

Black Creek Watershed Coalition Meeting Minutes

Date: November 30, 2010

Location: Riga Town Hall

Attendance: Rochelle Bell, Monroe County Department of Planning & Development; Dorothy Borgus, Town of Chili Comprehensive Plan Committee; Peggy Grayson, Town of Stafford representative and GLOW Recycling; Peter Lent, interested citizen; Jenny Landry, NYSDEC Region 8; Steve Lewandowski, Center for Environmental Information (CEI) Lake Ontario Coastal Initiative (LOCI); Brian Ostling, Town of Chili, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works; Judy Spring, Genesee County SWCD; George Squires, Genesee County SWCD; Tom Ryther, Genesee Land Trust; Larry VerWeire, Town of Riga resident and Lyle Warren, Village of Churchville Zoning Board of Appeals

Action Items Underlined

Agenda and minutes: October 2010 minutes were reviewed and accepted with corrections.

Watershed Symposium wrap-up: Rochelle reported that the joint Black and Oatka Creek Watershed Symposium October 28 was a rousing success. She has received numerous positive comments from people and everyone agreed that it was a success. George noted that at the recent Oatka Creek meeting that everyone also felt it was a successful event. There was a great turn out as there were 101 attendees. Rochelle will write a report for the grant regarding the symposium and will contact Donna Alder from Roberts Wesleyan regarding photos taken at the event.

Additional Grant items: Funds will cover a year's cost of the Website and printing of more map guides.

Municipal Outreach: The program has been going well and presentations have been given at almost all the municipalities in the watershed. G/FLRP would like any notes, comments, etc. from any of the outreach meetings.

Watershed Planning Update: Rochelle will contact Brian Slack regarding his attending our December meeting.

Freshwater Mussel Survey: Jenny Landry from the region 8 DEC office gave a very interesting presentation regarding the Freshwater Mussel Survey of Southern Lake Ontario Watersheds. The goal of the survey is to provide a baseline inventory of freshwater pearly mussels. The survey will encompass 4-5 field seasons. Thus far 15 sites have been surveyed in Black Creek and its tributaries, with 11 species of mussels indentified. There are approximately 300 species native to North America and about 40 species in New York State. About 75% of freshwater mussel species are considered imperiled. Threats include invasive species; stream habitat disturbances; and agricultural activities. Freshwater mussels provide numerous benefits such as acting as a filter to help maintain water quality; ecosystem indicators; make nutrients available for other small organisms. Volunteers are welcome to participate, please contact Jenny Landry, NYSDEC 6274 East Avon-Lima Rd. Avon, NY 14414.

TMDLs: Steve Lewandowski provided an update of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study for phosphorus for segments of Black Creek. Steve passed out a number of examples of the type of data his team is collecting for the study. Samples included a list of CAFO's in the watershed; listing of septic system failures; and the ten most significant SPDES permits of the Black Creek Watershed.

The TMDL is for phosphorus since evidence indicates that phosphorus is the greatest local contributor to degraded water quality. The study will identify background phosphorus levels and the distribution of phosphorus among uses (e.g. waste water treatment plants; agricultural fields).

The results of the TMDL study will be used to regulate things like waste water treatment plant discharge, MS4s, and septic systems. There may be money for improvements required to meet new regulations.

Christine Sevilla Memorial Wetland: Tom discussed that the Genesee Land Trust rededicated its Caledonia Wetland in Christine Sevilla's honor. Friends and supporters are now trying to raise additional money to build an interpretive trail through the 23-acre Christine Sevilla Wetlands Preserve and install an informational kiosk there. There's an exhibition of her work at the High Falls Center through January and they will be an auction of her work to help raise funds. Christine was integral in the creation of the BCWC map guide and was an accomplished artist and avid environmentalist with a fondness for wetlands. Please see <http://www.christinesevilla.com/> for further information.

Re-Tree Western NY project: Peggy discussed the Re-Tree Western NY project presentation she attended at Genesee Community College. The project has planted hundreds of trees in Western New York to replace trees lost by a major early snow storm a few years ago. She thought that the project might be something we should look at in light of the potential problem posed by ash borer insects on ash trees in the watershed. Please see <http://www.re-treewny.org/> for further information.

Next meeting: Monday, December 13, 2010 in Chili.