

Appendix B-2. Watershed resident meeting summary notes

Assawoman Bay

Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS)

Summary Report

Meeting Date: August 10, 2007

Location: Showell Elementary, Berlin, Maryland 21811

This meeting highlighted best management practices (BMPs) suitable in the Assawoman Bay watershed. Living shorelines and other conservation efforts were discussed by Katherine Munson. Nelson Brice followed by adding additional implementation programs landowners can apply for to receive cost share funding to create wetlands and plant vegetative buffers, for example. Septic systems were discussed in detail during the July 18, 2007 meeting. Bob Mitchell, Director of the Environmental Programs Department, was on hand to address the septic system issues. Lastly, Keota Silaphone provided draft copies of the proposed best management practices recommended for the Assawoman Bay watershed. Details are provided below.

Meeting objectives

- Educate landowners about BMPs suitable in the Assawoman Bay watershed.
- Provide additional opportunities to landowners to get involved in implementing BMPs.
- Review draft recommendations from Assawoman Bay watershed plan.

Worcester County Conservation efforts—Katherine Munson, Planner IV, Worcester County Department of Comprehensive Planning

- Living shorelines
 - A management practice that provides erosion control that emulates natural habitat i.e. marsh as opposed to rock
 - Benefits
 - Better for habitat and water quality when compared to rip rap
 - Effective at controlling erosion, and in low energy environments
 - In the northern coastal bays there is a lot of armored shoreline—the county would like to encourage property owners to use alternative methods
 - To learn more, attend forest management workshop scheduled for September 28-29
 - County is in search for 3 or 4 demonstration projects in the coastal bays watershed which should be accessible by the public
- Forest Stewardship Workshop scheduled for September 28-29, 2007
 - Learn how to improve the health and productivity of woodland property, enhance wildlife habitat on forested property
 - Experts will teach sound forest and wildlife management practices that owners and managers can implement on forested lands.
- Land conservation options (40+ acres)
 - MALPF
 - program that protects in perpetuity agricultural land—with easement in concert with MDA
 - funding available for this program

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- general have funding to purchase easements
- Lower Shore Land Trust
 - accept donated easements
 - 40+ acres in size, farmed or forested to some extent
- Weidman property, 600 acres
 - mostly forested
 - county owns property (currently closed to the public)
 - purchased in 2006
 - to be used for environmental education-K-12
 - MCBP assembled group to develop a strategic plan
 - passive recreation opportunities
 - demonstration projects

General notes:

- Rip rap is not banned, however, the county is encouraging other alternatives
- The Maryland Coastal Bays Program funded a shoreline project in West Ocean City where beach prisms will be used to preserve the shoreline. To learn more about beach prisms, visit www.beachprisms.com.

Soil Conservation District programs—Nelson Brice, Conservationist, Worcester County Soil Conservation District

- Weidman Farm
 - SCD initially worked on the farm by taking 100 acres out of crop production
 - Another project attempted was to remove mosquito ditches from the marsh (not achieved)
- Farm and Ranch land protection (FRPP)
 - SCD not spending the money federal government wants SCD to spend
 - obstacle—coordinate MALPF funding with FRPP and several other restrictions to FRPP
- Farm Bill
 - 90% of SCD time is spent on Farm Bill
 - small part of Farm Bill is about small parcels (1-2 acres)
 - can only offer assistance to property owners if directly related to farm bill; other option is to refer someone else that can offer assistance
 - Laura of extension office can possibly help with residential issues
- WHIP-wildlife and habitat protection program
 - develop wetlands, trees, improve wildlife habitat
 - cost share program
 - Example: south of snow hill, 3 acre lot, owner wants a wetland on his property—horseshoe berm will be installed on edge of property, roof runoff directed to wetland
- EQUIP-must have ag income (\$1,000 annual income)
 - involves poultry houses, poultry tunnel houses
 - exception in forestry because it's assumed that the stump value will be greater than \$1,000 (must go through DNR to figure out what to do and then SCD can pay for ½ of cost)
- Cover crop program
 - best bang for our buck, farmer plants a wheat or rye cover crop
 - state has 20 million in this program
- CREP—crop land in production
 - program takes it out of production to plant grass buffers or put it into wetland
- RCD-resource conservation and development

General notes:

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- Goal of SCD is to keep people farming in this country—trying to solve the problems.

Septic systems—Bob Mitchell, Director, Worcester County Environmental Programs Department

Bob Mitchell addressed issues raised during July 18, 2007 meeting. They are listed below.

- Mount Aire chicken plant-no nutrients from DE chicken plant because they are currently going to ocean outfall
- Sediment pollution at headwaters of Greys Creek-
 - Cause—failure of BMP in Greys Creek (washout and their BMP is not filtering out the sediments)
 - Mine is being fined on a daily basis
 - Issue is going to EPA Region III
 - Residents asked whether they were going to rectify the sediment that has accumulated in Greys Creek?
 - Group will follow up with Bob Mitchell
- Reuse of sludge—county is applying sludge from Wicomico County to forested land west of Snow Hill
- Bayview Estates septic system hook ups
 - DE offered sewer for hidden harbor and bayview estates
 - Sewer & Water costs
 - Hook up cost--\$1,700-1,900 per year for residents
 - Under the clean water fund their was a 75% cost share but that money is not around anymore
 - County has money for upgrades to *health related issues* and *low income areas*. Environmental issue is not related to health issues.
 - Cheap monies that financed sewer construction is being paid over 20 years, a chunk of S&W bill is paying that loan because we're not a city
 - Low income area—bids are coming in 2-3 times higher than expected because of the dry wells in Somerset County (people are too busy)
 -
- Nitrogen load
 - Systems are failing for nitrogen
 - county uses 36 lbs for a normal septic system
 - upgrade systems: state is using 12 lbs for non critical area
 - upgrade system--6 lbs for critical area
- Bay Restoration Fund
 - Upgrade sewer treatment plants and septic to nitrogen removing technology
 - No monetary award to run sewer lines or hook up septic to plants
 - MDE does not want to run lines in fear of development
 - Application for nutrient reduction system for nitrogen (grant is \$6,200)
 - Pays for maintenance
 - Zero cost to the homeowner for the unit; 5-15 dollars for electric per month (pumping and aerator for sludge)
 - Visit every 6 months to check aerator is clean for 5 years
 - Maintenance is \$400 per year for a larger system or maybe \$125-200 for a single family home per year
 - Reducing BOD and solids as well as nitrogen
 - Will extend the life of your drain fields
 - Approved systems are on MDE websites (county is likely to use Norwico system= the cheapest and most effective, also locally installed)

General notes:

- 454 septic systems in Assawoman Bay (MD); 166 septic in critical area

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- Currently some of these nutrient reduction systems are in the county
 - goal of the state is to reduce by 50%
- Mandatory pretreatment for new homes
- Cost to hook up for Showell is \$1,000-\$1,500 tag and hook-up (piping)

Draft Recommendations—Keota Silaphone, GIS Analyst, Worcester County Department of Comprehensive Planning

- Explained the WRAS summary and the strategy proposed.
- WRAS process = makes county eligible for grant \$.
- Plan IDs concerns and how to address the concerns. Plan IDs BMPs their cost, their effectiveness and total the nutrient reductions.
- Reviewed list of BMPs.
- Explained the BMP analysis: quantity of potential BMPs, effectiveness of BMP and calculate reduction and cost per BMP.
- Working on developing cost/effectiveness for some of the BMPs.
- List of most cost effective BMPs; cover crops are the best in terms of effectiveness.
- Cost per lb comparison helps to set priorities for comparing BMPs.
- Asked the group to review and let us know if we have missed something or other feedback. Concerned about content rather than format.
- Map provided and land cover summary lists along with program summaries provided.

General notes:

- Isle of Wight did not have this type analysis. It will be done to upgrade the IOW WRAS
- Next meeting late September/early October.
- Final plan in November meeting EPA's criteria.
- Assawoman Bay updates can be viewed at <http://www.co.worcester.md.us/cp/compindex.htm>.

Adjourned at 7:58 PM.