Otter Creek Steering Committee Meeting - 19 January 2017

Attendees: Jim Speer, Sue Berta, Garrett Pendergast, Hannah Lynch, Dana Gadeken, Tyler Trout, Josh Brosmer, Larry Owen, Bob and Mary Wilkie, Mike Davis, Emily Bruner, Michelle Marincel Payne, Phil Cox, Adam Grossman, Matt Mace

Concerns:

* E.coli concerns – where does it originate and can we identify its source
* Heavy metal issues throughout the watershed
* Is this project a good use of government funds
* How this project will impact agriculture and how agriculture impacts natural resources
* Flooding concerns and their impact on drinking water
* Flooding (17 floods over the last 80 years)
* Improved (faster) stream flow needed/stream needs cleaned
* Coordination of water release from Cecil Harden into the Wabash that results in flow backwards into Otter Creek and/or Lost Creek
* Natural resource conservation
* Cleaning and slowing the flow of water before it enters the stream
* Preserving forest land and improved/additional tree planting/reforestation
* Ways to engage the public including school age children to carry our message
* Manure management (small agriculture production)
* Small animal farms – where are these located and how do they handle their manure – should connections be made between small producers (horses specifically mentioned) and potential users (ISU garden)
* Responsible nitrogen application/optimizing for yield

Project History: General overview of timeframe of application (fall 2016) and contract status with IDEM provided.

Project Structure/Timeframe:

* Stream monitoring – 12 stream sites monitored 24 times starting as soon as the streams thaw. Monitoring will include grab samples for total suspended solids, total phosphorus, sulfate and E. coli and in stream measurement of dissolved oxygen, temperature, conductivity, turbidity, pH, nitrate, and ammonia
* Education and outreach – Indiana American Water plant tour; workshops focused on septic maintenance, forest management/maintenance and ag-based workshop potentially cover crops; volunteer water quality monitoring; clean up event
  + Pendergast, Bruner, and Lynch volunteered to assist with planning a cover crop workshop
  + Owen volunteered to assist with planning the forest management/maintenance workshop
  + Bruner and Cox volunteered to assist with planning the clean up event
* Watershed management plan – first draft submitted in December 2017; next draft due in May 2018

Vision Drafts:

First iterations from work groups:

* Have a future where sustainable development is the norm for all activities impacts our natural resources especially Otter Creek.
* Otter Creek a source of pride.
* A place where families can learn about history and enjoy recreational activities at Markle Mill Park/Otter Creek.
* Rebuild Markel Mill and have historical recreational area based around Markle Mill Park, Markle House and Forest Park.
* Sustain Otter Creek watershed for multiple uses.

Combined iterations:

* Remediate Otter Creek.
* Improve Otter Creek.
* Otter Creek Watershed is sustainable for multiple uses.
* Otter Creek Watershed is sustainable for all activities.
* Otter Creek Watershed is a source of price that supports multiple uses.
* Otter Creek Watershed is a source of pride.
* Improving Otter Creek Watershed for future generations.

Options for consideration:

* Otter Creek Watershed is sustainable for multiple uses.
* Otter Creek Watershed is a source of pride.
* Improving Otter Creek Watershed for future generations.

Vision Drafts:

First iterations from work groups:

* A community of volunteers promoting awareness and providing assistance to education and improve the Otter Creek Watershed.
* Local residents improving the quality of the Otter Creek Watershed for future generations through identify concerns, removing barriers and providing education.
* Project strives to improve the water quality through education and motivation for future generations to enjoy recreational and historical resources.

Option for consideration:

* Local residents in the Ottershed (otter creek watershed) improving water quality through education and awareness for future generations.

The mission and vision options will be reviewed at the start of the next meeting in hopes of finalizing these for review at the mid-point of the project.

Meetings: third Friday odd months – Peel will confirm meeting location and then provide details for future meeting dates.