

**Goose Creek Watershed Planning Meeting  
February 12, 2015  
Downtown Sheridan Association Community Room  
Meeting Minutes**

Present:

Amy Ormseth  
Bill Adsit  
Robert Brug  
Orrin Connell  
Travis Cundy  
Amy Doke  
Vicki Taylor  
Sandy Baird

Bill Adsit  
Rod Liesinger  
Brad Mohrmann  
Marlin Norling  
Rick Pallister  
Roger Reinke  
Dan Roberts  
Carrie Rogaczewski

Cathy Rosenthal  
Michael Watkins  
Pam Winterholler  
Susan Holmes  
Matt Westkott  
Beth Holsinger  
John Heath

Susan Holmes called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Open and Introductions:**

Susan Holmes, watershed representative for the Sheridan County Conservation District Board of Supervisors welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those in attendance to provide a brief introduction of their affiliation with the group. After introductions, Susan provided a brief history of the Goose Creek Watershed Group. The group has been active in the Goose Creek Watershed since 2003. The group was formed following the Goose Creek Watershed Assessment in 2002-2003. The initial purpose was to develop a watershed plan (approved by WDEQ in 2005) to address water quality concerns in the Goose Creek Watershed. After the initial and subsequent plans were developed, the group continued to meet to provide input on programs and activities.

**Activities/Progress Updates:**

***Downtown Sheridan Association:*** The Downtown Sheridan Association has been working with the City of Sheridan on removing the concrete flood control chutes through downtown to restore the historical appearance and flood control through the City of Sheridan. The project is undergoing a feasibility study and is now in the hands of the City of Sheridan and the Corps of Engineers. They have also been involved with the current construction on Dow and N. Main.

***Sheridan County:*** Rod Liesinger, Sheridan County Public Works Director, informed the group that Steve Bond retired so there is a new building official, Wess Smiley, working for Sheridan County. Wess is involved with septic system and flood hazard regulations. Rod feels like the County has a pretty good handle on septic systems within the County and they were recently able to partner with Sheridan County Conservation District and The Nature Conservancy to do a septic to sewer conversion on Little Goose Creek.

***City of Sheridan:***

### **Storm Sewer Maintenance/*E. coli* Detection Project**

Dan Roberts, Utilities Manager for the City of Sheridan, updated the group that the City of Sheridan is working with Sheridan County, primarily through SAWS, on the Watershed Control Plan aimed at addressing *Cryptosporidium* in the Upper Big Goose Creek Drainage. He also mentioned that through the TMDL, the City identified a 25% pathogen loading within the City of Sheridan and needed a 92% reduction in *E. coli* loading from storm water outfalls. The City has since tested the stormwater outfalls. 17 of the 19 outfalls tested positive for *E. coli*. The City was able to apply for and receive a 319 Clean Water Grant to try and find the source of the *E. coli* contamination. They also put in the grant to do video inspection and cleaning focused on hotspots identified in a previous study. They are also trying to identify any cross contamination issues, such as direct sewer discharge into storm drains. The City applied for \$250,000.00 and received \$125,000.00. They hope to start implementing the grant in the spring or summer of 2015. They have also already installed stormceptors at four locations. Stormceptors control sediment and hydrocarbon loading. They capture floating oils, greases, etc that get evacuated out. They also help with sediment loading into the creeks.

### **Big Goose Watershed Control Plan:**

Brad Mohrman with K•Coe Isom, was hired by SAWS and the City to develop a watershed control plan for source drinking water. Sheridan has been identified as having to have a 90% reduction in *cryptosporidium* to meet water quality standards. To accomplish this task, key stakeholders were gathered from SAWS, the City of Sheridan, Bighorn National Forest Service, the Sheridan County Conservation District, EPA and WDEQ. They are very close to finishing the Plan and getting it approved by EPA. Once they get the plan approved they will get credit for having the Control Plan in place. To qualify for the credit, the EPA requires four things: a delineation of the area of influence; identify potential or actual sources of *cryptosporidium* (humans, livestock or wildlife); develop control measures to address sources and develop measures to address how effective control measures are; and identify partners.

*Cryptosporidium* has not been addressed above the intake. Stakeholders gathered to address the plan with a list of recommendations to address the crypto. The group looked at BMP's, regulations and guidelines and didn't develop many new action items than those previously identified. The group took the recommendations and put them together in a document spelling them out to identify how to measure their effectiveness and how to prioritize them to implement the Plan. So far this has been a 1 ½ year process. The actual Plan was developed in the summer of 2014. It was first submitted to EPA in late summer. EPA reviewed the Plan and suggested a few changes. The Plan was resubmitted in January 2015. The group has received word from EPA that the Plan meets requirements and they are now waiting for final approval. The Plan was not submitted in time to receive credit if there is another crypto hit, but due to the aggressiveness of the group, it may still qualify for credit. The Plan needs to be formally adopted by SAWS and the City, and then it will be open to a public comment period.

### ***Sheridan County Conservation District (SCCD):***

### **2015 Water Quality Monitoring Update:**

Carrie Rogaczewski, District Manager for the SCCD visited with the group about the past monitoring effort on the Goose Creek Watershed. The last time the watershed was sampled was in 2012. The results show that the watershed continues to have issues with bacteria in the same reaches that previously tested high for bacteria. The Board has spent quite a lot of time discussing the overall water quality monitoring objectives: how useful it is, is it cost effective, and should we continue to do it? The answer is "Yes". The Board does feel that it is expensive. To try and figure out how to deal with the expense issue, Carrie visited with Jennifer Zygmunt, WDEQ Non-Point Source Coordinator, to get her opinion on how we should continue. Jennifer has been very pleased with our efforts in all three watersheds, but recognized there are many different ways to go about sampling. A couple different ideas she suggested are to eliminate sites and/or eliminate the number of times a site is sampled. The Board feels that a geometric mean is necessary for both high and low flows so eliminating the number of samples taken is not an option. They were, however, receptive to eliminating some of the sites sampled. Carrie looked at the current sites and decided to eliminate most of the new sites added in 2012. There will be approximately 19 sites between Goose Creek, Big Goose Creek, Little Goose Creek and their tributaries. There will still be 10 samples for each site and there will still be continuous temperature recorders at select sites, macroinvertebrate sampling at select sites, and flow measurements at all sites. The Goose Creek Watershed is scheduled to be monitored this year.

#### **Cost Share Program Update:**

Carrie explained that the District recently updated the ranking criteria for cost-share programs. The District has also reinstituted a batching period. The District felt like it was time to stop taking applications on a continuous basis and make participants apply at certain times. Initially there are two separate batching dates. The Board will review applications in April and August, so participants need to have their applications turned into the District by March 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. This allows District staff to look at potential projects prior to the Board meetings. The staff felt like these two dates still allowed plenty of time for summer and fall construction, which is typical for most projects. The Board did request for an emergency provision to be included for septic systems that failed outside of the batching period, but would otherwise qualify for funding. The staff is working on getting the process up on the District website, along with project applications. Carrie also noted that the District participated in its first septic to sewer connection, which was mentioned by Rod earlier in the meeting.

#### ***Bacteria Load Reduction Needs/Requirements:***

##### **Priority Areas:**

The WDEQ developed the Goose Creek TMDL, which was finished in 2010. The TMDL used data that was collected by the District in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2009 to determine bacteria load reductions in each watershed and subwatershed. These load reductions are based on concentrations of bacteria over time. The TMDL assigned a percent reduction needed to meet water quality standards. Carrie took the data from 2012 and compared it with the previous data. The data comparison is displayed on two maps. While the maps do not show a specific increase/decrease trend, we can use the information to help prioritize projects.

**Progress Register:** Carrie passed out Progress Registers to members of the committee. Progress Registers are maps that show water quality improvement projects within each watershed. When the watershed steering committees were first formed, they knew it would be tough to see direct correlations between projects and bacteria reductions. To make a meaningful connection, Progress Registers were developed to show the progress of water quality improvement, by highlighting improvement projects. The registers are updated annually.

***Plan Progress Review and Update:***

In 2011, the Goose Creek Watershed Group decided since the TMDL had already been completed, that it was not necessary to rewrite the Goose Creek Watershed Plan. Instead, the group decided to write an Implementation Strategy, incorporating items from the TMDL. The strategy was given a three year timeline, which ends in December 2015. Most of the items in the Implementation Strategy have been completed or addressed, with the exception of developing a cost-share program for urban runoff. The District hasn't been able to get this off the ground and has intentionally been a bit slow at pursuing this program due to problems with the initial rain garden. The District doesn't want to offer a program that may, in the future, cause problems. Since we are nearing the end of the timeline for the Implementation Strategy, Carrie asked the group what they wanted to do about extending the timeline and/or rewriting the strategy. The group decided to wait until this fall to start meeting again to develop a new strategy, that way it will be a bit closer to when the actual timeline expires.

***Public Information and Education Action Items:***

**Watershed Signs:**

Amy Doke, Program Specialist with the Sheridan County Conservation District informed the group that the District has been working on two informative signs to be placed along the City of Sheridan pathways system. The signs will be placed in South Park and Kendrick Park. The information on the signs is the same with the exception of a small paragraph about each respective location located beneath a map on each sign. The information is intended to be positive and help engage people in why they should care about water quality in our area. The signs are almost complete and should be installed later this spring or early summer.

**Septic Folders/Inserts:**

Amy also explained that the SCCD recently revamped some information to be distributed to homeowners who apply for septic permits through Sheridan County. In the past, the District had supplied the County with "Homeowner Folders" through the Small Flows Clearinghouse out of West Virginia. The assembled folders are no longer available for purchase, but the information in the folders can be downloaded from the Small Flows Clearinghouse website. The County ran out of folders and was downloading the information for people when they came in to apply for their permits. This process was a bit cumbersome, and the information, while good, was a bit redundant and more than was necessary. Amy and Carrie went through all of the information that was included in the original folders and condensed it onto a front

and back, full color, septic fact sheet. They also had new folders printed through Quick Printing. The County is now distributing the folders with only the septic fact sheets inside. They have also mailed out the septic fact sheets to homeowners with their SAWS bills.

***Additional Comments from Group:***

Mayor Heath wanted to thank everyone for all they do. He feels it's critical to continue the watershed effort. The work that is going on in the Goose Creek Watershed really makes a big impact in the overall scheme of water quality in our area.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for fall 2015.

Submitted by Amy Doke, SCCD Program Specialist