Water Resources Committee meeting 6/24/2016

Attendees

Alicia Lloyd, Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Mo Mills, Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Libby Reuter, Watershed Cairns
Janet Buchanan, Heartlands Conservancy
Jay Hoskins, MSD
Gary Moore, MSD
Chris Neaville, Doe Run
Amy Buessink, USGS
Paul Rydlund, USGS
Tracy Haag, DNR
Tracyee Verdun-Chapman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Genny Walters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jamie Paige, City of Wentzville
Celia Lamprecht, City of Wentzville
Tanner Aljets, 1 Mississippi/Sierra Club
Caroline Pufalt, Sierra Club

EWG Staff
Aaron Young
Bonnie Harper
Mary Grace Lewandowski
Carol Lawrence, Chair
Frank Johnson

Flood Inundation Mapping Tool

Amy Buessink and Paul Rydlund, U.S. Geological Survey

- Amy provided an overview of the agency and its operation of stream gauges on the Meramec River. The USGS has developed a Flood Inundation Mapping Tool and it would like to provide this tool for portions of the Meramec.
- The agency is partnering with cities and other organizations in the region for funding. They've raised $110,000 of the $128,000 required for Phase I.
- Paul explained the Flood Inundation Mapping tool in more detail. It translates a hydrograph into an operational map that can illustrate what areas would be impacted by a river reaching a certain flood stage level. It allows emergency management directors to better coordinate the preparation and response to major flood events while educating the public about the threat of flooding.

Urban Waters Partnership

Traycee Verdun-Chapman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- Traycee gave an overview of the Urban Waters Partnership, which is a federal place-based initiative focused on 19 designated community locations.
- The mission of the Urban Waters Partnership is to get community input on projects for the watershed and more effectively use federal resources.
- There are two grant programs Urban Waters is promoting:
    - Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration (Fish and Wildlife Service) – funds projects seeking to address water quality issues in priority watersheds.

    - Urban Waters Small Grants (EPA) – funds projects to help local residents and their organizations, particularly those in underserved communities, restore their urban waters in ways that also benefit community and economic revitalization.
- There has not been a lot of participation from the region on these grants. Traycee asked for feedback on what barriers individuals and organizations may be facing in applying.

Meramec River Ecological Restoration Feasibility Study
Traycee Verdun-Chapman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- The Army Corps of Engineers has signed an agreement with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to conduct an ecological restoration feasibility study of the Meramec River Basin in Jefferson and St. Louis counties.
- Funding has only been appropriated for the study. Any recommended projects as a result of the study will need a separate appropriation.

Our Missouri Waters Program
Aaron Young, East-West Gateway

- Aaron Young, East-West Gateway, gave an overview of DNR's Our Missouri Waters program and EWG's involvement with engaging local citizens and officials in the upper and lower portions of the Meramec River. The program seeks to bring people together and help define local priorities and goals for their watershed.

Lower Meramec River Watershed Plan Update
Aaron Young, East-West Gateway

- Eastwest Gateway is in the process of making several updates to its Lower Meramec River Watershed plan. The overall objective of the plan is to provide a framework for managing and improving water quality in the Lower Meramec River Basin. A finalized contract with DNR for the work is expected to be completed soon.
- Aaron said the updates include the addition of new HUC-12s, updated water quality tables, rerunning the watershed model and identifying projects for EPA funding.

Blue, Gray and Green Infrastructure as a Regional Opportunity (OneSTL)
Aaron Young, East-West Gateway

- OneSTL is interested in forming a working group around blue, gray and green infrastructure issues that can reconcile plans, define priorities and attract funding.
- The exact scale and scope of the group is still to be decided, would like it to complement the Water Resources Committee, possibly as a subcommittee.
- A sign-up sheet was passed around for committee members interested in participating.

Other Business

- Carol Lawrence, East-West Gateway, notified the committee of a DNR grant for homeowners with failing septic systems. It is being administered by the Missouri Association of Council of Governments.
- The timing of the next meeting was discussed and will likely be sometime this fall.