



Memphremagog Basin Water Quality Council

Monday November 14th, 10am-12pm

Draft Meeting Minutes

Present

Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

Officers

Beth Torpey Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA) - BWQC Chair
Kerry O'Brien Vermont Land Trust (VLT) - BWQC Vice Chair

Members

Thomas Bernier City of Newport
Meghann Carter NorthWoods Stewardship Center
Ted Sedell Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District (OCNRCD)
Patrick Hurley Memphremagog Watershed Association (MWA)
Sam Mayne Essex County Natural Resources Conservation District (ECNRCD)
Doug Morton Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA)
Eric Pope Town of Morgan

Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) alternates

Jessica Colby NorthWoods Stewardship Center
Heather Johnson Essex County Natural Resources Conservation District (ECNRCD)

Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) staff

Trey Martin Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)

Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

Ben Copans
Claire Madden

Members of the public

None

Welcome & Review Agenda

Beth opened the meeting at 10:00. The agenda was reviewed with no additions.



Roundtable Introductions

All participants introduced themselves with name, organization, and brief update.

Public Comment

None

Review and approval of 8.23.22 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Patrick, seconded by Eric to adopt August 23rd, 2022 meeting minutes with no revisions. Approved unanimously.

BWQC Membership and Alternates Proposal

Motion by Meg, seconded by Tom to nominate Sam Mayne from ECNRCD to fill the remainder of Heather Johnson's Term (2023) and to nominate Heather Johnson as ECNRCD alternate as well as nominate Edwin Sedell as OCNRCD alternate. Unanimously approved.

CWSP Update

Trey reported that VHCB has a signed contract with DEC for the Formula Grant and they are continuing to look for full time replacement for Kendall. Also working on administrative pieces for the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission award that will support capacity building and other activities that didn't get funded in the first GLFC award.

Presentation on Phosphorus Calculator Tool

Claire Madden, DEC's TMDL Tracking and Accounting Coordinator, gave a demonstration of the tool which will help in project prioritization and assessment of projects. There was a question about how to measure shoreland recession rates. Claire said that there is a standard described in the state's SOP document but reach out to DEC if more guidance is needed. There was a questions about who will assess validity of cost effectiveness numbers, will the BWQC review? Ben responded that while the goal is to avoid BWQC changing numbers they can weigh in on the uncertainty of numbers since estimates are being made at the application stage. He also pointed out that he will be at the BWQC meetings and can help check numbers. He suggested that having ranges for the practices in the application can help account for uncertainty. He noted a limitation of the tool is that stacked practices can't be accurately calculated so reach out to DEC if that is a question. He also mentioned the caveat that this tool is intended to support project prioritization and planning but ultimate P reduction credit will be calculated at close of a project. Claire encouraged people to use the tool make sure they have the most updated version because additional functionality will be added including categories like native revegetation and tree canopy expansion.

Question about design life: O&M requires 10 years so if project has less than 10 years does that nullify it as a BMP? Claire responded that design life has been set by practice type in the SOP



doc but can get the design life extended if verification and maintenance confirms that the practice remains functional for additional years.

Co-benefits Matrix and Project Scoring

Beth summarized the draft matrix/categories and asked for feedback. Question about Carbon Reduction via GSI (Green Stormwater Infrastructure) and that it was already seemed to be captured in the ecosystems section. There was discussion about the need to distinguish the scoring matrix from what applicant will be filling out/proposing, and to keep the application relatively simple. Suggestions for having check boxes or dropdowns of the co-benefit categories with one narrative for the application that can capture more information. Ben shared the Project Scoring Matrix Kendall had drafted, a high level look at ranking with 3 categories: 20% co-benefits, 60% cost effectiveness and 20% other factors. A potential process is for applicants to fill out the application, the CWSP consolidates/clarifies and assigns an initial score and then shares with the BWQC for their consideration and to add their personal knowledge and other information to the scoring.

Question about double dipping of co-benefits in multiple places, this could be a factor if there is a close call in project selection. Question about cost effectiveness, and whether projects should be ranked against each other or within category types or against a standard, and if should there be a minimum cut off. More discussion on this to come at next BWQC meeting.

Tactical Basin Planning Update

Ben Copans reported that critical needs identified in the TBP update work include the capacity gap for projects to move ahead, particularly smaller non-RAP ag projects and for lake shore practices. Strategies for implementing smaller practices, quantifying P reduction for lakeshore projects and creating an easier process to move these projects forward are all outstanding questions. The stream restoration work that consultants have done through the Functioning Floodplains Initiative for the LCB will begin to be done for the Memphremagog Basin. Ben will be engaging the BWQC in the TPB process to help identify project types, capacity needs and gaps and he anticipates having a draft plan to share with the BWQC in the next 45 days with public comment in February 2023.

Questions, discussion, open conversation

Discussion about what needs to be done administratively before projects are formally solicited through the RFP process. It was also noted that 50% of the people on the BWQC will also be applicants for funding and there should be discussion on what boundaries might need to be created. BWQC will talk more about the process for selection, including finalizing the scoring, at the next meeting. Members thought it would be helpful to look at a draft application that they can comment on prior to the meeting.



Next meeting of BWQC

Group would like to meet in person if possible, Beth will probably need to join by Zoom. VHCB staff will circulate a doodle poll for the meeting date and will meet with Beth and Ben to set the agenda.

Adjournment proposed by Sam, second by Kerry. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Freeman & Trey Martin