

**Paw Paw River Watershed Planning Project
Steering Committee Meeting Summary
October 18, 2006 9:30 – 11:00 AM**

PRESENT:

NAME	REPRESENTING	NAME	RESPRESENTING
Charles Goodrich	Hamilton Twp	Dave Foerster	Landowner
Mark Parrish	Pokagon Band	Chris Bauer	MDEQ
Gaye Blind	Berrien County Conservation District	Sue DeVries	The Nature Conservancy
Chuck Nelson	Sarett Nature Center	Julia Kirkwood	MDEQ
Joe Parman	Van Buren Drain Commissioner	Ken Shaut	Lawrence Village
Mindy Walker	Sarett Nature Center	Amy Lockhart	VB Conservation District
Laurence Pig	Kieser & Assoc	Doug Stiles	Almena Twp
Gary Stock	Landowner	Rob Zbiciak	MDEQ – LWMD
Steve Petersen	Hamilton Twp	Del Sipes	Watervliet Twp/MLSA
Nancy Edwards	Landowner	Marcy Colclough	SWMC
Daniel Ruzick	Antwerp Twp	Matt Meersman	SWMC
Tamara Lipsey	MDEQ		

Introductions

Julia Kirkwood will be our MDEQ Project Administrator.

Project Updates:

- Watershed Inventory – 213 sites have been completed. The data from each site has been entered into a database along with the corresponding pictures. In total we have over 600 pictures from road/stream crossings within the PPRW stored in the database. A final report will be prepared by the end of the year.
- SWAT modeling – Model is currently being calibrated and validated. Calibration for flow, phosphorus, and sediment expected to be complete by October. The model should be generating scenarios by November.
- Land Protection Committee – Committee mapping exercise completed August 30th. The results will be used to refine weighted values assigned to data entered in a GIS model. The model will be reviewed at the next committee meeting.
- Information & Education – The Watershed Short Course began on Tuesday October 3rd. 40 people are enrolled in the course. The Community EXPO is open to the public and will be held Oct 31 from 5-7 pm at the Van Buren Conference Center.

Mark Parrish – Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians: Mark gave a presentation on the Pokagon Band's Water Program Development and Monitoring Activities. The Band has property holdings in 3 areas where the majority of their population centers are located – the Paw Paw River Watershed (Hartford Area), the Dowagiac River Watershed (Dowagiac area) and southwest of South Bend, Indiana. The property in the PPRW is in 2 sub-watersheds and encompasses about 1200 acres near Mud Lake and the Van Auken

Drain and Pine Creek and Sassafras Lake. Mark's job is to develop an environmental department for the newly formed nation. He is developing a Water Program with authority from the EPA and the Clean Water Act. Mark has developed a Surface Water Quality Monitoring Plan in Sept 2005.

Pokagon Land in the PPRW – 1200 acres

Row Crop 37%

Wetland 36%

Orchard 6%

Wooded 11%

Other 10%

Mark is testing for pesticides including Atrazine, because the St. Joseph River contributes the largest amount of Atrazine to Lake Michigan. According to the Army Corps of Engineers, the St. Joseph River also contributes large amounts of nitrogen and sediment to Lake Michigan. EPA studies have also confirmed that Mercury is a problem in Lake Michigan.

Mark is sampling both surface water for nitrate, Atrazine, dissolved oxygen, temperature, conductivity, pH and turbidity. He is sampling ground water for nitrate, Atrazine, Metachlor and other pollutants. So far no atrazine or other pesticides have been detected. The groundwater samples have found nitrates, but the level may be natural.

Tamara Lipsey – 2006 MDEQ Biosurveys: Presentation of preliminary results from her 2006 fieldwork in the PPRW. MDEQ, Water Bureau, Surface Water Assessment did extensive sampling in the PPRW this year. The sampling is done by MDEQ every five years and is used as a tool for determining attainment status, supports the NPDES permit program. Sampling was conducted from June to September on the PPRW. Much of the work was with macro-invertebrates because they are good indicators of long term water quality conditions and easy to sample. Along with 9 metrics for macro-invertebrates, 14 aquatic habitat metrics were utilized to produce a score for each site.

***** 8-16-06 Meeting Summary Correction *****There were a few errors on people's names on the August Meeting Summary. The corrections have been made.

Other Comments, Concerns, Ideas, etc....

Harbor Shores -MDEQ Wetland/Floodplain fill application should be up for public comment again soon.

Airport Expansion Project Mitigation – no report.

Wal-Mart Mitigation – Public comment is closed on this permit application with MDEQ.

Next Steering Committee Meeting – December 20th, 2006 at 9:30am