

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 7, 2013 – 3:30 PM UCSD Meeting Room, Building W, 1100 E. University Ave., Urbana, IL 61803

Present:

Mark David – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Al Wolfe – Salt Fork River Partners Mallory Dolan – University of Illinois Urbana- Champaign George Czapar – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Ansel Anderson – Isaak Walton League Bruce Stickers – CCSWCD Staff Eleanor Blackmon – City of Champaign / CCSWCD Director Dennis Wandell – Salt Fork River Partners Daniel Olson – Champaign County Forest Preserve District Clark Bullard – Prairie Rivers Network	Jim Hoyt – Grand Prairie Friends Courtney Flint – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Tim Bachman – Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District Rick Manner – Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District Lowell Gentry – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Tom Berns – Berns, Clancy & Associates Jonathon Manuel – CCSWCD Staff John McMahon – Salt Fork River Partners Derek Liebert – Urbana Park District
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Eleanor Blackmon called the committee meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

No agenda changes were requested.

Minutes from November 1st, 2012 were approved with corrections, to be put on file.

Homer Lake / Educator / Habitat Sub-committee:

- A. Bruce Stickers informed the group about the cover crop plot that will be just outside of the watershed. This is part of an 82 acre field east of Philo that has been offered for this purpose. The SWCD office would be welcome to ideas of any cover crops the committee would like to see planted in the plot.
- B. Champaign County SWCD is planning on holding at least one County wide meeting on cover crops later this year.
- C. The Champaign County SWCD is planning two tours on cover crops for late summer.
- D. Mark David and Lowell Gentry told the group that the cover crop plot that they are monitoring did quite well, with nearly two tons of above-ground biomass and about 65 lbs/acre of nitrogen taken up. The tile draining the cover crop field has just started to show a decrease in nitrate compared to the matched control field. They will continue to monitor the cover crop biomass and tile nitrate concentrations through the spring.

The Nutrient Management sub-committee gave an update on:

- A. The agenda had the wrong topic for A it should have read “Salt Fork Point/Non-Point Nutrient Assessment Project Grant” This grant was approved for \$66,000 for this year. The goal is to keep the project going for 10 years. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago will be supplying technical support. This project will require a large percentage of landowners in the Spoon River watershed to take part to make this a success. Two questions will be addressed by this project. One, will enough landowners in the 27,000 acre Spoon River watershed agree to work together to make changes that leads to improved water quality (decreased nitrate concentrations)? Two, if there is good participation in changing practices, will there be a measurable change in river nitrate concentrations?
- B. Courtney Flint informed the committee that the second round of surveys will be going out in the next week or two for the Upper Salt Fork watershed. This will provide a good base line of information for the new project summarized above as well. She also introduced Mallory Dolan who will be doing face to face surveys.

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Water Quality Monitoring Sub-committee:

- A. The committee did not have much new information on the coal mine. At this time it does not look like they are going to be affecting the Salt Fork.
- B. Rick Manner did bring up some information that the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District has been contacted by a business that wishes to purchase a majority of its effluent. This would then be piped down to Tuscola and used for cooling. The Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District is beginning to look into this idea.
- C. Water quality data for the Salt Fork watershed is up-to-date through November 2012 and available at: saltfork.nres.illinois.edu

Channel Dynamics and Wildlife Habitat Sub-committee:

- A. Derek Liebert from the Urbana Park District would be interested in looking at a rain garden at that corner of Kesler Hall and Crystal Lake. The proposed rain garden would address overland flow from the parking lots to the Crystal Lake. Jonathon Manuel agreed to contact the Fairgrounds and a couple other groups to see about investigating this further.
- B. Derek Liebert also mentioned that the Urbana Park District is concerned about direct piped connections to the lake as well. Crystal Lake collects water from as far west as Lincoln Ave and releases to the Saline Branch of the Salt Fork. The sediment traps in place are approximately 30 years old and newer technologies are available that would improve water quality.

Information Sharing:

Meeting adjourned at 4:36 pm