



Schoharie Watershed Advisor Council Meeting

March 27th, 2013

Schoharie Watershed Program Office, Tannersville

Member attendance: Rebecca Wilburn and Val Reidman (Gilboa), Eric Dahlberg (Conesville), Stephen Walker (Windham); Lynn Byrne and Beverly Dezan (Lexington); Liz LoGuidice (CGCCE); Dave Kukle (Town of Hunter); Ron Urban – NY Chapter Trout Unlimited.

Others: Jeff Flack, Michelle Yost, Abbe Martin, Nick Larson (GCSWCD); Dave Burns (DEP); Zachery Thompson (Schoharie Co. Planning). Guest – Carol Yost

Chairwoman Wilburn brought the meeting to order at 6:15PM.

Meeting Minutes from October 2012 SWAC meeting approved on a motion from Lynn Byrne, seconded by Beverly D. with all present in favor.

SMIP Program 2014

- a. Jeff provided a summary of the potential changes for the SMIP program with the new GCSWCD/DEP contract for 2014
 - i. Potential SMIP program total funding \$3 million
 - \$2 million grant program expected to be continued
 - Additional \$1 million grant funding for local flood hazard mitigation expected

Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis (LFHMA)

- a. Michelle gave a presentation describing the Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis (LFHMA), which was negotiated with watershed partners following Hurricane Irene (presentation emailed). Prattsville has been through the analysis phase and is now in the planning phase.
- b. It is a voluntary program through which communities apply for funds to go through two phases to determine options for reducing flood risks
 - Phase I – Flood Engineering Analysis
 - Identifies causes of flood inundation hazards in population centers
 - Utilizes latest FEMA floodplain maps and models
 - Phase II – Mitigation Plan
 - Design plan based on engineering analysis to determine what options are viable for reducing flooding on the community scale;
 - Community determines what options should move forward;
 - Chairwoman Wilburn in her role with State Emergency Management Office noted studies like this can improve a communities rating for Hazard Mitigation funding, which is very competitive. Funding for analysis is only for areas of concentrated population/population centers
- c. Phase I – Engineering Analysis Details
 - Engineer/Consultant uses available data, maps and modeling software to determine contributing causes of flood hazards and potential projects to reduce impacts.
 - Creates and enhances flood model to analyze inundation levels for floods at different recurrence intervals
 - Modeling

- E.g. shows how reconnecting floodplain may reduce potential damage of flood waters or how widening stream crossings may reduce flood elevations allowing more flow capacity
- Predicts how potential solutions may change impacts (e.g. removing an undersized bridge or culvert)
- Question: Lynn Byrne questioned if there was a timeline
- Every time SEMO/FEMA mitigation money is available everyone competes for the same pot of money.
- Having a Mitigation Plan in place/adopted helps a community obtain that \$.
- LFHMA will be required for SMIP and CWC flood hazard mitigation funds also
- Lexington has a \$50,000 long-term flood recovery grant; GCSWCD will put out an RFP for LFHMA in conjunction with this and that will be discussed at July SWAC meeting.
- Town can have more than one hamlet studied, based on concentration of population, e.g., Windham has three distinct areas to be studied
- Engineer/Consultant evaluates implementation projects and provides a report identifying viable projects for the community to review.
 - Considers the number of residences and businesses that may be helped by a solution; the cost-effectiveness, water quality benefits and sustainability of solutions.
 - Cost-effectiveness is an important component of the evaluation.
 - Note: Large scale expensive projects may be funded if cost effectiveness can be proven
 - Potential Solution Examples
 - Reconnect floodplains to reduce velocity (not necessarily flood volume) and/or upgrading a bridge or culvert to reduce backwater effect.
 - Extensive modeling used to determine best flood mitigation strategies
- d. Phase II – Mitigation Plan
 - Identify and prioritize cost-effective projects
 - Determine level of community support/readiness for potential implementation plans/projects
 - Identify potential funding sources for implementation of mitigation plan
- e. Community Benefits
 - Scientific understanding of the effects of flooding and factors contributing to flood risks
 - Solutions that are based on current data and information, the sustainability and feasibility of those solutions.
 - Emergency Services – look at relocating critical emergency buildings
 - Eligibility for grant programs for implementation
 - Leverage and partner additional DEP funding with other existing funding sources
- f. Possible Scenarios (see LFHMA presentation slides)
 - Community gets grant to conduct an LFHMA
 - Community leads process as much as possible
 - Process helps to discovery what is feasible or not feasible in communities
- g. Questions:

- Val R. inquired for communities that are not present, do they receive the information about the LFHMA process?
 - Yes, it is provided at other meetings and at the Coalition of Watershed Towns level. The CWT was instrumental in negotiating funds for this purpose.
- How to determine population centers?
 - GCSWCD will provide their suggestions to each interested town board to start discussion.
 - There is no minimum to community size, but there has to be some justification for use of funds.
- What is the role of flood commissions?
 - Communities can form commissions to interpret and implement mitigation plans for their community if they wish. GCSWCD will assist those that are interested in doing this.
 - To help interpret and internalize how communities could and should use the analysis; communities should make decisions themselves
 - Focus on concentrated areas
- h. Lexington is starting the LFHMA process this year
- i. Windham is interested in starting LFHMA process, and will likely be the first community starting in 2014

Stream Management Implementation Program (SMIP) Summary

Rebecca W. worked through the handout provided: GCSWCD Schoharie Watershed Stream Management Implementation Program – Project Summary (March 27, 2013 SWAC Meeting) (21 projects complete; 2 on-going and 12 in process) (www.catskillstreams.org/grants); opening up discussion for all projects that are not complete.

- a. County Route 6 – EWP 75% match. Total cost estimates will be calculated once design is complete.
- b. Kozak Streambank Stabilization and Riparian Planting – postponed until 2014 due to EWP project priorities.
- c. Prattsville Stream Access – closed out (letter sent October 2012) due to site constraints and impacts of Hurricane Irene; reapply for future consideration.
- d. Mountaintop Highway Ditch Re-vegetation Program – Hydroseeding and power mulching after most new ditching projects.
- e. Cranberry Road Culvert Upgrade – options have been researched and are being discussed with highway department, with a meeting scheduled tomorrow morning.
- f. Glen Avenue Culvert Upgrade – options researched, estimates for replacement are based on different sizes. Cost will determine what the Village can afford, assuming there will be no FEMA funds
- g. Mountaintop Sweeper and Vacuum Truck – SMIP funds are a match for CWC funds. Currently, the CWC program to fund this has no available funding, when additional funds are available through this program, expect to receive the funds.
- h. Mitchell Hollow Road – Coordinating with DOT to complete.
- i. Thermal Refuge Study – Imagery has been collected; USGS in process of assessing and summarizing the imagery data and will provide a report to GCSWCD by April 2014. Project costs have increased \$24,000 due to need for additional post-processing and thermograph data collection. This was reviewed at the habitat/recreation subcommittee meeting in November.
 - a. Lynn B. Question: Why is this project delayed?

Multiple reasons (multiple delays in flight for aerial imagery collection; need for additional post-processing; staffing changes at USGS)

- j. Manor Kill Acquisition Cost Share – project has been put to bid, contractor selected; demolition to be scheduled; Town of Conesville is the lead on this project.

SMIP Budget

- a. The cost-share for 2013 EWP projects is still unknown, but will be clarified in the next 3 months
- b. Some of the remaining balance (after EWP match funds) may be used to support LFHMA
- c. Additional LFHMA funding through SMIP is not available until 2014, when the new contract registers between GCSWCD and DEP.
- d. After the USGS overage noted above (\$24,000), the balance is \$375,512 (of which \$61,247 is contingency money for overages on approved projects, such as the USGS)

Upcoming Events, Meeting Schedule

- a. Schoharie Watershed Month Proposal
 - i. Planning committee meeting
 - ii. Various activities throughout the month
 - iii. Hands on workshops and education to engage and connect with watershed communities
 - iv. May 4th, 2013 – opening for student art exhibit
 - v. Michelle presented an Education & Outreach proposal for \$1,700 for watershed month costs including refreshments throughout the month with the primary focus to support the Windham Path Opening and Pat Meehan Walk/Run/Ride Scholarship fundraising event on May 25th. Pat was a supporter of the Stream Management Program and the Windham Path, which SMIP helped fund. The all-day event will feature many activities and is expected to draw a large crowd. The entire budget is approx. \$2,500, with the Community of Windham Foundation contributing funds and in-kind.
 - 1. Motion to accept (Eric); Second (Ron); Approved
- b. The next SWAC meeting will be Wednesday, July 10th, 2013 at 1pm in the Tannersville Office.
- c. Ron U. reported Trout Unlimited 2013 Northeast Regional Meeting – July 20th -21st in Windham, NY. <http://www.tu.org/events/northeast-regional-meeting-2013>. There will be many presentations (stream restoration will be highlighted) and activities scheduled including a BBQ on Saturday night. It is an honor to host this large conference in the Schoharie Watershed. Ron also noted TU National is offering a free year membership for women. Anyone interested should let Ron know.
- d. Watershed Tour – due to staff limitations, a tour may not be held in 2013.