

**Eastern Regional RC&D Council Meeting
Newberry – December 3, 2009**

PRESENT: Jill Maki-Luce Co Comm; Dean Reid-Mackinac Co Planning Comm; Dusty King-Chippewa East Mackinac CD; Pat Carr-NRCS; Nathan Fazer-EUPRPDC; Dick Timmer-Chippewa Co Comm; Marilyn Shy and Darcy Rutkowski-UP RC&D Council

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reid at 12:55 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was approved with the addition of a new project “SAWP GLRI” (Timmer/Fazer).

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as written (Timmer/Maki) and will be placed on file.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

County Dues Update: Darcy reported that at their meeting on September 29, 2009, the UP RC&D Council voted to make no changes to the amount that is requested for annual dues from the 15 counties in the UP. The dues will remain at \$300 and invoices will be mailed to the counties in January 2010.

2010 Draft Annual Plan of Work: Marilyn distributed copies of the draft 2010 Annual Plan of Work. She believes that this draft will be approved when the UP RC&D Council meets tomorrow.

REPORTS:

Chippewa East Mackinac CD: Dusty King reported that they have 3 job openings at this time in the CD - engineer (Johanna took at job in New Hampshire), watershed planner (to replace Pat Carr who will now be working with the district as an NRCS employee), and forester (to work on EAB near Moran).

Luce County: Jill Maki reported that the county is in the budget process right now and it has been frustrating. They did receive funding for expansion to the industrial site.

Mackinac County: Dean Reid reported that the county is in the process of re-evaluating whether they want to remain with the district health department (3 counties) or go out on their own. They will probably continue with the other counties. The St. Ignace School District met with community leaders and is looking at a possible millage vote in May to fund technology, transportation and the new biomass heating system.

NRCS: Pat Carr reported that he was recently hired by NRCS as a Soil Conservation Technician and will be working with the new DC, Kent Dankenbring, helping implement farm bill programs and helping with construction oversight. Marilyn reported that Mike LaPointe is scheduled to be back from temporary duty in Flint on December 7 and that Steve Law (Timberland RC&D Coordinator) has been covering Mike's job while he is downstate.

LWMCD: No one present, Della called to say she could not be here today.

EUPRPDC: Nathan Fazer reported that EUPRPDC is working on a Wildfire Protection Plan for Whitefish Twp, and that local fire departments are working with homeowners to educate them on how to avoid losing their homes when a situation like the Sleeper Lake Fire arises. Once a plan is in place, local fire departments can apply for grants. Jeff Hagan is finishing a USDA Solid Waste (Recycling) Grant which involves educational outreach. It is his understanding that Mascoma has funding now for research and development, but

still needs funding for building. Frontier has given a \$2 million grant to MSU/MTU to study biomass availability. They are trying to get EDA funding (but need spin-off businesses, not just the one big company).

Coordinators Report: Marilyn reported that she and Darcy have been working on and submitted a grant proposal to do an invasive species project throughout the UP. The project if funded would provide funds to conservation districts to develop Rapid Response Teams and also do some demonstration projects. We should know if we are funded sometime in March. She is also working with 8 CD's on a proposal for a invasive species marketing/media campaign which would cover a good portion of the UP called "Know It-Don't Grow It".

NEW PROJECT MEASURES: Dusty described the new project which the CEMCD submitted for approval called "Sault Area Watershed Plan/Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Grant". Through this project they would work with the City of Sault Ste. Marie and with LSSU to submit a proposal for a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Grant to implement the St. Mary's watershed plan which is already completed. The goal would be to have the St. Mary's River delisted as an Area of Concern with EPA. The project was approved (Timmer/Fazer).

PROJECT UPDATES:

CEMCD Alternate Energy Project-The committee met this morning to discuss this project.

Les Cheneaux Watershed Project: Pat Carr reported on the Les Cheneaux watershed project which will be completed by year end. A fairly complex survey was distributed to residents (about 1600 people) regarding managing septic systems and they got 800 responses back which is a tremendous response for a survey. This proves how much support they have in the community for this project. They also sent another newsletter/booklet with more information. The final report is due 12/31/09

Superior Shores Trail: Marilyn reported that this trail is proposed to connect the state park in Brimley with the lighthouse, and has been spearheaded by two nurses. They applied for and have been told that they will be getting assistance from Barbara Nelson-Jameson (NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program manager in Michigan). This is a complicated 9 mile project which may have to be completed in segments.

BURN-UP: Marilyn gave an update on the Manistique District Heating Plant Feasibility Study. This project is an offshoot of the BURN-UP project. She, Dave Andersen, and Linda Howlett met with Lew McCreery, the grant administrator of our Forest Service grant at the Manistique cluster site. They also visited the Bay College "cluster" site. Mr. McCreery offered to provide a pre-feasibility study for about 80% of the cost with the BU grant funds to be used as match for the remaining 20%. There are 16 stakeholders/buildings (12 organizations). The USFS will analyze the energy use data that was compiled from each building for the past 2 years, and they will do a site visit, look at distribution systems, etc. They hope to have the results back by early January. The follow-up engineering work would require another \$65,000 and they have applied for the EECBG grant to cover those costs. They would also need to form a district energy authority, and then seek a bonding issue if they decide to proceed. Darcy reported that the BURN-UP project received a grant extension for Phase II until March 31, 2010. The two harvest demonstrations were held in September and had great attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

Meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE: The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 11, 2010 at 1 pm in Newberry with an 11 am meeting for the energy sub-committee. Due to a conflict with the CEMCD meetings, the meeting schedule for 2010 was adjusted. The meetings are now scheduled for March 11, June 10, September 9, and December 9.