

Michigan Stream Team Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2012

The meeting was held at the US FWS facility in East Lansing, and was chaired by Cyndi Rachol. Minutes were taken by Joe Rathbun.

Attendees:

Joe Rathbun Chad Kotke Travis Dahl Bethany Matousek	Coreen Strzalka Cyndi Rachol Sean Duffey Chris Freiburger
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Commitments:

- Joe R. will investigate how other states dealt with surveying regional reference curve sites in ecoregions similar to our Lake Plain ecoregion.
- DEQ staff will continue to scout for regional reference curve locations, and notify Army Corps staff when they travel to the Monroe area.
- Jim S., Chad K., Cyndi R., Chris F., Sean D. and Coreen S. will compile suspended and bedload sampling procedures used by their agencies and meet to discuss the results at NRCS in Lansing, on March 7.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 21, 2012. Location to be determined.

Agenda item 1: Lake Plain ecoregion reconnaissance

Joe R. summarized a recent reconnaissance field trip to scout sites for the 2012 regional reference curve project. DEQ staff visited 18 sites in the Thumb, mostly in the Pigeon and Pinnebog River watersheds, and found 6 or 7 sites that seem suitable for the curve project. Staff noted 3 situations that may cause difficulties for the surveyors:

- The length of stable reaches may sometimes be less than 2 bankfull widths.
- Due to local geology, some of the streams have few if any riffles.
- Watershed sizes at suitable sites identified to date may have a binary distribution, with larger watersheds in the Pigeon and Pinnebog and small watersheds in the coastal Lake Huron area.

These issues, especially the first two, may require altering our survey SOP. It was agreed that this possibility will be addressed after more potentially suitable sites have been identified. It was also agreed that **Joe R.** will contact staff in Maryland and North Carolina who have previously dealt with these issues when surveying their coastal zones.

DEQ staff plan to scout for more sites in the next few months, north of Saginaw Bay, along the Lake Huron shore, and in the Monroe area. Corps staff will be invited along on the Monroe site visits.

Travis D. asked if the Corps could satisfy its match commitment to the 2012 reference curve work by surveying streams outside of the Lake Plain ecoregion, as they worked on

other projects elsewhere (especially the UP). This will require further discussion with Ralph Reznick, who was not in attendance.

Item 2: Discussion of sediment rating curves

We had a wide-ranging discussion on the need for and mechanics of sediment rating curves. Some highlights were:

- **Chris F.** noted that having sediment rating curves and applying them through Rosgen's Watershed Assessment of River Stability and Sediment Supply (WARSSS) procedure allowed folks working in some watershed in Colorado to get minimal or no permits for sedimentation BMPs for a period of 25 years as long as they use the curves to demonstrate the effectiveness of the BMPs.
- It was noted that the USGS GLRI projects are only collecting suspended sediment data; a common situation around the country. **Joe R.** noted that DEQ's TMDL-related sampling on Kids Creek in Traverse City and Ruddiman Creek in Muskegon is for both suspended load and bedload.
- Sampling techniques were briefly discussed, and a committee of **Jim S., Chad K., Cyndi R., Chris F., Sean D. and Coreen S.** was charged with summarizing the techniques used by their agencies. They will do so by March 7, and meet at NRCS on that date to compile the results. This will be a first step in identifying procedures the Team might use or recommend if and when we pursue development of sediment rating curves in Michigan.
- **Chris F.** noted that developing sediment rating curves, like regional reference curves, requires data from stable streams. **Joe R.** added that DEQ's data collection efforts for TMDLs are at presumably unstable streams.

Item 3: Items of importance to those in attendance

Joe R. noted that the University of Wisconsin will conduct a 2-day short course on dam removals immediately before the annual Ecohydrology and Fish Passage conference in Amherst, MA, in the first week of June.

Chris F. and **Coreen S.** attended a meeting on stream connectivity in Menominee, with colleagues from MI, MN, and WI. Chris primarily discussed how the road design software *Roadsoft* will now include the new road crossing inventory form that he and others have been working on. This software is free and available at www.roadsoft.org.

Chris F. also mentioned a stream barrier inventory being conducted in the northern Lower Peninsula by DNR, DEQ, MDOT and the Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, as well as a similar effort in southeast Michigan by the Huron River Watershed Council.

Bethany M. mentioned a Great Lakes connectivity webinar to be held on January 25th. Its areas of focus are community engagement and support; invasive species management; contaminants management; and project prioritization. The link is: <http://www.sustainourgreatlakes.org/MediaResources/Overview.aspx>

Cyndi R. discussed progress in getting our reference curve data into the online water library at Northern Michigan College. She will continue this work and may complete the data transfer by sometime in March.

Travis D. noted that the Corps is working to set up a program to train volunteer groups to collect geomorphology data; transects, pebble counts, etc. Jim Selegian is the contact for this. Travis also noted that Calvin Creech will be on temporary duty in Brazil, which may impact some of the field work the Corps staff expected to do this coming field season.

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