

Illinois River Watershed Partnership

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, August 6, 2015

Watershed Learning Center, Cave Springs, Arkansas

Pre-Meeting: Dinner and Tour of White River Memoirs art exhibit by Chris Engholm, tour of new Native American Heritage Room in the Learning Center by Jennifer Michaels, CWR Coordinator, and tour of Plein Air Painters of the Ozarks in the Windgate Art Gallery, and tour of Farmer's Market and new Pavilion on North Shore

Welcome and Call to Order: Sam Goade, President

IRWP Board members Attending: Scott Carney, Mike Faupel, Sam Goade, Tom Hopper, Hunter Haynes, Sarah Lewis, Jimmy Mardis, Gene Pharr, Dirk Philipp, Roland Pinault, Kurt Price, James Simpson, Tim Snell, Evan Teague, Patrick Tenney, Scott VanLaningham, Ralph Weber.

IRWP Staff: Delia Haak, Becky Roark, Chas McCoy and Interns Erin Mertes, Evan Mertes, Mercedes Ruiz

Introduction of Guests: Carol Wright, TNC Development Director; Ed Fite, OSRC; OK State Senator Wayne Shaw and wife Anna; Suzanne Stubblefield, Kansas, OK; Alex Lawson, Eagle Scout and father Mark Lawson; Chris Engholm, White River Exhibit curator; Seth Walters, Environmental Officer Simmons Foods.

Public Comments – none

Minutes of May 7, 2015 Board Meeting

Board Action: Motion by Haynes, second by Lewis to approve May 7, 2015 minutes. Motion carried.

Finance Committee Report: Ralph Weber, Treasurer and chair, IRWP Finance Committee

Review of January 1, 2015 – June 30, 2015 draft financial statements prepared by Houston and Co. Finance committee meeting on July 30, 2015 motion by Simmons, second by Hunton to recommend June 30, 2015 financial statements to the IRWP Board. **Board Action:** Motion by Pharr, second by Faupel to accept June 30, 2015 financial statements.

Request presented by Cassie Elliott, grant writer for the City of Cave Springs for IRWP support of application for 2017 TAP funding through NWARPC to connect Hwy 112, the Illinois River Water Partnership Watershed Sanctuary, Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, and Cave Springs City Park to the Razorback Greenway through the Mt. Hebron trail. **Board Action:** Motion by Hopper, second by VanLaningham for IRWP support letter for Cave Springs grant application for 2017 TAP funding for trail connection.

Introduction of research by Biosolids Resource Management LLC led by Dr. David Longer, UA Professor of Agronomy, Crops, Soils and Environmental Sciences and Dr. Mike Ackerson, Applied Dynamics Engineering Group, Fayetteville. Recommended that research proposals be submitted to the Technical Committee for review for potential IRWP support and/or collaboration.

2016-2018 Strategic Plan Committee Reports

Nominations Committee: Evan Teague, chair

1. Develop an IRWP leadership training program (mid-career conservation academy) to attract and educate future committee and board member leaders about watershed issues.
2. Develop and implement IRWP Board member mentorship and training program. Pair new board members with founding members for one year mentorship. Encourage greater participation and engagement from IRWP board members. Offer new member orientation ex. hour lunch program as well as board training.
3. Interview current board members that are also founding board members (10) and produce video on the formation and values of the Partnership for future board training.

4. Review and update by-laws to reflect needed update and current practices. Need to appoint By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee to review by-laws and policies and make recommendations at the Nov. 5, 2015 meeting.
5. Recommendation to combine the nominations and membership committee for leadership training and development.
6. 2015 Nominations process to begin August 17 with announcement to general membership soliciting nominations and renewals for Board candidates, deadline August 31. Sept. 9 suggested candidates and Board renewals will be sent to Board category representatives for Board member responses to nominations, certifying slate of 2015 Board nominations by Sept 30 deadline. October 26 is last date Nominations Committee must provide slate of candidates for Board review. November 5 vote by Board to approve 2015 slate of Directors with affirmation by the IRWP general membership during the annual membership meeting.
7. Golden Paddle Award nominations due September 1.

Program and Planning Committee: Hunter Haynes, chair

1. Schedule and facilitate an organizational meeting of sustainability representatives from local businesses and industries within the watershed. Contact corporate sponsors/vendors to identify representatives. The goal is to have participants identify their organization as a stakeholder in the watershed and for IRWP to tell their corporate stories about what they are doing to protect local land and water resources.
2. Create signage to be posted along highways in Arkansas and Oklahoma designating the boundaries of the watershed. "You are now entering the Illinois River Watershed"
3. Raise public awareness of the commitment and implementation of NRCS best management practices of local farmers and ranchers through presentations, recognition and individual stories both in print and on the IRWP web site.
4. Implement green infrastructure and planting trees along Razorback Greenway including coordinating events with Trail Coordinator.
5. Identify "place-making" assets within the watershed and align goals with the NWA Regional Planning Commission Open Space efforts where landowner support is consistent with IRWP respect for personal property rights.

Technical Committee: Tom Hopper, chair

1. Help counties implement "Arkansas Unpaved Road Program Act" 898
2. Secure IRWP 2016 base funding support of \$300,000
 - a. Recent meeting with Mayors of Bentonville, Rogers, Springdale (Fayetteville could not attend)
 - b. Follow up with City Councils, planning commissions, water utilities
3. Nutrient trading program set up and implementation
4. Implement Upper Illinois River Watershed Management Plan approved by EPA in 2012
5. Cave Springs Cave Karst Study implementation
6. Water quality monitoring
 - a. Stressor response results
 - b. Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)
 - c. EPA Implementation
 - d. ADEQ delegate responsibility to cities and counties
7. Oklahoma Watershed Management Plan
8. Relationship with Cherokee Nation
9. Pavilion completion and dedication
10. Small cities in Benton and Washington Counties BMP education
11. Keep IRWP relevant to water quality issues in the Illinois River Watershed

Education: Dr. Dirk Philipp, chair

1. Develop plans to accommodate individuals with learning disabilities, mobility, hearing impairments and physical limitations in watershed education events.
 - a. IRWP Staff to address facility needs
2. Work with MS4 storm water representatives to promote best practices to protect the watershed to urban residents.
 - a. IRWP Staff contact MS4 reps and provide # of people and hours of IRWP volunteers and education outreach for match for cities and counties.
3. Develop on-going college internship program and offer research opportunities.
 - a. IRWP Windgate Foundation grant for interns 2015-2016
4. Offer watershed/science training for teachers and teacher candidates.
 - a. IRWP staff work with NWA Cooperative to offer teacher education. Identify resources that are available from CO-OP and UA Math & Science program.
5. Reach out to landscape architects, construction managers and developers about best practices to protect the watershed and encourage a “green infrastructure” culture.
 - a. Contact trained person(s) to deliver education and IRWP offer CEUs.
6. Host Arkansas/Oklahoma Nature Conservancy roundtable
 - a. No discussion on this at this time.
7. Update the map showing the loss of pastureland from 2006 to 2014
 - a. UA Dirk Philipp will update map.
8. Clean Water Rangers (CWR)
 - a. Committee recommendation to request suggested donation of \$3 per student per half-day program and \$5 per student for full day program at Watershed Sanctuary and Learning Center.
 - b. Use e-commerce and technology to make CWR songs and book(s) available to download via i-tunes, etc. Roland Pinault to work on this with Walmart ISD team. Bat Cam for live viewing is underway with Motorola and WMISD.
 - c. Continue CWR programs with Marshall Mitchell in schools.
 - d. Continue CWR Afterschool Program through Windgate grant

Staff Reports:

Delia Haak: Upcoming presentations by IRWP:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| August 22 | Bats and Bluegrass at Watershed Sanctuary
4-6 pm Bentonville Old High Middle School Bat House demo, Fish with A Cop
6-8 pm Bluegrass concert with Southern Tradition
8:30 pm Bat viewing with US Fish and Wildlife and night vision goggles |
| August 24 | Arkansas Natural Resources Commission Watershed Stewards meeting
5:00 to 9:00 pm at UA Washington County Cooperative Extension Service |
| September 16 | Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Legislators Tour
5:30 pm Dinner at Watershed Learning Center |
| Sept. 23-24 | Arkansas Natural Resources Commission Non-Point Source project presentation |
| Sept. 23-24 | AR-OK Arkansas River Compact Commission, Tahlequah, OK |

Oct. 13-15 Annual conference at Crystal Bridges: 60th Midwest Groundwater Conference
<http://www.irwp.org/education-and-outreach/60th-midwest-groundwater-conference/>

Oct. 21 EPA Region 6 Stormwater Conference – IRWP on panel in Hot Springs

Oct. 23 Southwest Philanthropy Conference – IRWP to present on Arts and Nature

IRWP participating on following regional planning committees:

Open Space Steering Committee

Mt. Kesler Preserve Steering Committee

AR Nutrient Trading Advisory Panel

AR Section-AWRA

NWA Council Infrastructure Committee

Becky Roark, Project Manager:

Low Impact Development features completed through ANRC grant for porous parking lots, rain garden, phosphorus removal structure, green roof, lawn

Razorback Greenway Green Infrastructure projects completed to date: Mercy Trailhead in Rogers, Bentonville trailhead at the Amazeum, City of Johnson trailhead. Plans ongoing for Springdale trailhead at Lake Springdale and Fayetteville's Gordon Long Park.

These are significant investments through ANRC grant for 5 trailheads along Greenway. We are also working with AR Forestry Commission to plant additional trees along the Greenway.

Building partnerships with regional E.A.S.T. programs with schools in the IRW to conduct projects for Environmental and Spatial Technologies.

Chas McCoy, Education Outreach Coordinator:

Completed CWR Afterschool program at end of school year and will begin again Sept. 1

Began agricultural raised beds project with ASP and created Farmer's Market for Cave Springs. Market is open on Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm. June 18 to Oct. 1. Good turnout of visitors with up to 100 per week. Up to seven weekly vendors with some coming from Jay, OK, Sulphur Springs, etc. Farmer's Market is tool to work with local agricultural producers to adopt NRCS conservation programs.

Tree farm upkeep at SWEPCO with plans to add a tree farm at Boston Mtn. Solid Waste facility in Spring 2016.

Rex Barrett, Project Manager

Pavilion

- We are having problems with delivery from Cedar Forrest Products. The original delivery was 3 weeks late and we are still having issues with delivery of the plumbing package, restroom partitions, vandal resistant wall panels, and missing door jambs. I have had daily contact with our sales rep trying to get confirmation on delivery and Diamond C has had daily contact with their contact at the factory in Illinois, and not getting any confirmed commitment.
- With regard to the overall design and structure, it all went together well and we are very pleased with the quality.
- We had planned to set the sewage tank and pumps on Wednesday this week but rain caused a delay with that. Will need to pump out hole and wait for it to dry out. Tank will be installed, 2 yards of concrete poured around the tank, then pump and plumbing installed.

- Electric and duct work is roughed in and walls in restrooms and concession area are ready for sheetrock.
- Plumbing is roughed in and ready for fixture installation.
- Installed a vegetated retaining wall on the northeast corner of the pavilion as LID demonstration.

Parking and LID landscape around Learning Center

- Everything is complete except for the dirt work on south side of lake. That material came out of the pervious parking area and will be used to level off the south side parking area. That area will be leveled and drainage will be improved to help with standing water.
- We now have two handicap and 13 regular pervious parking spaces that can be used for LID demonstration.
- We installed a bio-swale in front of the building for LID demonstration. Removed asphalt parking and replaced with lawn. May need to replace downspout on North side of building to improve drainage as it does not appear to be functioning properly.

Crosswalk

- We were notified that we got approval from the state to install a crosswalk with lights at the south end of the dam. The city will purchase the equipment, state highway department will paint the crosswalk, and we will be required to install a handicap access on the west side of the highway for access from the sidewalk to crosswalk.

Lake

- We are struggling with algae in the lake again. We tried a new treatment by lowering the level of the lake to stop outflow during treatment. Used a high pressure/high volume pump to break up the alga before treatment. We are monitoring the alga to know whether it was effective, but then the rain came and changed the look again. We are currently working on trying to develop a method of skimming the algae off of the lake.
- The control gate is functioning quite well. We “exercise” it once every 3 months as prescribed by the manufacture. We have used it 3 times to draw down the lake for algae treatment and flood control.

Volunteers

- We currently have an Eagle Scout doing a project to stain our wheel chair ramp and bridge at the cave.
- They are also building 6 ea. Picnic tables to use in the new pavilion.

New Business:

Introduction of potential for Low Dam Project sponsored by the Walton Family Foundation. Sam Goade and Delia Haak toured site and showed video of project site.

Board Action: Motion by Hopper, second by Haynes to approve Delia Haak to serve as chair of a working group to consist of representatives from City of Siloam Springs, Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission, and Walton Family Foundation. Motion carried.

Next Board Meeting: November 5, 2015

Adjourn

Motion by Faupel, second by Tenney to adjourn. Motion carried.

January-July 31, 2015	Participants	Hours
Board and Committee Meetings	209	326
Clean Water Rainger Programs	1,410	655
Creek Cleanups	497	715
Riparian Project and Tree Farm	501	1,132
Watershed Education Outreach	5,528	9,802
NRCS Conservation Outreach	183	280

Windgate Art and Nature Initiatives	153	2,657
Water Bar at Crystal Bridges	3,261	815
TOTAL	11,757	16,561
MATCH CONTRIBUTION		\$ 347,786