

Lake Maumelle Watershed Management Plan
Policy Advisory Council Meeting
December 8, 2005

Meeting Summary

The Lake Maumelle Watershed Management Study Policy Advisory Council (Council) convened for its second meeting Thursday, December 8, 2005, at the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock. A meal was served at 5:30 P.M. with the business meeting beginning at 6:00 P.M. Participants were provided an overview of watershed management tools and performance standards as well as engaged in a discussion of whether aesthetics should be considered by the Council.

Council members in attendance:

Ms. Kate Althoff – Citizens Protecting Maumelle Watershed
Ms. Ruth Bell – League of Women voters of Pulaski County
Mr. John Bryant – Grande Maumelle Sailing Club
Ms. Sue Corker – North Little Rock Neighborhoods
Mr. Herb Dicker – Little Rock Neighborhoods
Quorum Court Member Patricia Dicker – Pulaski County Quorum Court
Vice Mayor Barbara Graves – Little Rock Board of Directors
Mr. Glen Hooks – Sierra Club
Mr. Wally Loveless – Little Rock Realtors Association/Adkins, McNeill, Smith & Associates
Mr. Charles R. Nestrud – Deltic Timber Corporation
Mr. Alan Newman – U.S. Forest Service
Mr. Kevin Pierson – Audubon Arkansas
Mr. Mike Simpson – Jacksonville Water Works
Mr. Steve Owen – North Little Rock Chamber of Commerce

Annotated Agenda

Project Update and Meeting Agenda Review

Mr. Trevor Clements, Manager of Watershed Management Planning Services for Tetra Tech, gave an update on new membership of the Council. This included two new representatives of Pulaski and Perry County small landowners. Mr. Clements also advised the Council of a procedure change. In the event that the Council cannot come to consensus on an issue, the Central Arkansas Water Board will make the final decision instead of the Central Arkansas Water staff. The original protocol for the Council (distributed at the September 8th meeting) called for CAW staff to make the final decision when the Council could not come to consensus.

Mr. Clements then described a new series of public meetings that were added to increase the opportunity for public participation. Tetra Tech proposed four series of meetings: The first set in December to orient the landowners and listen to their thoughts on management objectives and concerns; the second in February to go over management ideas; the third in June to go over evaluation results for the most promising management options and discuss refinements for the watershed plan; and the fourth in October to review the draft watershed plan and discuss refinements for improved chances of implementation success. Initial meetings were held December 6th in Pulaski County (6:30 P.M. at the Winfield United Methodist Church - 20100 Cantrell Road) and December 7th in Perry County (6:30 P.M. at the Great Hall of Camp Ouachita - 618 Highway 324 South, Perryville).

Mr. Clements announced that fluvial geomorphologists were hired and had completed a preliminary survey of the streams in the watershed. The geomorphologists found very little evidence of in-stream instability (erosion). They speculated that the stream banks were protected (armored) by the native sandstone geology of the area. In addition, they noted that there was not evidence of sediment imbedding in the streambed (smothering out aquatic life). A council member asked if the geomorphologists took into account the fact that we were in a drought year. Mr. Clements stated that they had. The council member then asked why there had been algal blooms. Mr. Clements explained that this issue is different than sedimentation and more related to the issues that cause turbidity.

Overview of Watershed Management Tools

Ms. Kimberly Brewer, Associate Director of Tetra Tech, gave an overview of the watershed primer that was provided to the group in draft form. Ms. Brewer described the document as a broad review of a variety of techniques related to watershed management. She stated that truly effective management programs utilize a balance of regulatory and non-regulatory approaches. She explained that the goal for this meeting was to touch on a variety of these programs and at the next meeting the council would look at which of these is most relevant to Lake Maumelle.

Ms. Brewer reviewed the following tools:

Regulatory Tools

- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Sedimentation and Erosion Control Ordinance
- Storm water Management Ordinance

Non-Regulatory Tools

- Land Acquisition

A council member asked, "Who would create, pass, or implement these ordinances?" Ms. Brewer stated that it would either be the City of Little Rock, or Pulaski or Perry Counties. In addition, Ms. Brewer stated that the Council would discuss this during the July through September meetings.

Focus on Performance Standards and Site Evaluation Tool

Tetra Tech discussed and presented some slides describing performance standards and a tool that was developed to evaluate particular sites in a watershed in regard to previously set standards. The presentation covered the common components of performance standards, where they are used, and some examples.

A council member asked that for communities that have implemented performance standards, how much staff is needed to administer a program and to monitor, inspect, or evaluate performance. Tetra Tech stated that that type of data is not available, but that most performance standards programs require at least an annual inspection of sites.

A council member asked how new performance standards would affect existing landowners. Tetra Tech stated that it would not apply to existing landowners. The council member said that

they understood the rationale for not including them, but disagreed, especially if the land owner turned out to be a significant contributor of pollution.

Consideration of Aesthetics

Ms. Kimberly Brewer, Associate Director of Tetra Tech, led the council through a discussion of whether the recreation objective should include text regarding aesthetics. She pointed out that if the other objectives of the plan are carried out, aesthetics should be protected (e.g., if nutrients levels are kept in check, there should not be algal blooms). A council member agreed, but felt that it was important to at least discuss or see examples of how other organizations have addressed the issue.

A council member stated that aesthetics is a very subjective area and that we should limit discussion and not consider aesthetics as part of the council's deliberations, the council should instead restrict discussions to qualitative issues such as water quality criteria. The group voted on this motion and did not reach consensus. A council member requested to move forward and leave the objective "as is", which would mean that it did not have references to "aesthetics" added into the text. The motion was seconded and the group agreed.

Additional Summary of Public Meetings and Next Steps

Mr. Trevor Clements, Manager of Watershed Management Planning Services for Tetra Tech, provided some additional comments regarding feedback received from the public meetings on the watershed planning process. Concerns from the public ranged from feeling that they were not represented on the council, not understanding how they were going to benefit from the process, and worrying about the potential of condemnation of their property.

In regard to next steps, the Council will discuss a variety of management options and a baseline assessment of population growth brought together by county planners, Metroplan, and realtors.