

# elm creek Watershed Management Commission

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## Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes | November 13, 2024

I. A meeting of the **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 10:34 a.m., Wednesday, November 13, 2024, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chair Ben Scharenbroich.

Present: Heather Nelson, Champlin; Kevin Mattson, Corcoran; Ben Scharenbroich, Plymouth; Andrew Simmons, Rogers; Diane Spector and Erik Megow, Stantec; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); and Judie Anderson, JASS.

Not represented: Dayton, Maple Grove, and Medina.

Also present: Lauren Letsche, Corcoran; and Doug Baines, Dayton.

II. Motion by Simmons, second by Nelson to approve the **meeting agenda**. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion by Simmons, second by Mattson to approve the **minutes of the August 14, 2024, meeting**. *Motion carried unanimously.*

### III. **FY25 WBIF Contract.**

A. Attached to Staff's November 6, 2024, memo\* is the final grant application\* for the FY25 Watershed-Based Implementation Funding allocation, except for that portion that is being contracted to Hennepin County for the shared Conservation Specialist. It is making its way through BWSR, awaiting approval of the final workplan and contract. The County outreach cost-share project will be incorporated into the next Hennepin County contract for services. The Diamond Lake neighborhood project will be led by the city of Dayton, the Rice and Fish Lakes project by the city of Maple Grove. Prior to initiating work each city will execute a cooperative and subgrant agreement with the Commission.

B. The work being funded is summarized below and in the table that follows:

1. Additional agricultural/rural BMPs through Hennepin County in the priority Rush Creek Headwaters, South Fork Rush Creek, and Diamond Creek subwatersheds.

2. Three improvements in Dayton identified in the Diamond Creek SWA, including reducing dissolved P in outflow from Grass Lake to French Lake; SAFL baffles on two key storm sewer outlets on the north side of Diamond Lake; and a feasibility assessment to reduce loading from land uses in the vicinity of West French Lake Road and 117th/118th Avenue North.

3. Developing a strategic plan to guide further work to manage carp and fish habitat in Fish and Rice Lake and implementing priority actions such as fish barriers and further carp removals. Included in the meeting packet is a memo summarizing actions to date prepared by staff and submitted to BWSR as part of the grant review process.

**Final WBIF allocations**

Funding Priority	Total Cost	WBIF	Match	Source of Match
<b>Contracted to Hennepin County</b>				
Education & outreach coordinator	\$306,000	\$46,000	\$77,000	WMWA and county (\$77K); other WBIF*
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$306,000	\$46,000	\$77,000	
<b>Contracted to the Elm Creek Commission</b>				
1. County outreach/cost-share	\$192,500	\$175,000	\$17,500	County staff time and \$, land-owner in-kind and \$
2. Diamond Lake Neighborhood BMPs	\$120,000	\$108,000	\$12,000	City Cost Share or Closed Projects, City
3. Rice and Fish Lakes Fish and Habitat Management	\$49,050	\$44,590	\$4,460	City/Partnership Cost Share, City, landowners
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$361,550	\$327,500	\$33,960	
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$667,550	\$373,590	\$110,960	

\*Shingle Creek, West Mississippi, Bassett, and Richfield-Bloomington WMOs are each contributing \$46,000 from their WBIF funds

**IV. North Fork Rush Creek Preliminary Design.\***

**A.** As part of the FY23 Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) process, the City of Rogers requested the Commission to evaluate the feasibility of a re-meandering project on a portion of the North Fork of Rush Creek in Rogers, which is part of Hennepin County Ditch #21. The proposed project would stabilize banks to define a new channel, improve water quality, enhance aquatic habitat, and reintroduce some of the natural meanders that existed prior to channelization.

The impetus for this was the pending acquisition by Rogers of a large tract of high-quality maple-basswood forest known as Steig Woods, which had been owned and preserved by the Steig family for over a century. The City’s intent is to manage the site as open space with limited access and is also interested in making enhancements to the surrounding area. The woods are south of the current alignment of the creek.

In addition, Hennepin County is considering a future extension of CSAH 117 across the Creek and its riparian wetlands north of Steig Woods. Also, the Three Rivers Park District Master Plan for the Rush Creek Regional Trail includes a future trail extension expected to parallel the CSAH 117 extension.

On April 12, 2023, the Commission authorized completion of the North Fork Rush Creek Remeander Feasibility Study. Since that time Staff have completed field work and met with city and agency representatives to explore potential options for the remeander that would help meet the Commission’s water quality, ecological integrity, and wetland goals, WCA and floodplain requirements, City and Three Rivers recreation goals, and Hennepin County transportation needs. This Feasibility Study considers options for the desired stream improvements and open space enhancements while also accommodating these future infrastructure projects. Staff have developed two potentially workable options which were presented to the members.

Both designs proposed would implement new meanders and lengthening of the channel. The second of the two designs would also implement some step pools to create an open water feature, increase potential for aeration, and increase habitat. The proposed meandered channels are designed to be 5 feet deep to prevent the growth of cattails. The bank slopes would be 3:1. The excavated material could be used to fill in several of the lateral ditches. Two of the ditches are used as outlets for stormwater ponds for the residential development, but the remaining lateral ditches appear to not serve a function and could be filled.

#### **V. Fourth Generation Plan.**

Last month, the Commissioners began an initial discussion regarding **Resilience/Adaptation**. The twin issues of ongoing development/land use change and changing precipitation and other climate patterns have the potential to negatively impact water resources in the watershed. The Commissioners have already expressed concern about new, increased volumes and rates of runoff generated by land use conversion. Those impacts will be magnified as precipitation patterns continue to change and intensify. As part of the Fourth Generation Plan the Commissioners have identified their desire to think proactively about those impacts and how they could be mitigated or prevented entirely through projects, practices, and adaptive planning.

“Resilience and adaptation” are very broad topics that can quickly overwhelm the planning process. Staff’s October 2 memo presented some planning options for what to include in the Fourth Gen Plan, and what to include as a “plan to plan.” This watershed plan update can be used to specify what the cities should address in their Local Stormwater Management Plans as they develop their 2050 Comp Plans in accordance with Met Council requirements.

Resiliency planning will include H & H modeling and GIS exercises to help identify vulnerable and high-risk areas, ultimately helping to develop a framework of how cities can incorporate the data into their own local water plans and land use planning. This planning framework and analysis will help to identify opportunities in the developing cities that will benefit the waters and infrastructure in downstream, developed communities and help members to plan projects and policies that have been successful elsewhere in the watershed.

Staff have asked a couple of members of the TAC as well as a member of the County staff to participate in a resiliency working group. Nelson and Scharenbroich volunteered to participate in the work session and Kris Guenther will be asked to participate as well.

#### **VI. OTHER BUSINESS.**

**A.** The Education and Outreach Coordinator is continuing her outreach for the **chloride reduction campaign** targeting faith-based facilities in WMWA territory. If you have any connections at such a facility, please advise Amy Juntunen in the JASS office.

**B.** The focus of the **December 11, 2024, TAC meeting** will be a review of draft parts of the Fourth Gen Plan.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

**elm creek Watershed Management Commission**

TAC Meeting Minutes | November 13, 2024

Page 4

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson

Recording Secretary

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