

**MINUTES OF THE SUNRISE RIVER WATER QUALITY AND FLOWAGE
MANAGEMENT PROJECT WORKSHOP
OF THE
COMFORT LAKE -FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT**

**Tuesday, May 19, 2011
6:30 pm**

1) **Call to Order**

The Vice President called the May 19, 2011 CLFLWD Sunrise River Water Quality and Flowage Management Project Board of Managers Workshop to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Forest Lake City Offices, 220 North Lake Street, Forest Lake, Minnesota

Present: Vice President Jackie Anderson, Treasurer John Lynch, Secretary Wayne Moe, Manager Jon Spence.

Absent: President Richard Damchik

Staff: Doug Thomas, Lisa Tilman (EOR)

2) **Meeting Purpose**

Administrator Thomas went over the purpose of the meeting which was to provide an overview of 1) the history of the Sunrise River in the project area, 2) the established goals for the project, 3) an overview of the preliminary projects identified in the preliminary engineers study/report, and 4) provide time for questions and discussion. At that time Administrator Thomas introduced Lisa Tilman, District Engineer, from EOR to continue with the presentation.

Engineer Tilman went through the history of the river/ditch and showed slides of the original land survey and plats from 1849, 1884, and 1904 along with aerial photographs dating back to 1936 to show how EOR evaluated what actually existed in the way of a natural creek/river in this area prior to Judicial Ditch 1 being constructed in the early 1900's. She then went on to show aerial images of the area dating back to 1936 and discussed what one would expect to see if there was a meandered stream in the area upstream of Shallow Pond and showed pictures of Rice Creek, in Anoka County, for comparison purposes. EOR's conclusion was that the area was most likely a large expanse of wetlands with an undefined channel that Forest Lake drained into and that the only strong evidence for a meandered stream would be in the area between the outlet to Shallow Pond and Comfort Lake.

Manager Anderson commented on that she found this to be very informative and that it now appears that the headwaters area was likely a large wetland complex rather than the meandered stream that many had assumed it to be and how that influences what we are trying to go back to and the selection of water quality improvement practices.

Engineer Tilman then reviewed the water quality data that the District has been collecting in this area and how it relates to the current nutrient and pollutant loading to Comfort Lake from the

project area. She pointed out the difference between load, which is the total amount of nutrients/pollutants for a period of time such as a year (lbs/yr) at a given point or location vs. concentration which is the amount of nutrients/pollutants measured in a given quantity of water at a given time (mg/liter). She pointed the importance of understanding concentration vs. load as it is usually the most cost-effective to treat areas where you have a high concentration of pollutants. She went on to discuss the wetland areas such as Bixby Park and the District tax forfeit lands and the difficulty that exists in determining if they are acting as sinks or sources for phosphorous without very detailed study. That said the project will conduct further investigations and soil analysis's to provide a means of comparing sites to one another. She noted how many of the wetlands in this area have been manipulated by ditching and how that may be influencing the delivery of phosphorous in the system.

Engineer Tilman introduced Jason Naber from EOR, who will be the project manager, and who would now be reviewing the project goals and proposed projects. Jason pointed out that the overall goal is to reduce nutrient and sediment loads to Comfort Lake. As part of the District's Six Lakes TMDL Study the phosphorous load reduction for Comfort Lake is 125 lbs/year which is the amount necessary to meet the State's in lake water quality standard of 40 mg/L for phosphorous and a 395 lbs/year reduction to meet the District's long term goal of 30 mg/L of phosphorus for the lake. He also pointed out that a secondary goal of the project is to reduce localized flooding where feasible.

Jason then went through the project ideas/concepts that were identified in the preliminary study and that are being proposed to be fully evaluated in the final engineering report, which included:

- Enhancements to floodplain interaction within the wetlands along the Sunrise River upstream of Comfort Lake.
- Modifications to improve water quality treatment on the District's tax forfeit properties.
- Modifications to improve water quality treatment within Bixby Park.
- Carp management strategies.
- Incorporation of iron enhanced filtration.
- Identification of locations for retrofits to improve stormwater treatment in urbanized portions of the City of Forest Lake that drain to the Sunrise River.
- Investigation on the need for stream stabilization or remeander of the Sunrise River between 256th and Comfort Lake.

Manager Anderson asked Administrator Thomas to explain some of the ideas for how the tax-forfeit parcels that have been acquired by the District can be expanded upon for things like open-space and recreation. Administrator Thomas pointed out that one of the goals/intentions of the Managers has been to look at opportunities to work with the cities and counties on ways to capitalize on the District projects and land by using these areas to develop additional open space, parks, recreational uses such as trails, and for environmental education. He noted that he has been meeting with city and county staff to begin discussing these types of enhancements as we move forward with the engineering report in the coming months.

Question was asked about future development and what will happen when it occurs. Administrator Thomas pointed out the District's rules and regulations that are in place and that they will require any new development and/or redevelopment to reduce phosphorous loadings from the property by 50% so future development will not reduce the effectiveness of the proposed projects. Manager Anderson noted that the basis for these rules was the District's 2008 Water Quality Study which

identified what the phosphorous load reduction would need to be in order to meet water quality standards. Manager Lynch mentioned how the district is also looking at areas, such as the car dealerships, and trying to be pro-active at the time of re-development by looking for opportunities to enhance the water quality treatment above and beyond the permit requirement at the time of redevelopment.

Jason Naber continued the presentation and discussed the potential outcomes/load reductions that the project could provide if fully implemented.

Chris Johnson, Mayor of Forest Lake, commented on the city's interest in the projects and how they can be done to enhance the area and turn it into a community asset. He mentioned things like the incorporation of trails and educational stations. Manager Moe commented on how the cities and counties can help in seeking opportunities to tie into grant and funding programs that are available to the cities and counties for trails, open space, parks, etc... Dan Coughlin, Forest Lake Administrator, commented on the educational component of projects like these and mentioned the idea of a kiosk or other types of displays and how that could involve the school district.

Manager Anderson thanked everyone for their comments and questions and commented that it appears that we all seeing somewhat of the same vision for the area.

Hearing no more discussion Manager Anderson closed the workshop at 7:30 pm.

Wayne S. Moe, Secretary