

Cass River Greenway Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2014
City of Vassar Office 1:00 – 3:00 PM

2014 Cass River Clean Up Report

Jared Olson reported on the very successful clean up project held on Saturday, July 26. The clean up covered the river between the Caro Dam and the MDOT Rest Stop on M-46. Forty five volunteers turned, out collecting 2 full stake trucks of trash, including 55 tires.

2015 Cass River Clean Up Plan

Next year's clean up will be hosted by Bridgeport Township. Their plan is to work the river from the Dixie Highway Bridge to the Bridgeport Walking Bridge. Bill Wheeler indicated he would likely be the chairman. Peter Haake indicated he is willing to provide assistance to Bill. During the discussion, Craig Kilpatrick suggested that Tuscola County may want to sponsor another clean up upstream from where we ended this year. The group agreed we would endorse two clean ups if we were confident enough volunteers were recruited.

June 21 Float & Swim the Cass

Bill Zehnder reported on this successful event. Eight swimmers participated and approximately 32 kayaks/canoes also took part. The group traveled from the Tuscola launch to the Frankenmuth launch – approximately 4 ½ miles. Bill expects the event to be scheduled again in 2015.

August 2 Bavarian Inn Experience Triathlon

Bill Zehnder reported that the 2nd Tri for Life Triathlon took place at Frankenmuth RiverPlace on the morning of August 2. 433 participants took part in this year's event – about 100 more than last year. Bill expects the event will be scheduled again in 2015.

Vassar Launch Project

Brad Barrett reported on a successful visit by a representative from the Natural Resources Trust Fund in early June. He has since been invited to present their proposal to the Trust Fund Board in late August. Pending funding, the new launch and park site will be constructed in 2015.

M-46 Launch Site

Joe Toth reported on a site meeting held with DNR Real Estate representatives. Discussion included locating the site on the DNR State Game property vs. the MDOT park located across the river. At the request of DNR personnel, MDOT has provided them a letter dated July 29, 2014 explaining why they recommend the launch be located on the DNR site. We are waiting for feedback from the DNR.

Bridgeport Launches

Bill Wheeler reported that a Natural Resources Trust Fund representative visited the two proposed launch sites. Bill expects feedback regarding their grant requests in a few weeks. His team will be working to secure the remaining funding in the months ahead. 2015 is targeted for construction.

2014 Phragmites Control Plan

Bob Zeilinger provided Michelle Zaverucha with phragmites survey data for 3 townships – Elkland, Novesta and Elmwood. Many thanks to the Tuscola County Road Commission for their continued support of this project. Survey data was compiled by Jim Hartwig, Tom Lynes, Jim Vandeveld, Larry List and Bob Zeilinger.

Bob also reported that 3 private property owners have contacted him regarding help treating their properties.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

RCPP leadership has been advised that their “pre-proposal” was successful and they have been invited to submit a full proposal for consideration by October 2, 2014. The pre-proposal included a five year action plan to promote conservation practices that are proven to reduce nutrient and sediment laden runoff in the most high risk areas across the Saginaw Bay Watershed, at a scale that ensures ecological results. Of importance to us, the Cass River Watershed is included in the Tier 1 targeted area. This initiative is a perfect compliment to our Cass River Watershed Management Plan.

Watershed Management Plan

Tiffany Foco and Jim Hergott reported that the Cass River Watershed Management Plan has now been approved by the MDEQ. The Plan now needs to be approved by the EPA. However, with MDEQ approval, we are now qualified to request funding for action items suggested in the Plan. A “notice of intent” to request funds will be submitted by August 20 and a full proposal will be submitted by October 17.

Streambank Erosion Control

Tiffany Foco reported that Cole Creek is currently being looked at for the initial erosion control work using funding already secured. There is a need to find approximately seventy 15’ spruce trees for tree revetment material. Tiffany indicated that two major funding requests are in process. Bob Zeilinger reported that a commitment of support has been received from Star of the West Milling Company and he is meeting with the Frankenmuth Conservation Club in mid-August.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 1, 2014 1:00 – 3:00PM
Vassar City Office

Bob Zeilinger
August 7, 2014