grant funds to local projects

-Municipalities are all in this together. We share the same streams. We need your support and financial resources if we are to succeed in our endeavor to improve the quality of our local streams in the most cost effective manner.

**Questions:**

Q: What happens to the committee after the first 2 years? Does it go away?

A: We hope to continue operating. We will oversee money going out to the communities in the workgroup. The initial MOU could form the basis for developing an official entity that receives and distributes funds. We are still in the early stages of this workgroup. We agree a better-defined structure is essential to success.

Q: These 3 watersheds represent a majority of DuPage County. Should Cook County take some responsibility?

A: We would welcome involvement from Cook County. Up to this point, only MWRDGC has been involved. We hope that both Cook County and MWRDGC participate at whatever level they feel is appropriate.

Q: A question on logistics. Where are you placing the probes? How do you know where to put them?

A: The workgroup has gotten input from the IEPA, based on past and present Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Program sites, on where probes are needed. We can also move them around as needed.

Q: Can communities monitor in lieu of donating money?

A: This option can be discussed further as the monitoring program is designed. "In kind services" can be used to provide the local match.

Q: What about the Toll Authority, preserves, and unincorporated areas? These entities all contribute to the problem. How do they contribute money to the program?

A: We do not have a clear, efficient way of raising funds (taxing) right now.

Q: Could the DuPage County Stormwater Tax be increased as a means of providing for the local match?

A: That is a possibility.

Q: When will the MOU go out?

A: We will provide a summary of issues discussed at this meeting attached to the MOU.

Other suggestions:

-MOU must be kept simple.

-Those present preferred a 2-year commitment.

-POTWs should establish a line item in their budgets.

-Send out MOU on Conservation Foundation's letterhead.