

Silver Creek Pilot Watershed Project Stakeholder Meeting December 20, 2016

ATTENDEES:	Erin Wilcox/NEW Water	Nikki Truymen/Outagamie County LCD
	Kevin Fermanich/UWGB	Isabelle George/UWGB
	Mathew Dornbush/UWGB	Sherrie Zenk-Reed/NRCS
	Jon Hadeck/Oneida Nation	Megan Bender/CH2M
	Wes Johnson/Oneida Nation	Jim Snitgen/Oneida Nation
	Jeff Polenske/Tilth Agronomy	Paul Baumgart/UWGB
	Greg Baneck/Outagamie County	Michael Finney/Oneida Nation
	Todd Brennan/Alliance for the Great Lakes	Jon Bechle/Brown County LWCD
	Brent Petersen/Brown County LWCD	Gary Van Vreede/US Fish & Wildlife
	Nick Vande Hey/McMahon	Nicole Van Helden/The Nature Conservancy
	Adam Abel/NRCS	Eric Paulson/United Cooperative
	Tyrone Larson/NRCS	Scott Laeser/Clean Wisconsin
	Casey Eggleston/Fund for Lake Michigan	Mike Troge/Oneida Nation
	Jessica Schultz/Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance	Chad VandenLangenberg/Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance
	Gene Schubert/Oneida Nation	Annette Weissbach/NEW Water
	Brent Brown/CH2M	Jeff Smudde/NEW Water
	Tom Sigmund/NEW Water	Megan Bender/MKE
DATE:	1/2/2017	

Objectives

The objectives of the 2016 Stakeholder Meeting were to gather information on what happened within the Silver Creek pilot project during 2016 and discuss where further work can be done and where collaboration can happen. The meeting was held at the Jack Day Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin from 8:30am to 12:00pm on Tuesday, December 20, 2016. The meeting was started at 8:45am by Jeff Smudde/NEW Water.

Summary

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review and Meeting Goals

The meeting began with Jeff Smudde welcoming everyone and everyone introducing themselves. Jeff reviewed the Agenda and the goals of the Meeting. The goals include:

- Assess collaboration ability between partners and stakeholders

- Determine willingness for participation of growers/landowners
- Measure water quality response to projects completed
- Evaluate the capacity of partners to assist in the project
- Estimate overall cost of adaptive management to achieve water quality goals
- Develop a framework for full-scale adaptive management.

The three years of the project were reviewed, with 2014 being the year a baseline was established, 2015 being a year of inventory including comprehensive field evaluations, and 2016 a year of implementation.

Review of Accomplishments in 2016

Video: Water Knows No Boundaries

Jeff Smudde showed the NEW Water produced video highlighting the work being done in the Silver Creek Pilot Project.

Jeff Smudde and Nikki Truymen reviewed accomplishments of the project in 2016, by reviewing the BMP implementation that happened in 2016, starting with the landowner/grower luncheon held on December 6, 2016 and continuing with the various demonstrations held throughout the year, the Silver Creek CREW event for high school students to learn what is happening in the watershed, the 2016 statistics for sampling, conservation plans, winter cover on fields, and structural BMPs implemented. Jeff and Nikki also reviewed a few of the implemented BMPs on various fields and went over Oneida field 42.

Communication and Reflection

Brent Brown reviewed the 'Silver Creek Reflection' sheet, which covered the successes and lessons learned on aerial seeding that occurred in the watershed. Brent solicited feedback on the Reflection sheet and asked for additional ideas for more Reflections.

Jessica Schultz commented that the Pilot should coordinate with Fox-Wolf because they have been working on similar documents.

Todd Brennan commented that the Reflection sheets would be helpful and liked the simplicity of them. Todd recommended that for the aerial seeding example that was discussed, that the Reflection sheet state that the aerial seeding was completed as a contingency plan because interseeding was not able to be accomplished. Todd asked if we were trying to encourage aerial seeding, Brent responded not necessarily encourage but wanted to demonstrate lessons learned from an alternative approach to planting a cover crop. Todd recommended, and Brent and Jeff agreed, that clarifying the contingency plan aspect of the aerial seeding will help with communicating that interseeding would be a priority over aerial seeding.

Nicole Vanhelden recommended including cost-benefit information as part of the Reflection sheet. Brent and Jeff agreed.

Tools for Implementation Tracking

Megan Bender reviewed the Silver Creek AGOL verification application, which is the main tool being used by the project team to track implementation and inspect practices throughout the implementation and inspection process. Scott Laeser commented that the GIS approach is unique and a powerful tool for managing data and decision making. Scott asked if others are doing similar efforts and Brent commented that Outagamie and Brown County and Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance are developing a comprehensive GIS system to serve for trading, multi-discharger variance, NRCS reporting, DNR reporting, and work flow for county operations.

Lower Fox River Watershed Update: Projects, Equipment, Next Steps, and Opportunities for Collaboration

Greg Baneck of Outagamie County went over the 9-key element plans being developed by the County for each sub-watershed in the Fox-Wolf watershed and reviewed some of the main issues that are found throughout the watershed, including stream bank erosion, low residue on fields, gully and rill erosion, concentrated flow areas, and an abundance of drain tile in fields. Brent asked if streambank soil phosphorus is being collected to understand the phosphorus loading from streambanks – Greg responded yes but did not have the data yet.

Greg reviewed the benefit of the 9-key element plans and how they can be used for determining where to concentrate conservation efforts to get the most conservation for the money being spent, and how they're like a road-map to achieving water quality goals. He also went through some of the work being done, including the purchasing of the Valmar seedbox which can be used to hook up to various pieces of equipment to help with implementing cover crops during tillage passes and also with the manure injector. He also went through some of the treatment wetlands for treating tile/surface drainage, monitoring N, P and sediment movement, and seeding of concentrated flow paths throughout the watershed. He reviewed a streambank stabilization project in Plum Creek and noted that many farmers are seeing what's been working and purchasing their own equipment to get the job done themselves.

John Bechle from Brown County then reviewed the big picture of working with Outagamie County and the FWWA for land and water conservation. He mentioned the three goals of Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department are: 1) Provide technical assistance related to water quality, 2) Implement practices that promote economic and environmental health, and 3) Actively collaborate to restore and enhance habitats. He reviewed the FPP/WLI program and showed how many parcels within Brown County are enrolled, which would require walking every parcel enrolled in the program at least once every four years, which would be tough for the County to complete based on current staffing levels.

Jessica Schultz from FWWA gave an update about the conservation database being developed for Brown, Outagamie, Winnebago and Calumet counties and that they had hired two new people to help with outreach efforts for FWWA. She gave an update about what projects FWWA was involved in throughout the watershed and talked about phosphorus trading projects and possibilities for credit banking with WDNR. She also went through the Winnebago Waterways Project, which is an attempt to determine what nutrients that water system is contributing to the Fox-Wolf watershed and the new push towards creating 9-key element plans for that waterway system and coordinating efforts to begin conservation projects in that area as well. Jessica noted that they hoped their GIS conservation database would be up and running by February of 2017, but more likely would take until late spring or early summer of 2017 before it was working. At that time, all information would either be digitized or re-evaluated to create digital records of conservation plans.

Demonstration Farm Update

Brent Petersen reviewed his demonstration farm projects and gave an update on the progress being made. He reviewed Brickstead Dairy and the various cover crops and seed mixes being used and tested on the demonstration farm. He noted the issue with rapeseed and that broadcasting seed didn't work as well as using the interseeder did. He mentioned variety selection for seed mixes is absolutely critical to the success of cover crops and that sunlight early on is also key for success. He also mentioned herbicide choices being incredibly important as well.

Technology Demonstration and Discussion: Veris

This item was stricken from the Agenda due to Bill Schaumberg not being present.

Special Project Updates

Vegetated Water Treatment Systems

Matt Dornbush reviewed the test plots of biomass grasses they've been running on fields in the Silver Creek watershed. They went through the grass mixes and phosphorus uptake of those plants to determine the possibility of removing phosphorus from the fields through biomass harvesting. He noted that when the plots were fertilized with nitrogen, the phosphorus uptake was much higher, and was about 40% higher when nitrogen fertilization and double harvesting were both done to the plot. He mentioned the study only looked at above-ground biomass, not the root systems of the plants.

Mike Troge gave an update on the vegetated treatment system being implemented on Oneida_42 field where he's attempting to promote as much infiltration as possible. He showed a map of the project and where the berm will be along with tile lines to discourage standing water, he needs to maintain 12-inches or less of standing water to avoid permitting issues with the airport.

Wetland Sites 1, 2, and 7

The wetlands group is working on conflicts with the permitting due to the proximity to the airport. They're negotiating how to implement restoration of the sites without causing nuisance wildlife issues for the airport.

Adams Road Wetland

The same issue with the airport permitting is happening with this wetland as well. In late 2016, the areas were planted in permanent cover (frost seeded) until the wetland work can be completed.

Biological Monitoring

Jim Snitgen reviewed the biological monitoring the Oneida Nation is doing on a stretch of Silver Creek south of Florist Drive for many years. He had completed his 3rd sample on the site yesterday and mentioned he used a multi-habitat qualitative sampling method with composite samples. He mentioned the habitat had improved between his first two samplings and was only encouraged that it would continue to improve with all of the projects being implemented in the watershed.

Jim will provide the 2016 monitoring results to CH2M for updating of the biological assessment memo and for calculating additional metrics.

Grazing

Adam Abel went over the Robertson Grazing project that is occurring within the watershed. He mentioned the fences were constructed, the field has been seeded down, and is on track to be ready for grazing by summer of 2017. The manure pit had been concrete lined and the heavy use area had been concrete lined as well. He went over the out-wintering plan for the fields.

Paul Baumgart reviewed the study they are completing on the grazing project, which is to evaluate the effectiveness of grazing in terms of TSS, total phosphorus, and dissolved phosphorus runoff from the field.

Adaptive Management Next Steps and Group Discussion on Opportunities for Collaboration

Brent Brown reviewed the criteria the project is looking at for determining where to go next for full-scale adaptive management in the Fox Wolf watershed. He asked for any comments on what geographic area would be best to move to next for full-scale adaptive management. No comments were immediately forthcoming on the criteria handed to the stakeholder group.

Silver Creek Next Steps

Jeff Smudde mentioned NEW Water is looking at 2017 and beyond and that updating the conservation plans is next on the list and that he'd like to see everything lined up before spring so we're ready to go with implementation when spring comes.

Jeff asked if the meeting format was OK and if anyone had suggestions for improving the meetings to be most beneficial to all. There were no immediate comments to change the meeting format. The group commented that the meetings are helpful and there is plenty to talk about.

Thank you and Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Jeff Smudde at 12:40pm.

Water Quality Monitoring

This agenda item was tabled due to time constraints. A summary will be developed and communicated to the group via email or in a subsequent stakeholder meeting.