TWO RIVERS COALITION
BOARD MEETING, SEPTEMBER 9, 2009
GENEVA TOWNSHIP HALL

Call to order 7:03 p.m.

Attendance: Nina Consolatti, <u>Joe Parman</u>, John Mitchell, Kevin Haight, Dick Curtis, Chris Bauer, Carl Bouton, Joe VonWahlde, <u>Nancy Edwards-Bayha</u>, Al Baerren, <u>Deb Berkey</u>, <u>Dave Foerster</u>, <u>Kevin Haight</u>, <u>Tom Howe</u>, <u>Matt Meersman</u> (Board Members names are underlined)

Motion by Deb Berkey, seconded by Matt Meersman to approve the agenda, all ayes.

Motion by Kevin Haight, seconded by Matt Meersman to approve minutes of August 12, 2009 meeting as amended, all ayes.

Presentation by Celery Pond Advocates, CPA – Carol Niffenegger, slide show provided. The CPA is a non-profit organization set-up to protect and preserve the Celery Pond wetland in the City of South Haven. Help protect the Celery Pond wetland by contacting the City of South, and for more information log on to www.celerypond.blog.com

Treasurer's Report: Matt Meersman, hand-out provided. Total Net Income of $4,053.77, receiving $20.00 in donations and no expenses.

AWEP – Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, Matt Meersman: Hand-out and map provided as attachment to the minutes. The Prioritization Committee is researching future projects and properties for 2010 funding. It is expected there will be an opportunity for TRC to participate in educating farmers in priority watershed areas on the opportunities for financial assistance with clean water project initiatives.

PROJECT REVIEWS: COMMITTEE LEADERS:

Fundraising – The committee was asked to look into projects that could be utilized through a grant. The committee suggested purchasing a display for public events and painting a mural on a building.

Motion by Matt Meersman, seconded by Joe Parman to have Sam Ewbank and Fund Raiser committee, with the help of Tom Howe and Membership Committee, draft an application for a grant from River Network and prioritize the purchase of a display board and printed materials such as educational items and brochures. The draft will be emailed to Board members for comment/concurrence.

Media/Communication – Nothing new at this time

The Two Rivers Coalition is a citizen-based Group working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw River watersheds through conservation education, and advocacy.

Annual Meeting – Facility is secured and is tentatively planned for December 9, 2009. Suggestions on topics and speakers can be emailed to Deb Berkey at berkeydeb@yahoo.com

Communications Connections – Al Baerren has the power point presentation on the Two Rivers Coalition done for public meetings and events. Contact Al if you would like to use the presentation; ABAERRE@entergy.com

P-Ban, Joe Parman – Committee is developing a lawn friendly/green sticker for fertilizers and mini-brochures for retailers.

Septic System Ordinance and Outreach, Deb Berkey – Great Bear Lake Association is organizing a door to door canvas and volunteer program for septic system evaluations.

Buffers, Joe Parman – Nothing new at this time.

Motion by Deb Berkey, seconded by Al Baerren to have TRC, Dave Foerster to draft letter supporting Celery Pond Advocates efforts in preserving and protecting the Celery Pond Wetland in South Haven, all ayes.

New Business and Announcements:

Chris Bauer, MDEQ: MDEQ is looking for water courses to monitor for water quality testing in the upper St. Joseph River in 2010 and the lower St. Joseph in 2011. For suggestions contact the Water Bureau Division of the MDEQ. BauerC1@michigan.gov

Bangor/South Haven Heritage Water Trail annual meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2009. For more information log on to www.vbco.org/watertrail.asp

Marcy Colclough drafted a press release covering the August Black River event. Copies will be emailed to Board members for publication authorization.

Motion to adjourn by Al Baerren, seconded by Matt Meersman, all ayes. 9:06 p.m.

Joe Parman, TRC Secretary

Attachment: AWEP Program Overview

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Five Year AWEP Funded – Southeast Lake Michigan

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- **AWEP – Agricultural Water Enhancement Program**
  - **Not a grant, but a program funded by USDA**
  - **Covers St. Joseph River, Kalamazoo River and Black River Watersheds**
  - **$27 million over 5 years, with 79% of the funds going to Michigan and 21% of the funds going to Indiana. Based on percentage of land in farms within the target watersheds in each state.**
  - **190,000 acres in the southeast Lake Michigan watershed**
  - **Farmers must apply through their local NRCS offices.**
  - **Funds will be used to offset the cost of adopting practices that protect water quality and quantity.**
- **2009 Allocation**
  - **$2 million requested for allocation in 2009 with $1.5 million to Michigan and $500,000 to Indiana.**
  - **FY 2009 funds must be allocated no later than September 4.**
  - **EQIP rules will apply for each state for FY2009**
  - **2009 will target EQIP non-funded applications with eligible practices that reside within the target watersheds.**
- **Steering Committee**
  - **Made up of individuals in all three watersheds, including conservation district, watershed councils, NRCS representatives, and other interested individuals**
- **Proposal submitted & supported by:**
  - **Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD)**
  - **Kalamazoo River Water Council (KRCW)**
  - **Friends of the St. Joe River (FotSJR)**
  - **Conservations Districts in Indiana and Michigan**
  - **Michigan and Indiana Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)**
  - **Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD)**
  - **Plus many other organizations too numerous to mention provided letters of support to the proposal**
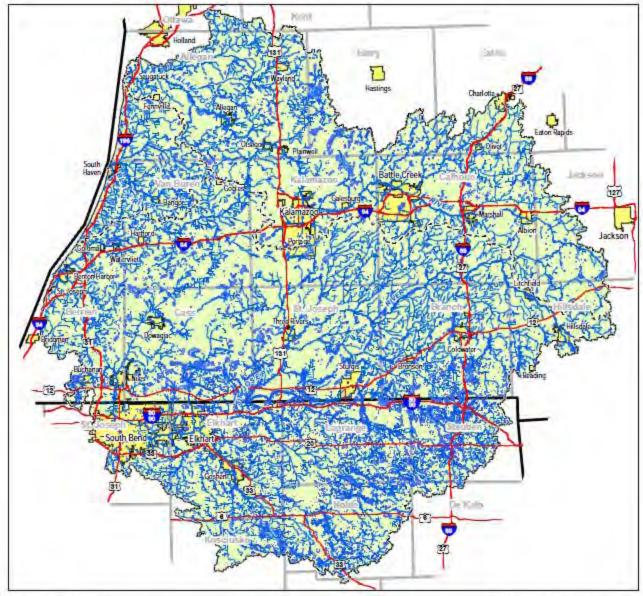- **Eligible cost share practices include:**
  - **Irrigation Water Management**
  - **Cover Crops**
  - **Filter Strips**
  - **Diversions & Fencing**
  - **Nutrient Management**
  - **Pest Management**
  - **Pasture and Hay Planting**
  - **Watering Facility, water well for livestock watering**
  - **Water & Sediment Control Basin**
  - **Waste Storage Facility for livestock**
  - **Plus others**

02/09/2009 - USDA NRCS
DATA SOURCE: NHD and NRCS Watersheds

Map produced at the Michigan State Office
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Attachment: AWEP Program Overview
TRC minutes 9-Sep-09