

SWEET

Meeting Minutes

Monday January 27, 2025

After a brief check-in meeting began at 10:02am

In attendance: Adam Rickert (MCHD-SP), Maggie Sullivan (Friends of Lake Monroe), Trohn Enright-Randolph, Rachael Johnson (City of Bloomington Planning), Dillon Plummer (Town of Ellettsville), Michael Dorsett (IU MS4), Erica Eason (MC Soil and Water), Kriste Lindberg (CBU).

BIG COLLABORATION ITEMS

- For 2025 planning, several ideas were discussed including
 - a) Having SWEET members host/promote a 2 to ½ day workshop on stormwater issues and environmental education. Sending out a survey prior to the workshop could collect information from the public as to what stormwater issues and/or questions they might be encountering.
 - b) Having SWEET assist with expanding local composting efforts and resources. Possibly offer a SWEET workshop specifically on composting. During previous SWEET meeting, discussion of composting included a request from the Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department to the City of Bloomington Planning (and Environmental Commission) to keep HAND in the loop about composting programs led by local government. HAND might be in the position where they are citing a resident for noncompliance related to composting.
 - c) For SWEET meetings, invite guest speakers to join in person or online. For example, guest speakers sharing their experiences and what they learned from participating in an environmental/stormwater education program. Provide 10-15 minutes for the guest speaker to have the floor and promote the speakers' attendance 2 to 3 months prior to the meeting.
 - d) Related to c), have existing SWEET members provide their experiences with a specific project/program that they learned something or had a different mindset after the project/program was up and running.

As part of the discussion of the big collaboration items, Trohn discussed an idea of SWEET hosting a workshop or summit, having the goal of closing the presently identified gaps with stormwater and/or waste reduction management. With a workshop or summit, the gaps (or areas of improvement) would be identified through a process of learning what the public needs and participating SWEET members providing education to the public. As an example, Trohn mentioned potentially hosting an annual convention that brings in city, county planning, MS4 folks, waste reduction folks, stakeholders using private solid waste haulers, stakeholders interacting with the Friends of Lake Monroe to provide the opportunity to learn from all participants.

Maggie mentioned having a stormwater summit, where you have a few players assembled to talk about where the gaps are, where the overlaps and contradictions are present. Friends of Lake Monroe hosted a Lake Monroe Watershed Summit (LMWS) a few years ago which had about 40 people participate. Maggie indicated it was a really positive event and that it took a lot of planning and questions to consider in terms of who do you invite, what conversations do you hope to have, how do you encourage them to happen and how do you structure it? The LMWS was based around the Lake Monroe Watershed Management Plan (LMWP). During the

Summit, Friends of Lake Monroe essentially said “here’s our plan and all the things we want to do, so what we want to talk about is how do we do these things, is there anything that we are missing and of these things, what role do you play, what role does your agency play?” After the LMWS participants began to answer these questions, participants had the opportunity to take ownership of the tasks to overcome the obstacles and gaps and to do their part to fulfill the LMWP. Through this process LMWS participants were able to identify tasks and gaps that they could not really do anything about, but we can work to address this task or this gap.

Trohn said a lot of folks may not know exactly who the right contact person is initially when trying to address a stormwater related problem or gap. Trohn indicated with the Stormwater Management Ordinance (SMO), the County Development Ordinance (CDO), the (Bloomington) Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and long-term plans with Lake Monroe are all good discussion items for folks to educate them. Anything we could do to help folks understand what we are asking will be proactive and potentially mitigate issues that would be time consuming or costly.

Maggie said if SWEET wanted to do something smaller like a workshop, composting as the focus is too specific. With composting, there are generally two groups of people: for the larger group, composting turns them off in that they equate it with extra work while the smaller group is open to it. A workshop titled “leaf management” with the hosts/speakers providing the attendees with options/resources and also going over how leaf management ultimately benefits water quality in receiving streams could still provide composting information.

Trohn asked Adam what a successful attendance rate would be if SWEET hosted a workshop or summit. After a lengthy answer which essentially summarized the last few minutes of the meeting, Adam responded with somewhere between 10-40 participants.

Trohn responded with asking what kind of folks are we targeting for outreach.....someone that owns one property, someone that represents a HOA and that person shares it with other residents within the subdivision via a newsletter? Maggie indicated that also leads to the question of is a workshop the format we’re looking for? Or if our goal is to get this information out there, is it more developing materials that each SWEET Team member then uses in other outreach situations? And that maybe we have something on our web page that’s a quick overview of how to manage your leaves.

During the SWEET meeting, it became apparent that several SWEET participants were not able to join the meeting. After the connectivity issues were resolved, the meeting resumed at about the 50-minute mark of the Teams recording file.

Post technological difficulty resolution discussion included: Trohn mentioned that since we have a number of different MS4 communities within Monroe County, the public may not know what department or resource will be able to provide the services they are seeking. As an example, leaf removal.... are there two different ways the City and Monroe County provide this service? Hosting a summit wherein representatives from the different MS4s within the County are available to provide resources and to listen to the concerns of the public would be a possible means to reduce confusion and improve stormwater management.

Having a summit format might yield plentiful attendance amongst the public. Also, participants may attend to learn about a particular topic and see a course on something else for which they learn something new.

Adam mentioned that we should maintain the momentum from similar events and offer stormwater education to a broader audience if possible. As part of having a public event which includes listening to public concerns as a component of the event, at the very minimum, we should identify improvements we can make.

Trohn mentioned with the new stormwater management ordinance in place at the county level, the Town of Ellettsville looking at their ordinance, the City of Bloomington's UDO and Friends of Lake Monroe Watershed management plan, there is lot of what we do overlap with those particular ordinances and plans to educate the public and be proactive. If we can mitigate anything (an activity/service) requiring a significant time commitment or costly effort that the county, city and municipalities have taken on, holding a summit would be well worth it.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

- National Association for Interpretation Region 4 Workshop, ***Deep Connections Roots to Rivers***. March 17-20, 2025, Hueston Woods State Park, Ohio. <https://nairegion4.weebly.com/regional-interpreters-workshop.html>
- [Weed Wrangles](#) are happening monthly at various locations around Bloomington, Check https://www.bloomingtonvolunteernetwork.org/need/detail/?need_id=815567 for upcoming dates.
- Nature Days will resume in 2025 with Leonard Springs on April 1st and April 8th and Griffy Lake on April 3rd and April 10th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION

- No report.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON UTILITIES

- Kriste reaffirmed the importance of working with HOAs from the Big Collaboration Items discussion. CBU is considering having educational events specifically focused on HOAs moving forward as well.
- CBU has a postcard through the Monroe County Organizations Active in Disaster with the focus on how people can mitigate heavy rainfall events through completing little adjustments on their property.
- MCCSC-CBU just finished the 4th grade Maker Challenge and had their showcase a couple of weeks ago. The showcase was very well attended. Currently working with the 8th graders on the Maker Challenge.
- Working with IU. CBU has a presentation coming up this Friday with IU Chemistry.

- CBU is continuing with IDEMs Clean Communities Program.
- CBU is revising the stormwater grants program to include more HOA related infrastructure.

FRIENDS OF LAKE MONROE

- Getting everything scheduled for the year, but FLM will be continuing on with our regular shoreline cleanups.
- FLM will do some outreach events this year on forestry and on septic system maintenance, although probably focused more in Jackson County.
- FLM is hosting another watershed tour in 2025, sometime in June.
- FLM still has \$30,000 in cost share funds for farmers to do soil and water conservation. If you know people in the watershed that want to do some projects, please send them to me.

MONROE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

- No report.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON PLANNING

- Bloomington's Earth Day Celebration will be held April 19, 2025. City of Bloomington Department of Economic and Sustainable Development and Bloomington Parks and Recreation are working to co-host the event. The Environmental Commission will be at the Earth Day Celebration to present Eco Heroes. Announcements regarding Eco Heroes will go out in the next few weeks.
- Environmental Commission is still taking applications for several vacancies. Monroe County residents residing within the City of Bloomington may apply through the website, https://bloomington.in.gov/onboard/applicants/apply?committee_id=14

MONROE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Soil testing program that we had with the Lake Monroe Water Fund last year has been extended through June of 2025. A lot of funding still remains, if you know of anyone that would like their garden or lawn soil tested, please let them know. After the funds are exhausted, the price of the soil test will go back to \$25 per soil test plus shipping.
- Starting new funding for the Stormwater Partnership Grant. Soil and Water allotted almost all of it for 2024. During 2024, Soil and Water finished six projects and have allocated funding for 6 other projects that will be completed during 2025.
- If CBU needs any assistance with HOAs, Erica offered continued assistance.
- Soil and Water has some 319 Funding for Lower Salt Creek. The funding is mostly for AG conservation projects. Erica will keep SWEET updated for future Lower Salt Creek Steering Committee meetings.
- Annual Soil and Water meeting is 3/1/2025 at Ivy Tech, Shreeve Hall. This years meeting will showcase some of the Stormwater Partnership Grant projects completed during 2024.

MONROE COUNTY WASTE REDUCTION DISTRICT

- No report.

MONROE COUNTY HIGHWAY STORMWATER PROGRAM

- **Contractors Workshop** was held on January 22, 2025 at Ivy Tech Bloomington.

MONROE COUNTY SURVEYOR

- House Bill 1037 which would restrict local communities and counties from having more restrictive stormwater regulations than what is in the CSGP. In Monroe County, we have Critical Watersheds or drainage basins and we have more strenuous water release rates to prevent flooding. HB 1037, if passed would impact the Stormwater Management Ordinance to maintain flooding prevention controls within the Critical Watersheds. INASFM is tracking this bill.
- INAFSM tracks the fate of Indiana legislative bills related to stormwater and flood control management on their website. Other bills being tracked includes a bill regarding the use of DNR's best available flood data.

FRIENDS OF LAKE MONROE

- No report.

TOWN OF ELLETTSVILLE

- No report.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

- IU is working on Annual Report(s) for IDEM currently.

PUBLIC INPUT

- No public input.

NEW BUSINESS

- No new business, meeting adjourned at about 11:00am

NEXT MEETING

February 24, 2025 at 10:00 am.