



OTTER CREEK BASIN

clean water service provider

2024-04-24 Otter Creek Basin Water Quality Council Agenda

Present: Ellen Cronan (ACRWC), Hilda Haines (Danby), Arabella Holzapfel (ACRPC-chair), Kate Kelly (LCA), Gioia Kuss (Weybridge), Adam Piper (VLT), Barbara Noyes-Pulling (RRPC), Pam Stefanek (OCNRCD)

Absent: Nanci McGuire (RNCD)

Public: Angie Allen (DEC), Claire Madden (DEC), Staci Pomeroy (DEC), Chris Robbins (ACRWC), Matt Witten (ACRWC)

Staff: Mike Winslow, Deron Rixon

1. Amendments to the Agenda - none
2. Approve [Minutes](#) of January meeting. **Moved by Ellen. Second by Barbara. All in favor. Gioia abstained.**
3. Review of DEC's P Calculators - Staci Pomeroy and Claire Madden -
 - a. P Reduction calculator tools are built for planning and prioritization. Tools are simplified compared to tools that will be used for actual accounting. This is especially true for the spreadsheet based model.
 - b. Trainings on the [Spreadsheet tools](#) have been recorded and are available on line.
 - c. DEC has Standard Operating Procedures ([SOPs](#)) for calculating P reductions from various projects
 - d. DEC expects P reduction estimates to evolve over a projects design and implementation stages
 - e. P credits are assigned based on the tools available when project implementation is complete. DEC does these calculations. Methods may be updated in the future, but they will not retroactively address CWSP credits after they're assigned
 - f. Kate K. asked who makes final P assignments? Are project details self reported or determined by DEC? Claire - project details included in project close out reporting. DEC bases reductions on that reporting. The watershed planner checks submitted data and reports. A verification and maintenance program is in development. Kate - How important is it for the BWQC to check calculations as they receive them? Claire - it's up to the CWSP and BWQC to decide. Some



OTTER CREEK BASIN

clean water service provider

project types will be straightforward, but others have more room for change between stages.

- g. All structural stormwater practices have a web-based tool, and P calculations should be straightforward. Also Lake shoreline stabilizations
- h. Riparian buffers can have up to three different components of P reduction; Two in the spreadsheet, treatment of overland flow and land use change in the buffer area, and one in the Functioning Floodplain Initiative (FFI), reconnection to the floodplain.
- i. Gully restoration - P crediting and eligibility are intermingled. Gully projects require addressing upstream water sources before being eligible. Others might be addressed in the FFI. Some gullies don't fit into current project types and may require other P accounting methods. Specific projects will need to be addressed individually.
- j. Forest roads - methods in the SOP are more in depth than in the calculator tool. Many data inputs required; DEC is consolidating them to align with Municipal Road General Permit standards. Clarification will be needed on the project type. There will be more uncertainty associated with P estimates on these projects.
- k. Private roads - loading rates are not specific to private roads so DEC will be using municipal road loading rates, but DEC may update as more information becomes available.
- l. Any changes to SOPs will be subject to public comment
- m. The spreadsheet floodplain and stream project tab uses a simulated median value for project types. They're meant for initial phases of project development. As the project moves to implementation, FFI would offer a more accurate estimate of P reductions.
- n. Projects not included, such as native revegetation and tree canopy expansion, will be included in the next version of the tool, but calculations are straightforward. Agricultural projects are left out of the calculator due to eligibility concerns.
- o. Staci [oversees the FFI tool](#) which was released about one year ago. FFI has built in incentives (more possibility for P reduction) for targeting projects to streams that are less connected to their floodplain.
- p. A user management system is in development to allow project tracking and updating.
- q. Not all streams have a reduction allocation
- r. Strategic wood addition not currently included in the tool



OTTER CREEK BASIN

clean water service provider

- s. Previous trainings have been recorded and are [available on the DEC website](#).
 - t. Gioia asked about the source of the floodplain data. Statewide river corridor data were used for the floodplain. Inundation consideration uses a UVM topographic based model. FEMA maps are in the process of being updated, but the FFI tool does not use those.
 - u. Ellen asked about further guidance on when and how to use the spreadsheet tool. Particularly, which tool for each project type; considerations around accuracy in the tool (e.g. which tools are more or less likely to change). Claire can work on that.
 - v. After Claire and Staci left, Kate asked about they Wyman Wales P calculations
 - i. Final calculations will be completed by DEC. As noted by Claire, there are up to three different components of the reduction score and they are additive. Discrepancies between scores primarily occurred in the FFI component.
 - ii. Regardless of changes the project is still cost effective
4. Request for Additional Funds - West Rutland has requested additional funding for their wetland restoration final design. The request was greater than 50% of the original award, so requires BWQC approval. Details were included in the BWQC packet.
- a. **Gioia Moved to approve the additional funding request . Second by Barbara. All in favor.**
5. Establish a Finance Committee. The Finance Committee would be authorized to approve requests for increased funding between BWQC meetings as per the BWQCs [Budget Amendment](#) policy. Finance Committee meetings would be publicly warned.
- a. Ellen, Barbara, and Arabella volunteered to serve
 - b. **Kate moved to appoint Ellen, Barbara, and Arabella to the finance committee. Barbara seconded. All in favor.**
6. CWSP Application Process Check in
- a. Review Draft RFP
 - b. Kate would like to see the BWQC application information in one document
 - c. The BWQC discussed rolling applications. Kate, as an applicant feels it might move projects faster. Perhaps quarterly would meet the need. Barbara noted that the South Lake has moved toward rolling applications. Adam P. said it would be handy to put in applications as they are ready.
 - d. Ellen expressed concern that applicants looking at the efficiency scores would discourage some projects (e.g. high cost stormwater projects) from coming in.
7. Annual Meeting and Election of BWQC Officers



OTTER CREEK BASIN

clean water service provider

- a. **Gioia moved to approve Arabella as chair and Pam as vice-chair. Ellen seconded. All in favor.**
- b. Arabella thanked the BWQC for their confidence in her.
8. Reactions from Clean Water Summit
 - a. Ellen was discouraged by the parting comments from the state, referring to the summit being an airing of grievances. Felt that the comment indicated the concerns raised would not be taken seriously. Many of the BWQCs and CWSPs are experiencing similar problems.
 - b. Adam appreciated that the CWSP was willing to point out real problems with the system
9. Funded Projects Status update - information in packet
 - a. Ellen asked about the LDFLA Sucker Project. The quarterly report noted possible impacts of sediment transport in the Brook. Mike noted that the funding is for development of the project. Any issues that arise can still be addressed in design.
 - b. Ellen asked about the West Rutland and Shoreham IDDE projects, and coordination with the Watershed Projects Database. She asked that we ensure past projects be brought forward into the database with these IDDE projects. Angie noted that if project proponents are not hearing back from her about getting projects into the database, they should feel free to poke her.
 - c. Barbara asked if the quarterly reports could include the end dates in the future.
 - d. Kate would like to see the scoring approach for the IDDE projects. That will be included with final reports.
10. Adjourn: Moved by Ellen. Adjourn at 15:25.

Next Meeting - July 24, 2024 at 2PM