

**Goose Creek Watershed Planning Meeting**  
**February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014**  
**Downtown Sheridan Association Community Room**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Present:

Bill Adsit	Clark McClung, USFS	Roger Wilson
Robert Brug	Mark Reid, Sheridan County	Pam Winterholler
Travis Cundy, WGFD	Lane Thompson, City of Sheridan	Susan Holmes, SCCD Board
Rod Liesinger, Sheridan County	Colin Betzler, SCLT	Cheryl Harrelson
Roger Reinke, SCCD Board	Dan Coughlin, SAWS	Chuck Carbert, City of Sheridan
Carrie Rogaczewski, SCCD	Jack Landon, Jr.	Tina Krueger
William Bradshaw	Mike Nickel, SC Commissioner	Mitch Cangiamilla
Maria Burke, SCCD	Dan Roberts, City of Sheridan	Mike Sweeney
Dave Garber, Chairman	Hannah Weist, Sheridan Press	

Dave Garber called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Open and Introductions:**

Dave opened the meeting with a round table introduction and Carrie gave a brief recap on how and why the Goose Creek Watershed Steering Committee was formed. The Committee was formed in 2003 as a follow-up to the watershed assessment completed by the Conservation District in partnership with the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County. The initial purpose was to develop a watershed plan (approved by WDEQ in 2005) to address water quality concerns in the Goose Creek Watershed. After the initial and subsequent plans were developed, the group continued to meet to provide input on programs and activities.

**Activities/Progress Updates:**

***Sheridan County:*** Rod Liesinger, Sheridan County Public Works Director, informed the group that in 2013 there had been 78 upgrades or replacements of septic systems in Sheridan County, an increase from previous years. He also passed around a map of the Goose Creek Valleys that showed there had been 40 septic system upgrade or replacement in the last three years. Rod pointed out to the group that he considered the three public septic meetings that were held in Big Horn, Sheridan, and Beckton in 2012 to be a big success, and wants to have another round of septic meetings in 2014. Additional meetings to real estate agents and septic system contractors may also be included in 2014.

Mark Reid, Sheridan County Planner, gave a brief update to the group about the existing Sheridan County regulations that have an indirect positive influence on water quality. These include the Zoning Rules and Regulations in relation to stream setbacks, steep slopes, and groundwater protection areas; Subdivision Rules and Regulations involving Conservation Design options and Drainage Easements; Floodplain Management Rules and Regulations; and Wastewater Facilities Rules and Regulations. These are separate County regulations; they are not part of the Goose Creek Watershed Plan, but do relate to water quality in the Goose Creek and other watersheds.

**City of Sheridan:** Lane Thompson, Engineer for the City of Sheridan, updated the group of the 2012-2013 storm drain sampling that was conducted with 319 federal grant funds. SWCA, the consulting group that conducted the sampling, recommended three locations for new storm Interceptors that could reduce the amount of sediment entering Little and Big Goose Creeks. These three storm interceptor locations include: one on Big Goose Creek at Centennial Lane off of Loucks Street, one on Little Goose Creek just after it exits Washington Park, and one on Little Goose Creek at College Street. Lane stated that the City plans to install these three interceptors in 2014. The hope is to have two additional storm interceptors built in 2015. The 319 Federal Grant that will help fund these storm interceptors, expires in 2015. Through the sampling, the City was also able to identify some “hot spots” related to bacteria concentrations. The present grant does not have funding to address these, but it may be something the City can consider in the future.

Dan Roberts, Utilities Director for the City of Sheridan, provided an update on the Watershed Control Plan aimed at addressing Cryptosporidium in the Upper Big Goose Creek drainage. The City received State SEP funds to develop the plan. EPA, WDEQ, and Source Water Protection Collaborative have also considered it a Pilot Project because it considers both drinking water and clean water (surface water) issues. The steering committee consists of representatives from the City, SAWS, Bighorn National Forest (BNF), Wyoming Rural Water Association, Conservation District, and WDEQ/EPA. The permittees in the BNF have also been contacted. The consultant has completed Phase 1, which included characterizing the 120 square mile watershed project boundary that extends up to Cloud Peak Wilderness Boundary. Phase 2, which consists of two rounds of sampling and the development of Best Management Practices (BMPs), is planned for completion by June 2014. Since 85% of the land use management is owned by the US Forest Service, a lot of the BMPs will be adapted from USFS BMP policies. Clark McClung, District Ranger for BNF, stated that Forest Service BMPs are based off of the Clean Water Act (CWA) not the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), which is why this Watershed Control Plan is so unique. Dan Roberts reiterated that the BMPs associated with the Plan will have to take into account both the CWA and the SDWA. Turbidity sampling will also occur in Phase 2 because some studies have shown that when there is lower turbidity, there is also lower Cryptosporidium. In the future, the City of Sheridan and SAWS may consider source tracking but it is very expensive.

Robert Brug, landowner in the Goose Creek Watershed, feels like incorporating BMPs into the Watershed Plan boundary is doomed for failure because the BMPs will only regulate livestock and human actions and not wildlife. He feels that instead of putting more pressure on the permittees and recreational users by creating these BMPs, the City should incorporate a filtering system into the water intake to trap the protozoa, which is a technique that was used in Korea. Dan Roberts stated that they are not trying to regulate anyone; they are only offering practices that can benefit everyone downstream. A filtration system is already in place. It would cost \$6 million to upgrade the intake system with several stages of treatment to make sure that Cryptosporidium could not be detected in the drinking water. The City of Sheridan and SAWS feel they need to first try voluntary BMPs, which would not only benefit our drinking source but all downstream water users.

**Sheridan County Conservation District (SCCD):** Maria Burke, Natural Resource Specialist for SCCD, discussed the results found from the 2012 water quality sampling in the Goose Creek Watershed, and gave a brief history on sampling in the Goose Creek Watershed. Water quality assessment for this watershed started in 2001 and continued into 2002. This included 46 sampling sites and several parameters. In 2012, there were only 24 sampling sites and the parameters were temperature, pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, E. coli bacteria, and turbidity which were sampled five times in May and five times in August. Continuous water temperature data loggers were used to monitor instream temperatures from May 1, 2012 to October 31, 2012 at nine of the 24 station. Macroinvertebrate sampling and habitat assessments were performed at eight stations in September. The noticeable findings were:

- An increase in *E. coli* bacteria concentrations from 2001 to 2012 was observed at every comparable site and sampling period, except for Park Creek and Kruse Creek during the month of May. In August of 2012, out of the 21 comparable stations from 2001, only 14 stations increased in bacteria concentrations.
- Every continuous temperature logger reported water temperatures above the maximum instream temperature standard (20°C/68°F) for cold water fisheries, often for multiple days, except for the furthest upstream Big Goose station.
- Biological conditions on six of the eight macroinvertebrate stations sampled in 2012 were partial/non supporting, and one station was indeterminate supporting based on the evaluation of the stream benthic macroinvertebrate communities. Big Goose Creek's most upstream station was the only fully supporting its biological condition. The partial/non-support and indeterminate support classifications indicates the aquatic communities are stressed.

Carrie Rogaczewski, District Manager for the SCCD, then informed the group about the Run-off BMP Demonstration Project located at the Downtown Sheridan Association office, next to the building. A rain garden was first constructed 2011 and then rebuilt in 2013 to reduce roof storm water run-off from entering the storm drains. Within this project there are three BMPs: the rain garden, the permeable sidewalks, and the rain barrels located on the other side of building. Maria Burke then showed photos of the project that highlighted the various plant species, boulders and gravel used to help with stagnant water, underground pipes used to improve drainage, the construction of the permeable sidewalks, and the rain barrel stand which helps with accessibility. Initially, it was hoped that this project would kick-start a cost-share program to address run-off in urban/residential areas. The many issues encountered through this project, as well as some other concerns, has delayed initiation of a program. SCCD is still hopeful that a program will be developed, but several concerns need to be addressed first.

Maria Burke then mentioned the progress register map that identifies all activities that have taken place since cost-share programs were established at SCCD. The boxes highlight all of the projects that have been finished since the TMDL was published in 2010. Since 2010, there have been four septic systems replaced, four livestock improvement projects, 4 streambank erosion projects, and two diversion upgrades in the Goose Creek Watershed. SCCD would like to see more participation in their cost-share programs, but increasing awareness is a struggle. This led into the next agenda item.

### **Improving Outreach and Past Cost-Share Participation**

Maria Burke stated that SCCD offers all programs on a voluntary basis, thus they cannot go door to door to solicit participation in a program. When SCCD sent out a survey to past participants, most participants said they heard about the program through SCCD or NRCS. If people have not worked with SCCD previously, they are less likely to know about services offered. The group offered several ideas. Pam Winterholler stated that SCCD should use the new buzz word “Sustainability” in publications. Travis Cundy suggested that Public Pulse might be a great way to encourage participation. Maria Burke has created a new Facebook page to try and spread the word to the younger generations that do not listen to the radio or buy the Sheridan Press. Carrie Rogaczewski stated that the SCCD will be holding workshops in the Inner Circle of the Sheridan Library during the month of May. There will be three mini-workshops: one on the Farm Bill, one on water wise gardening and composting, and one on grazing management and weeds. The hope is to connect with three different audiences: ranchers, gardeners/city residents, and small acreage landowners. Please keep your eyes and ears open for these three workshops, and encourage people to come. The SCCD is working with the Sheridan Community Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy on the Farm Bill session; there may be several of these, in addition to the one in May.

### **Plan Progress Review and Update**

Carrie Rogaczewski, District Manager of SCCD, went over the handout that outlined the 2012 - 2013 completed action items, projects completed in 2012-2013, 2014 planned action items, and the 2012-2013 outstanding action items. Carrie stated that with the comments made by individuals in this committee, SCCD now is involved in the Third Thursday events, and on Earth Day/Local Foods Event, and distributed a livestock postcard/rack cards to educate small acreage landowners on grazing management. Planned action items include finalizing our Goose Creek Monitoring Report, printing septic information packets to hand Sheridan County septic system permittees, and having “Love Your Watershed” signs along the bike path to educate people about the importance of a healthy watershed.

### **Additional Comments from Committee**

Carrie Rogaczewski also wanted the committee to know that this year SCCD will be updating its Long Range Plan. If there are any suggestions or direction that this committee feels SCCD should include in its Long Range Plan, please let us know now, stop by our office or send us an email in the coming months.

Maria Burke also stated that SCCD’s brochure and informational cards on our cost-share programs are in the back of the room. If you have a friend, neighbor, or relative that you think should know about our cost-share programs, please take these items on your way out and either hand deliver these informational materials to them or slip them into their mailbox.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2015.

Submitted by Maria Burke, Natural Resources Specialist