



Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Minutes
9/19/2024 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Lake County Division of Transportation
600 W. Winchester Rd.
Libertyville IL 60048

Discussion and Possible Approval of the Following:

1. Call to Order

Rob Flood, alternate Monitoring Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:38.

2. Roll Call

Anna Niedzinski, DRWW Coordinator performed roll call. Members present: Chair **Rob Flood**, North Shore Water Reclamation District (NSWRD); **Alana Bartolai**, Lake County Health Department (LCHD); **Brian Kuebker**, Village of Libertyville; and **Jim Bland**, EPS, Inc. A quorum was present.

Others present: Anna Niedzinski, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC); Christine Morris, Lake County Public Works; Don Wilson, EPS, Inc.; and Tom Morthorst, Village of Third Lake. Attending virtually Rishab Mahajan, Geosyntec; and Ashley Strelcheck, Lake County SMC.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. *07/18/24 Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion by Kuebker, seconded by Bartolai to approve the 06/20/24 Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes. Motion passed with a unanimous vote.

5. Old Business

a. LCHD 2024 Monitoring Update

Bartolai provided an update to the Monitoring Committee on the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) monitoring program. LCHD performed the September monitoring activities this week. Many sites were experiencing drought conditions which may affect test results, and seven (7) sample sites were dry, and no samples were collected at those locations. July 2024 data was submitted to the DRWW Coordinator, and August sampling data will be submitted shortly. LCHD monitors 73 sites in the watershed.

6. New Business

a. DRWW Water Quality Report Discussion

The Monitoring Committee discussed the possibility of having a water quality report like the project that the North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup (NBWW) has been working on a water quality summary project, which would help illustrate and explain the status of the watershed to potential stakeholders in an accessible way. Bartolai and Flood updated the committee on the status of the NBWW report, it is currently in the draft stage and the consultant is working to make the report more user friendly. The committee showed interest in doing a similar project after the NBWW water quality summary report is finished.

b. Update on the Dutch Gap Forest Preserve Project

Niedzinski updated the Monitoring Committee on the Dutch Gap Forest Preserve Project, the information was provided by Nick Huber from the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD). The LCFPD continues to collaborate with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for a Section 206 – Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration project at Dutch Gap Forest Preserve. The proposed project seeks to restore the entire 785-acre site by restoring stream, wetland and upland buffering communities. Potential actions include stream re-meandering, drain tile disablement, and reestablishing native plant communities across the entire preserve. Final project design is anticipated in Winter/Early Spring 2025, at which point the USACE will begin the process of hiring a contractor to perform the work. Contract award and permit approvals are anticipated by May 2025, then LCFPD/USACE/Contractor will determine a start date, likely to be Summer 2025. Construction may be completed in 2025, but ecological restoration efforts will continue.

c. DRWW 2025 Monitoring Plan Discussion

i. Guidance for Missed Sample Sites

LCHD is looking for guidance on how to monitor dry sites, Illinois EPA has not provided guidance on this topic. The Monitoring Committee decided that LCHD should continue report dry sites as dry/unable to collect, and not perform additional sampling.

ii. Bioassessment and Sediment Analysis

The Monitoring Committee discussed the frequency of bioassessment and sediment analysis. It is recommended that the committee go back to the recent MBI report and the recommendations MBI uses consensus-based sediment guidelines. In the current NPDES permit sediment analysis is recommended, but not required. The committee discussed performing bioassessment or sediment analysis after completion a substantial change to the watershed and decided to not to pursue this for the 2025 Fiscal Year and to resume discussion in July 2025.

iii. Review of the DRWW Monitoring Plan

The Monitoring Committee discussed the DRWW Monitoring plan, and any changes that will need to be made. Currently the monitoring done for the DRWW fulfills the NPDES permit requires for MS4. There was discussion to reorganize the monitoring schedule as there is budget for additional testing. The committee want to get recommendations from Geosyntec and Dr. Burkholder on how to structure a more nutrient focused monitoring program. The committee reached a consensus to keep the current monitoring plan for 2025 and start discussions on the 2026 monitoring plan.

d. DRWW Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) Comments Discussion

i. Ettinger and Sierra Club Comments on NARPs Submitted

Albert Ettinger from the Sierra Club submitted a letter to the Illinois EPA criticizing the NARP process and the reports that have been submitted. The letter recommends that the Illinois EPA rejects all NARPs submitted due to a lack of stakeholder involvement, and incomplete water quality target levels and reduction plans, and that agencies should be given until the end of 2025 to resubmit the NARP.

ii. Overview of Illinois Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Guidance Meeting

Bartolai gave an overview of the guidance meeting with the Illinois EPA. Illinois EPA recommended that DRWW respond to the comments received by Burkholder and Ettinger. Illinois EPA has not yet reviewed the DRWW NARP t has conf any discrepancies are noted it will be addressed in the NPDES permits. Illinois EPA is not anticipating responding to the Ettinger comments. The Monitoring Committee discussed what Illinois EPA is recommending and extended an invitation to Dr. Burkholder for a presentation on the comments at an upcoming meeting.

iii. *Geosyntec Proposal to Address Comments to the DRWW NARP

Geosyntec generated proposal to formulate a response to the Illinois EPA on the comments received from Dr. Burkholder and Ettinger on the DRWW NARP. The Monitoring Committee discussed the scope of the proposal and wanted a breakdown of the task items (which would

include position, hourly rate and number of hours) between the two documents that justifies the cost of the proposal.

Bartolai, seconded by Bland made a motion to table Geosyntec's proposal until a cost breakdown of the task items between the two letters is provided. Motion passed with a unanimous vote.

7. Member Comments

Niedzinski announced that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will be hosting a webinar on the updates for the Fox Illinois River Basin TMDL Project on September 25, 2024.

8. Next Meeting(s)

- a. Monitoring/Water Quality Improvements Committee Meeting October 17, 2024 at 12:30pm (LCDOT Conference Room A)

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Bland, seconded by Kuebker. Motion passed with unanimous vote. Flood adjourned the meeting at 1:40pm.