

## White Oak Bayou Steering Committee Meeting Notes (3/29/10)

Chairman Scott opened the meeting at 3:45pm and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Mr. Scott introduced Scott Owen and asked that he update the Steering Committee on Technical Advisory Team activities and present information collected thus far on wetland types in the watershed.

Mr. Owen's presentation included photos of different wetland types, i.e. *riverine backwater*, *beaver impoundment*, *riverine overbank*, *forested flat*, etc. identified by the Technical Team. The Technical Team will be conducting field work to classify wetlands (using the Arkansas HGM classification methodology) and to map locations of those wetlands. Additional data collection and study will include: HGM assessments, elevation data compilations, water quality evaluation, macro-invertebrate & fish surveys, erosion monitoring, identification of species of concern, litter decomposition study, time lapse photography, and threats assessment work. This data will be used to gain insight into how landscape features within the watershed function collectively to provide wetland benefits in the community.

Mr. B. Richardson commented that wetland mapping has to be a product of the process. The steering committee agreed that mapping the wetlands could help add certainty to the regulatory process.

Ms. M. Scott asked who would be paying for all these studies and work. Chairman Scott explained that EPA grants and donation of agency resources will be utilized to accomplish the proposed work. An existing EPA grant is funding some current activities and proposals for future funding are being prepared by Mr. Owen.

Chairman Scott opened discussions on the mission statement. Mr. K. Vestal voiced a concern that individual property rights were not adequately referenced in the mission statement. Concerns over perceived anti-development tone in the mission statement were voiced. Ms. M. Scott commented that the spirit and intent of the draft mission statement was not anti-development. Some additional "word-smithing" of the mission statement will continue to address these concerns. Mr. R. Voyles expressed his hope that the steering committee would not become "bogged down" in continually revising the mission statement. Chairman Scott agreed.

Chairman Scott passed out a draft "brainstorming outline" of potential steering committee objectives for the wetland planning process and expected outcomes. He briefly discussed components of the outline and requested that the steering committee be prepared to submit their ideas at the next meeting.

Chairman Scott requested Mr. Owen discuss public outreach efforts. Mr. Brazil suggested the steering committee determine the message they want conveyed before putting out any information. He suggested simplistic and general information for the first "reach-out". Mr. Owen will work up a draft one-page public outreach document.

Ms. B. Miller suggested a presentation from S. Owens at the upcoming AWAG meeting as a good way to get the word out among agencies. The City of Maumelle has an upcoming Family Fest event in May that would be a good place for a display or booth with outreach material. Ms. Miller also discussed the Project WET curriculum for school teachers and explained it was a great educational aid to help students understand wetlands and their functions.

Chairman Scott asked Mr. Owen to discuss distribution and printing of the newsletter.

Chairman Scott discussed frequency of steering committee meetings and the importance of meeting more often at the beginning of the planning process. Development of objectives and outcomes will require more coordination and effort from the steering committee.

Chairman Scott asked steering committee members to provide their availability for the next meeting and adjourned the meeting.