

Education & Outreach Committee Meeting

Schoharie Watershed Program Office, Tannersville, NY

Thursday January 13, 2011 at 4pm

Meeting Notes

- **Introductions**
 - Present at meeting: Robyn Worcester, GSWCD; Jeff Flack, GCSWCD; Liz LoGuidice, GCCCE; Joan Kutcher, Mountain Top Arboretum; Sharon Sofranko, Hunter Elementary; Judd Weisberg, NYS Licensed Guide; Rebecca Wilburn; Dave Burns, DEP; Michelle Yost, GCSWCD
 - On phone: Diane Galusha, CWC; Tara Collins, WAC; Katie Palm, CCCD

- **Stream Management Implementation Program (SMIP) overview**
 - Most members are currently familiar with the SMIP & SWAC, but Robyn gave a brief overview of the program, focusing on the 'Education on Watershed Protection' category for new members not familiar with the program
 - We discussed past funded projects to give examples of supported EO programming:
 - Mountain Top Arboretum: Joan described her two SMIP grants (kiosk & brochures, outdoor classroom design)
 - GC Cornell Cooperative Extension: Liz told us about the Rain Barrel Workshop grant CCE received for Schoharie Watershed Week last year, and this year they will be providing 3 SMIP grant-funded workshops during Schoharie Watershed Month
 - Michelle gave the example of a school-focused project: the Schoharie River Center Manor Kill Study Stream Management Implementation

- **Discussion on focused programming goals for SMIP EO grants**
 - Robyn introduced the idea that GCSWCD and DEP are interested in generating more focused EO grant proposals; do we want to have a focused mission, be clearer about what types of proposals we want to receive? How do committee members feel about that?
 - Tara suggested a yearly theme to focus education activities around—all yearly events and programming would tie into that theme
 - Judd underscored importance of educating on stream habitat values and protection (a separate habitat/recreation committee exists to provide direction as well)
 - Diane said she appreciated the broadness of our EO category—it allows for more creative proposals, and doesn't exclude any ideas that could turn out to be fabulous
 - Pratt Museum streamside educational program example: historic focus that ties into water quality issues from 19th century tanning industry
 - Dave stated that he thinks the EO Committee should be responsible for an overall picture of education within the Watershed to help focus the grant program
 - Joan questioned whether EO SMIP grants should focus more on water quality issues or the Schoharie Watershed in general
 - All programming should be focused on/located within the Schoharie Watershed
 - Water quality is an important aspect of watershed health—all programming should be about watershed health

- Liz stated that she feels we need better SMIP outreach—how do we appeal to audiences that we’re not currently receiving applications from? She agreed with Tara that it would be useful to have a focused theme and audience targets.
- Rebecca stated that we should reinforce school programs, but change direction to address adult populations that are harder to reach. What are the adult populations we want to reach and how?
 - Sporting, Contractors, realtors, heavy equipment operators, tourists, outdoor enthusiasts, 2nd homeowners, summer camps
- Diane suggested that it would be useful to notify state or local campgrounds of the grant opportunity. See if we can fund watershed/water quality focused ranger talks.
- Campgrounds within the Schoharie Watershed:
 - Oh-Neh-Tah (Girls Quest)
 - Camp Tri-Mount (Boy Scouts)
- Expanding outreach to generate interest, Dave brought up the idea of a RFP approach to generating focused SMIP applications. How does committee feel about that?
- Committee generally feels good about determining target audiences/programming, and generating applications through specific proposal requests, such as focusing on tourists
- Sharon stated she feels it is important to expand programming to adults involving upstate/downstate relations as they pertain to the NYC Watershed, similar to the Green Connections model with students, to help adults think outside their familiar zone. Creating a film on upstate/downstate relations for instance that can spur motivation to want to learn about the watershed and our impacts on it.
- **Film Development Discussion**
 - Rebecca suggested that perhaps we should **reach out to filmmakers to see if we could create a short film describing the watershed, water supply issues, and stream management**, hitting winter tourists by playing it at ski resorts, reaching the downstate audience that way.
 - If we developed a film we could reuse it in many ways: website, trainings, summer & fall festivals, etc.
 - Diane introduced the Mountaintop to Tap film that was created through the Catskill Mountain Foundation as an example. That film showed the journey of teens from NYC and upstate as they traveled through the WOH Watershed and learned about watershed issues.
 - Is this something that we want to recreate with grant funding?
 - Maybe for our film we should recruit students or young talent, such as Reel Teens (movies made by teenagers around the country)
 - Dave asked about the cost for creating a short film
 - Could vary widely, depending on film length, quality of production, videographer expertise, etc.
 - People to contact for more information about film production/pricing: Tobe Carey, James Orlando, Jonathan Donald, Margot Peletier & Lisa Thomas
 - Generally for use in public places like the ski resorts, the short clip would need to be of high quality
- **Schoharie Watershed Month (May 2011) (25 minutes)**
 - Expanded from last year’s Schoharie Watershed Week
 - “Action” theme → hands-on activities
 - Currently identified SWM 2011 events
 - Cornell Cooperative Extension Water Quality at Home workshops

- 3 workshops throughout the month, held on weekends
 - Rain barrel building, eco-landscaping, holistic pond management
 - CD Lane Family Day
 - Canoe/Kayak demos, fly fishing demos, nature walks, scavenger hunt
 - Mountain Top Arboretum unveiling of boardwalk, kiosk, wetland walk
 - Saturday, May 21?
 - Windham Arts Alliance Art Show
 - Gilboa Dam Tour – reschedule, residents expressing interest
 - Dave and Rebecca said they didn't know if we'd be able to actually get inside the dam: construction currently going on, too much security issues
 - Perhaps we can do a drive around the reservoir, stop at several locations and talk about the dam & history
 - Potential event/activity ideas for SWM 2011
 - Riparian Walk field trip with students - Sharon
 - Stream clean up
 - Trout release celebration – Sharon
 - Judd: Pocket Park in Lexington might be a good location for the release party
 - MTA Bird walk with Larry Federman (6am) - Joan
 - Environmental Film Series - Tara
 - Tara is planning on applying for a SMIP grant for the film series for the Feb 1 round
 - Planting project
 - Currently have a scheduled Green Connections planting project in May. Can tie into SWM
 - Maybe also have another one for adult volunteers?
 - Mountain Top Historical Society Walk
 - Clean-up invasive species with the high school at the Arboretum - Joan
 - Judd – Lexington Pocket Park unveiling , if park elements completed by then
 - Rebecca – maybe we can have each school district in the watershed do at least one event/project/field trip during the month
 - 4 school districts, 4 weeks
 - Potential event/activity ideas for SWM 2011
 - Day in the Life of the Schoharie Creek
 - Potentially involve Schoharie River Center
- **New GCSWCD website**
 - Robyn said that GCSWCD has a new website (gcswcd.com). It's a huge improvement over what we used to have, and she encouraged members to check it out and provide feedback on how to make it more user-friendly