

## **Raccoon Creek Partnership Technical Advisory Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes – 08/09/2010**

In Attendance: Tim Ferrell-ODNR, Kim Brewster-Ohio University, Ben McCament-ODNR, Natalie Kruse-Ohio University, Kaabe Shaw-ODNR, Amy Mackey-Raccoon Creek, Brian Blair-Raccoon Creek, Regan Welch-ODNR, Steve Ferrante-ODNR Intern/Raccoon Creek, Barb Flowers-ODNR, Pam Stachler-USFS.

Meeting was called to order at 09:10.

#### **Issue 1: General Updates**

Raccoon Creek Coordinator Amy Mackey went over a number of recent important events and information regarding the Raccoon Creek Partnership (RCP):

1. Americorps member Rina Caldwell finished an exemplary term of service on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010. She is to be proceeded by two new Americorps members Sarah Landers & Kara Walton who will begin their year-long term of service on Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
2. The upcoming Harble-Griffith Project is underway with the grant having the official start date of 07/01/2010. A BMP (Best Management Practice) has been submitted for the project, though a QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan) is still needed. Pre-construction water quality sampling will begin soon.
3. Amy is currently working on a presentation for the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAML) conference to be held in Scranton, PA in September. Pam Stachler asked Amy to forward information regarding the conference to her.
4. Raccoon Creek's yearly MAIS (Macroinvertebrate Aggregated Index for Streams) biological sampling is complete. A big thank you was given to all agencies and individuals who helped during this sampling event.
5. Fish sampling in Raccoon Creek is underway with about 10 sites completed so far this year. More sites will be completed soon.
- 6.) The Raccoon Creek website is experiencing some technical difficulties stemming from the recent relocation of Ilgard servers to the general Ohio University tech jungle. Updates will be delayed until this transition is completed.
- 7.) East Branch Phase III is a pending project and Raccoon Creek will be submitting an OSM (Office of Surface Mining) grant for this project no later than October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

8.) Ohio University Masters of Science and Environmental Studies (MSES) student Jacob Sissler recently sent his scope of work for his Vinton lowhead dam removal proposal to Amy Mackey for review.

9.) A Raccoon Creek newsletter is forthcoming for Summer 2010. Anyone who would like to contribute articles or pictures is encouraged to do so soon.

10.) An ODNR inter, Steve Ferrante (in attendance) was hired earlier in the summer and has been working steadily on Raccoon Creek projects and sampling.

11.) Raccoon Creek needs to add projects to the Surface Water Enhancement, Restoration and Protection (SWERP) Clearinghouse as soon as possible.

12.) Mulga Run needs reconnaissance to choose sample sites. Kaabe Shaw agreed to assist with this.

13.) Ben McCament asked when the new coordinator grant began, and was answered that it had just begun in January of 2010.

## **Issue 2: Water Quality Specialist Update**

Raccoon Creek Water Quality Specialist, Brian Blair recounted the work being done over the last couple of months including MAIS and chemical sampling. Again thanking all those who provided assistance during these busy sampling events.

### **Sub-Issue: Elk Fork**

An analysis of the effect of the EF0400 tributary on the main stem of Elk Fork is underway, with Brian reporting that there is evidence of increased acid and metals loading. Graphs of the data collected at upstream, downstream, and tributary mouth sites will be disseminated among committee members when complete and will also be presented at the next TAC.

It was noted that the downstream site from EF0400 shows degraded chemical and biological data, though this is in part to severely degraded substrate and erosion from landowner property near the tributary.

It was also noted that the property which the tributary flows through is owned by an individual who does not wish to allow access for chemical sampling of the tributary. This sparked a discussion among the committee as to whether or not there was any way to gain access to this important site as more complete tributary mouth data could be very useful in addressing the AMD problems presented by the EF0400 tributary.

It was determined that there was, unfortunately, no current avenue for gaining direct access to the EF0400 tributary. Amy Mackey added that upstream and downstream sites (each less than 1 river mile from the tributary mouth) were still available and could offer adequate insight in the event that the tributary should remain unavailable for direct sampling.

Kaabe Shaw offered to send an official letter to the EF0400 landowners to see if it might be of any help in attaining access to the tributary as this had proven a successful tactic for other projects.. Amy Mackey agreed that this was a good idea and Kaabe agreed to do so.

### **Issue 3: Middleton Run**

Ohio University MSES student Kim Brewster reported on the status of her leadership project involving Middleton Run in the Little Raccoon Creek section of the Watershed.

Kim reported that chemical sampling data had been collected and entered into the NPS database for April, May, and June 2010. She announced that she would provide this data to the group at the next TAC meeting in November.

In July of 2010, the tributaries to Middleton Run from the acid sources in her study were observed to have dried up due to summer weather. Therefore, in collaboration with Kaabe Shaw at ODNR, it was decided to postpone further data collection until fall when flows resume.

Kim also reported that she had completed extensive recon and GPS marking for the project. Also, right-of-entry (ROE) forms have been completed for all landowners in the project area with two exceptions being the absentee landowners from Michigan and a minor landowner from the local community. The Michigan landowners are expected to sign and return a ROE soon and no one has yet been able to contact the local landowner. Another attempt will be made locally upon the next visit to the area.

Amy Mackey asked if Mary Ann Borch (ODNR, not in attendance) had any new data from her independent sampling in Middleton Run. The committee was unsure and it was agreed that an inquiry would be sent to Mary Ann.

### **Issue 4: Harble Griffith Project**

A meeting was held the week of August 2<sup>nd</sup> at the ODNR-Mineral Resources Management Office to discuss the upcoming Harble Griffith project in the Raccoon Creek Watershed. (many TAC members were also present at that meeting).

A quick overview, with slides, of the project was offered by Amy Mackey including the following information:

- a.) The project will reclaim approx. 29 acres of coal spoil
- b.) The primary goals of the project are to fill, cap, and drain two sites to prevent acid and aluminum runoff.
- c.) The grant funding the project started on 07/01/2010.
- d.) Regan stated that the engineering design work was scheduled to begin Nov. 2010.
- e.) Construction on the ground is scheduled for Spring-early Summer 2011.

Amy Mackey noted the contributions of local landowner and Raccoon Creek Partnership member Mike Schooley in helping to make this project possible. He was instrumental in speaking with landowners and getting them excited about the project and also owns land adjacent to the project site which may be available for use during construction.

Kaabe Shaw asked if it would be advisable to meet with individual landowners to make sure expectations and preferences regarding the upcoming project would be well reconciled with project goals.

The committee agreed that it would be best to first arrange a meeting with Mr. Schooley and then the individual landowners. Barb Flowers proposed a tour of Mr. Schooley's property as well. The date of August 23<sup>rd</sup> was proposed and Amy Mackey contacted Mr. Schooley to arrange this tour.

The plan of action going forward was approved as follows:

- 1.) Visit Mike Schooley's property
- 2.) Meet with Mr. Schooley
- 3.) Meet with other landowners involved in project.

This was followed by a quick overview of the Harble-Griffith project with current design specs and a brief discussion of the 319 grant funding the project including the adjustment of match funding in regard to the level of ODNR-DMRM commitment to the project. The committee agreed that all elements regarding the grant were properly in order at this time.

### **Issue 5: East Branch Phase III**

Pam Stachler, USFS, excused herself from the meeting at this time due to a prior commitment but added that her agency was moving forward on East Branch Phase III and more information would be forthcoming.

## **Issue 6: Pierce Run**

Barb Flowers, ODNR-DMRM, updated the committee on the status of construction at the Pierce Run site.

After lengthy delays due to heavy rain and other factors, the contractor for the project was mobilized last week and construction is once again underway, including:

- working on steel slag bed embankments, should finish today and get started on supply pond.
- lime kiln dust is being used on site to help improve soils there. Anyone visiting the construction site is advised to wear a protective mask to prevent respiration of the material.
- there is the potential for new coal mining to begin near the project site, but no certain news regarding that possibility at this time.

Amy Mackey informed the committee that RCP would be monitoring the construction weekly to help assure a timely completion of the project. At this time a September completion date is desired so that post-construction sampling can be completed before the grant closes on the project in December 2010.

## **Issue 7: Engineering Project Updates**

Regan Welch from ODNR-DMRM updated the committee on the status of all pending projects in the design stage of development.

### **East Branch Phase I: Maintenance**

Right of Entry for this site is pending (Kaabe Shaw, ODNR, assured the committee it was forthcoming) and once received a site survey can take place. Two weeks after the survey the design can be completed and then construction can begin.

### **East Branch Phase II: Under Construction**

Barb Flowers and Kaabe Shaw are heading out this week to check progress on site. This project is going well and a September completion date is a possibility. This project continues to move forward very smoothly.

### **East Branch Phase III: Preliminary Stage**

Bid opening for this project were last Thursday and approval on a low bid should be coming soon. The project looks to be pricing in the \$315,000 to \$330,000 range and is scheduled to begin in spring 2011.

### **Carbondale: Maintenance**

Kaabe Shaw updated the group that ingress/egress was secured for the ditch cleanout on McBride and that local landowners were pleased with the work being done.

Remaining work to be done includes cleaning up seeps behind the doser and vegetation of disturbed/eroding areas.

Amy Mackey asked if there was any work planned to address possible erosion into the doser channel from unsecured seep ditches along upper channel. Barb Flowers echoed this concern and said it would be looked into with vegetation mentioned as a possible method of securing the ground along these sites.

Regan Welch reported that ODNR was looking into installing a flume at Carbondale to measure doser output. A request has been made and she is waiting to hear back.

#### Lake Milton: Observation/Maintenance

Kaabe Shaw reported that after observing low output from the steel slag leach bed of about 20 gpm, the water supply has recovered and output is now back up to about 50gpm.

Regan Welch reported that maintenance on the Lake Milton Project has been delayed due to the difficulty of accessing valves which were installed 16 feet beneath the lake dam. It is not possible to cut the dam and so a workaround will need to be designed and this will take time.

#### Orland Gob: Preliminary Stage

It was announced that a test pit was scheduled to be drilled in August 2010 to check the availability for good soil for the Orland project. Barrels previously dumped in the site area by unknown individuals would also be checked to ascertain if they were suitable for scrap and could be removed. There is also a large number of tires on site (approx. 50) that need to be removed.

Amy Mackey noted that a tire removal program in the area may be available to assist with this issue and that a Pete Thompson should be contacted regarding these tires.

#### Jaymar Steel Slag Bed: Maintenance

Regan Welch added that the skimmer needed to be hooked up at this site.

#### Mulga Run: Maintenance

Beaver dam removal at the Mulga wetland is forthcoming

#### Flint Run East: Maintenance

Regan Welch announced that drawings were done for the plans to pipe the slag bed discharge down to the AMD affected tributary directly from the bed itself.

### East Branch Phase I: Maintenance

Regan Welch reported that the designs for the scheduled maintenance of Phase I sites would be announced soon.

### Buckeye Furnace: Maintenance

Kaabe Shaw noted that a trip to the project site at Buckeye Furnace was needed to clean out the pipes for the vertical flow pond and install new pipes to enable flow measurement.

### Lake Latrobe: Preliminary Stage

Barb Flowers related her conversation with a coal company interested in mining near the Lake Latrobe area. She expressed the need to meet with the Raccoon Creek Partnership at a future date to look over area maps and determine if there is enough coal in the Latrobe area to warrant re-mining.

Ben McCament and Amy Mackey expressed their understanding of the arrangement as mutually beneficial wherein the coal company would re-mine the area and would fill Lake Latrobe to prevent acidic seeps currently passing through the lake dam.

Barb Flowers explained that this arrangement was now in question as the coal company was unsure if enough coal still remained near Lake Latrobe to make the endeavor profitable. The company will need to drill and assess existing coal deposits before a decision is made.

### **Issue 8: AEP Project Update**

The AEP project currently underway in Raccoon Creek involves a study of the stream recovery present downstream of limestone dosers including measure of parameters including chemical, sedimentation, toxicity of sediment, soils, etc.

In Raccoon Creek, this project is taking place along the length of Hewett Fork and currently MAIS, sediment, some chemical, and fish sampling have been completed thus far. Hewett Fork is acting as a case study for a wider ranging predictive model that will emerge from the work being done.

Ben McCament explained that the goal of this study is to be able to accurately predict stream response to project installation with emphasis on lime addition systems.

Natalie Kruse added that one specific aspect of the study is a comparison of sediment loading between Hewett Fork & Pierce Run to compare a lime addition system as in the former, and a stream without lime addition as is the case with the latter.

Amy Mackey added that should a report on this study be completed before the next meeting that she would see to its distribution among the committee.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Raccoon Creek Partnership's Technical Advisory Committee was scheduled for November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00.