

**Curry's Fork Watershed Plan
Technical Committee Meeting**

Thursday February 16, 2012
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Oldham County Fiscal Courthouse, La Grange, KY

Curry's Fork Watershed Plan Update and Implementation

1) Welcome and Introductions

Paul Maron from Strand Associates, Inc. (SAI) welcomed the 11 stakeholders in attendance to the meeting. Representatives from University of Louisville (UL), Oldham County Environmental Authority (OCEA), Oldham County Schools (OCS), Kentucky Division of Water (KDOW), Lagrange Utilities (LU), and United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) were also in attendance.

2) Watershed Plan Update

Paul Maron provided a brief review of the project history of the Curry's Fork Watershed Plan from 2004 to current and the number of parties involved in the WP to illustrate how it has developed over the past eight years.

Paul Maron provided an update on the current status of the Watershed Plan and the recent communications with Kentucky Division of Water. The WP had been originally submitted to KDOW in September 2011. KDOW provided comments in December 2011. Comments from KDOW were discussed and addressed in a WP resubmittal in February 2012. Currently the WP resubmittal is being reviewed by KDOW staff.

Paul explained that the original WP submittal was well received by KDOW. The comments provided by KDOW were well thought out, thorough, and overall improved the plan. KDOW did not have any comments that significantly changed the plan, mostly clarification comments to improve the flow of the document.

3) Stream Restoration Project Update

Art Parola (UL) discussed the current status of the Stream Restoration project in Beth Stuber's absence (Oldham County Engineer). Art went into a brief history of the project and explained that it was delayed for several years due to numerous easement and easement language issues. It is now scheduled to start March 15, 2012 due to permitting constraints and is estimated to be completed by October 2012, although an August or September completion is possible depending on work speed and weather conditions.

The current plan is for Oldham County Fiscal Court (OCFC) and UL to host a pre-construction meeting for the nearby residents between March 12-14, although no official date has been set. Although this meeting will be geared toward the public and nearby residents, Corrine Mulberry (Independent Watershed Advisor) encouraged the Technical Committee (TC) to participate in the meeting and that another potential tour of the Stream Restoration Project be set up specifically for the TC.

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Paul discussed the potential for additional Stream Restoration work through separate funding avenues.

4) Watershed Plan Implementation Update

Paul discussed that the available budget for implementation for the next year (until June 2013) was around ~\$150,000 and noted that some of the budget will need to be set aside for reporting purposes. After implementation for this year is complete, OCFC will be pursuing funding for an additional three years for more implementation projects.

5) Proposed Solutions to Implement

Two primary solutions were proposed by the Curry's Fork team for available implementation money within the next year. These two solutions were presented to the TC to solicit feedback on their feasibility and potential impact to water quality in the watershed.

a) Watershed Coordinator

The TC discussed a number of functions the Watershed Coordinator would serve. Several are the primary functions discussed were developing education and marketing programs, coordinating. The Watershed Coordinator would be a single point of information and coordination for all WP activities and would be the driving force to keep the WP implementation moving. The concept of a Watershed Coordinator was well received by the TC if the appropriate person could be found for the position. The Watershed Coordinator would have a part in all the solutions discussed throughout the TC meeting, whether it was through coordination of agencies, developing presentations, marketing the plan, pursuing funding for implementation, or other tasks.

b) South Curry's Fork Riparian Planting Project

Discussions with the Curry's Fork team and OCFC indicated that some implementation money should be dedicated to a physical solutions that watershed residents can see and be involved in, increasing their personal connection to the watershed. A Riparian Planting project in South Curry's Fork was identified as a Tier 1 BMP due to the biological, habitat, and riparian conditions of the South Curry's Fork watershed, especially the upper portion.

Initially the Curry's Fork project team envisioned a tree planting within South Curry's Fork that was separate from the Stream Restoration project. Concerns were raised by UL regarding site selection for such a project. While a tree planting project is something that can be feasibly done within the time and budget constraints of the implementation money, site selection would be critical for a successful, long lasting planting. UL cautioned the TC that tree plantings can potentially hinder future restoration efforts if the site is not selected carefully. Tree planting efforts could be partially wasted if there are plans for development or utilities in the area. It could also prevent a more robust Stream

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Restoration project from being completed because there would be resistance to disturbing the previous plantings.

As an alternative, UL recommended that the tree planting project could be done in conjunction with the Stream Restoration project. While part of the Stream Restoration project budget is set aside for tree plantings, there is none for a wetland area. A wetland planting would involve the watershed residents in the same fashion as a tree planting and would be in an ideal location where a Stream Restoration project has already been constructed, minimizing the chance it would hinder future projects, utilities, or development. The concept of a wetland planting at the stream restoration site was well received by the TC.

Although some plantings may not be permanent where development or utilities will eventually be placed, Kurt Mason (USDA-NRCS) expressed that these areas should not be ignored. Lower cost options are available to increase the quality of these areas before development occurs. One option mentioned was a native grass planting instead of a full tree planting or riparian planting. Property owners may also be more willing to participate with native grass plantings.

c) Others if Funds are Available

The following solutions were also discussed if funds allowed for more implementation with the available implementation money and time limit.

1) Other Stream Restoration or Tree Planting Sites

As discussed with the South Curry's Fork Tree Planting project, site selection would be important if this was pursued.

2) Watershed/Stream Signage

Several TC members expressed the difficulty they experienced in past watershed signage projects due to requirements and coordination between State and Local governments. Varying types of signage was discussed in further detail for the Stream Restoration Project instead of signage for the watershed, such as a sign local students could help produce with pictures and descriptions of wildlife found in the area.

3) Septic System Inspections

The Watershed Coordinator would play an important role in this solution. Other septic system inspection and education programs are already in place, the Watershed Coordinator would work with other agencies to make sure work was not duplicated.

4) Monitoring

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Art Parola suggested setting up a more permanent type metering station for long term, continuous monitoring as opposed to grab samples. This type of sampling would be easier to prove water quality improvements through BMPs in the watershed.

A Watershed Coordinator would also coordinate with other agencies performing water quality monitoring in the watershed to share information and reduce duplication of work.

5) Coordinate Water/Wastewater Expansions

This idea was well received within the TC. This solution would be handled by the Watershed Coordinator through working with the various utilities and agencies within Oldham County.

6) Public Access to the Stream Restoration Project Site

An important part of proposed solutions was to develop a connection between residents and the watershed. Access to the Stream Restoration project via a small drive or local parking with a walking trail was discussed to allow residents access to the improvements in Curry's Fork. The general consensus of the TC is that Curry's Fork has poor public access to most of its streams.

7) 1-Day Educational Seminar for Elected Officials

A 1-day seminar focused on educating local elected officials was well received by the TC. It was proposed that Art Parola would conduct the seminar which would include an indoor presentation and an outdoor tour of local 'good' and 'bad' streams in the watershed.

d) Solutions to Fund in the Future with Additional Three Years of Funding

1) Continue Funding for Watershed Coordinator

This solution was well received by the TC.

- 2) Other Stream Restoration Projects identified for South Curry's Fork
- 3) Stream Restoration Projects identified for Asher's Run
- 4) Septic System Solutions for Asher's Run (education, inspections, repairs)
- 5) Water Quality Data Management Agency
- 6) FEMA

6) Funding for Future Projects

Brooke Shireman (KDOW) discussed the available funding for future Watershed Plan projects. Limited funding is available and it diminishes each year due to budget cuts. Approximately \$1M is currently budgeted for future implementation projects that OCFC could apply for. Brooke

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encouraged that projects stay below \$200,000, otherwise the project would consume too large a portion of the available funding and the project may not be selected.

7) Closing and Conclusions

Overall,