

SALT FORK RIVER WATERSHED IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

A sub-committee of the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District
2110 Park Court, Suite C
Champaign, IL 61821 (217) 352-3536 ext. 3

Minutes from the Implementation Committee Meeting of February 5, 2009 – 3 PM NRCS State Office

Present:

Ansel Anderson – Izaak Walton League	Mark David – UIUC
Tim Bachman – Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District	Al Wolfe – Salt Fork River Partners
Brad Bennett – City of Urbana	Gary Lutterbie – IDNR
Tom Berns – Berns, Clancy and Associates	Lloye Esry – Drainage District Commissioner
Clark Bullard – Prairie Rivers Network	Bruce Stickers – CCSWCD Staff
Jim Hoyt – Grand Prairie Friends	Renee Weitekamp – CCSWCD Staff
Paul Terrio – USGS	

Bruce Stickers called the meeting of sub-committee chairs to order 3:10 PM.

No agenda changes were requested.

The Channel Stewardship Subcommittee Revised Draft Recommendations for the Salt Fork Channel were discussed. Clark Bullard felt the phrase “survived a flood event” could be clarified better. The general consensus was to present the recommendations to the full implementation committee for approval.

The Chair meeting scheduled for April 2nd will be cancelled.

Several potential funding sources were discussed. Programs included: USDA National Water Quality Program, CSREES, and IEPA 319 Grants.

The sub-committee meeting was called to order at 3:33 PM.

The Channel Stewardship Subcommittee Revised Draft recommendation was added to the agenda.

The November meeting minutes will be changed to show the meeting was at the Tony Noel Building at Parkland College and the UI data website address will be corrected (<http://saltfork.nres.uiuc.edu/>).

Table 14 discussion was deferred. The most recent and up to date version of the table was not presented. It will be included in the next meeting’s information.

The revised draft recommendation from the Channel Stewardship Sub-committee was discussed. After discussion, Ansel Anderson made a motion to approve the recommendation for a future maintenance plan for the areas of the Salt Fork River outside any drainage district boundaries. Tom Berns seconded, motion carried.

Data from the Water Quality monitoring is continually being updated on the website (<http://saltfork.nres.uius.edu/>). A letter describing the project and asking for financial support was sent to local entities that could benefit from the data collected through the gaging stations. At this time, the City of Urbana and the City of Champaign have pledged financial support for the gaging stations. The UCSD may provide financial support in addition to the in kind labor they currently provide.

The Nutrient Management Sub-committee has been working on several projects. A grant proposal for a research project studying the impacts of nutrient placement with strip-till has been submitted to FREC. The sub-committee is also working on a brochure for homeowners that addresses the over application of lawn fertilizers.

Tom Berns noted the detention area built by the Urbana Park District west of the Scottswood Subdivision received recognition for its eco-friendly design.

Marc Miller, a Bondville native and former member of the Salt Fork Watershed Committee, was recently named as the new IDNR Director.

At the CCSWCD Annual Meeting, Tom Berns received the Outstanding Friend of Conservation Award.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 2, 2009 at 3:30 pm at a location to be announced.

Mr. Stickers adjourned the meeting and the attendees broke off into groups with the rest of their sub-committee for independent discussion.

**Revised DRAFT RECOMMENDATION to the SALT FORK
IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE from the CHANNEL STEWARDSHIP
SUBCOMMITTEE**

The charge to the Channel Stewardship Subcommittee was to "review the recent Salt Fork maintenance project to determine a future maintenance plan for the stream and then see what funding can be developed to do that maintenance. The committee is to keep in mind that any plan will respect the private property rights of landowners along the stream and will be consistent with the guidelines previously developed by the Salt Fork Steering Committee". Those guidelines have been incorporated into the CCSWCD 2007 "Watershed Implementation Plan for the Upper Salt Fork of the Vermilion River".

The "Salt Fork River Maintenance Project Final Report" was prepared by CCSWCD staff. After reviewing the report it is the opinion of the Subcommittee that -

- 1) An extensive stream survey, prior to physical maintenance work, is not a cost-effective tool. We believe a more reliable source of information regarding major problem sites along the Salt Fork would be communications from the adjacent landowners and from recreational users.
- 2) Predicting, and removing, potential problem trees is not the best use of limited funds. Rather, available funds should be directed to existing problem sites which threaten to grow more serious with time.

The Subcommittee believes that bank stabilization is too cost intensive to be undertaken by the watershed committee and is best left to individual land owners obtaining appropriate grants, perhaps in collaboration with the CCSWCD. Hence our focus has been on identifying funding to apply to stream blockage problems.

The present Subcommittee believes that an attempt to establish any new taxing district is likely to be unsuccessful and therefore recommends that the concept of voluntary payments be revisited by CCSWCD with the following suggestions -

- 1) CCSWCD should hold individual meetings with representatives of the municipalities and with the attorneys for a majority of the drainage districts to determine the most appropriate form of agreement. Upstream drainage

districts could be reminded that a contribution would be in lieu of assessments charged by any new taxing district that potentially could be established.

2) CCSWCD should establish a working fund of perhaps \$2000 to be used in the removal of "young" blockages before they become a more expensive undertaking. CCSWCD could then request voluntary contributions only as needed to maintain the working fund.

3) The landowner adjacent to a blockage should be asked for a voluntary cash or in-kind payment equal to 10% of the project cost with a cap of \$250.

4) Adjacent landowners and recreational users of the stream should be encouraged to report young blockages (defined as Condition Three in the 2007 Plan) which (a) cause soil erosion on land bordering the blockage and (b) have survived a flood event. CCSWCD would make the final decision whether the blockage is in need of attention.

5) Management activities within the stream should be approved by any landowner impacted by a project.

Ansel Anderson (chair)

Kent Krukewitt

John McMahon

Larry Pridemore

Larry Rishel

1/13/2009