February Boardman River Dams Implementation Team Meeting
APPROVED Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 at 1:30 pm
Facilitator: Frank Dituri, City of Traverse City
Notes: Nate Winkler, Conservation Resource Alliance
Location: Traverse City Governmental Center, Second Floor Training Room

Implementation Team
Grand Traverse County                      City of Traverse City
Traverse City Light and Power Department  Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition       US Fish and Wildlife Service
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Grand Traverse Conservation District (Ex officio)  Conservation Resource Alliance (Ex officio)
Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay (Ex officio)  Charter Township of Garfield (Ex officio)
Grand Traverse County Road Commission (Ex officio)

Voting IT Members Present:
Frank Dituri, Marty Colburn (City of Traverse City)
Brett Fessell (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians)
Dean Bott (Grand Traverse County)
Bob Stuber (Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition)
Rick Westerhof (US Fish and Wildlife Service) (via conference line)

Non-voting IT Members Present:
Nate Winkler, Amy Beyer, Katie Auwers (Conservation Resource Alliance)
Christine Crissman (Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay)

Non-IT Members Present:
Jason Plum (AECOM)
Dan Zielinski (Great Lakes Fishery Commission)
Charlie Weaver (Northern Michigan Environmental Action Council)
1. Welcome and introductions – Introductions were made by those in attendance.

2. Public comment – None.

3. Miscellaneous

   Agenda deletions/additions – Since no representative from the Corps was present, the Corps update was struck from the agenda.

   Review and potential approval of the December IT meeting notes – Approved with no discussion.

   Action item review from the December IT meeting – Reviewed by Winkler; those not complete were noted as owing and placed on the “Pending Action Items” list (at the end of these notes) unless determined to no longer be relevant.

   Fourth quarter 2018 draft project manager’s report: discussion and approval (CRA) – Approved with no discussion.

   Review of draft updated IT contact list: review and discussion (CRA) – Short discussion regarding vacancy for representative from the GTCRC. Winkler indicated that he’d make an inquiry to see who might replace Jim Cook and subsequently update the contact list accordingly.

4. AECOM update: report and discussion (Jason Plum) – Plum presented the following updates on the local effort:

   Brown Bridge Dam
   - The Brown Bridge as-built drawings are pending, no word on expected completion date but Dituri indicated he’d look into any progress. Beyer suggested that City may already have them in their files

   Boardman Dam
   - Currently working with the GTCD and CRA on acquiring permits for the additional sites identified in November (2018) that require stabilization work
   - The as-built survey provided by Michels is undergoing revisions, no word on expected completion (and is the final contractual pay item)

   Sabin Dam
   - Contractor remobilized to site the prior month to finalize channel grade stabilization and riffle construction, then demobilized for the rest of the winter
   - MDEQ made site visit with AECOM prior to closure and determined (MDEQ) satisfactory site conditions for the winter

   Union Street Dam
   - Currently the Corps is subjecting the FishPass 60% design plans to an internal technical review which will take approximately one month. The 90% level of design is expected to be complete in late June, early July (2019)
4. **AECOM update: (continued)**

In response to an inquiry from Beyer, Plum indicated that a primary milestone for the Boardman River dams project finalization is closeout documentation which include as-built surveys. In fact, the as-built survey submittals will mark formal project completion. Plum went on to note related tasks under AECOM’s purview including reviewing final construction documents (ie as-builts) and FEMA flood map reconciliation.

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation Team update: report and discussion (Winkler)**

Winkler provided an update on the 2019 plans for macroinvertebrate survey work which will be performed under a 2018 contract amendment with the Au Sable Institute. Potential additional work that was suggested by Dr. Brian Keas (Au Sable Institute) is the analysis of New Zealand mud snail density in the Boardman River measured at different times of the year when they might be more abundant than what’s picked up during the annual macroinvertebrate survey. Because the annual survey requires sampling during late spring, the actual maximum density of the snails may not be quantified as water temperatures are colder at that time. Because they continually reproduce, there may be an uptick as water temperatures warm in the summer. Discussion ensued amongst the IT members and it was agreed that, while valuable, acquisition of those data is outside the scope of the IT as it doesn’t relate directly to the dam removal project. However, there may be partners that may contribute to the effort outside the activities of the dam removal project.

Fessell provided an overview of the geomorphic monitoring occurring as an MDEQ stipulation. A report has been submitted to MDEQ describing data acquired in 2018 as a baseline and therefore does not apply to the three-year data set required by MDEQ. This effort will commence in July (2019) to meet that three-year data set (the 2018 data did not include those needed for the new stretch at Sabin dam site as construction was occurring).

6. **FishPass: report and discussion (GTB/Corps/GLFC/MDNR/City) – Zielinski reported the following highlights:**

- Members of the FishPass team recently presented on the project at the International Fish Passage Conference in Australia
- There have been project outreach events held recently in Traverse City including the Traverse City Parks and Recreation Commission (which subsequently endorsed the project), the City Commission and a public reception at the City Opera House
- The first physical meeting of the FishPass Advisory Board was held to discuss project scope items including what the passage experiments will entail within the fish sorting channel, the development of O&M memorandums of agreement between partners, development of RFP for project construction, and development of an acoustic telemetry study grant proposal to the GLFC
7. **Bottomlands update: report, discussion (IT)** – The following updates were offered by the team:
   - (Dituri) The pedestrian footbridge at the Brown Bridge dam site has been delivered and the footings are under construction
   - (Colburn) Phase II of the large wood installation project at Brown Bridge is in the planning phase with talks currently underway between the City and the GTB for an O&M agreement. Fessell and Dituri added that construction is slated for the end of summer (2019) with funding coming from the Rotary wild game supper, GLFWRA, and NRCS

8. **Communications update: report, discussion (CRA/IT)** – Auwers provided an update on the updated 2019 project communications plan.

   Per a question from Crissman, Beyer indicated that several grant reports were being prepared and will construct a single, comprehensive document to serve as a final report(?)

   Zielinski provided an update on two communications meetings convened that relate to FishPass including:
   - AECOM staff weighed in on “way-finding” signage formats for the eventual facility
   - A subset of the above group convened to work up a documentary on accomplishments to date and projected next steps. A follow-up meeting is planned for later this year

   Fessell announced a planning meeting scheduled for later in the month (26 February) for a celebration of the river re-emergence. Assistance in the planning and execution of the event would be appreciated and related materials will be available for reference for those that would like to pitch in.

   Bott gave kudos to the team for a recent presentation to the County Road Commission and said it really went a long way with elevated understanding of the project influences with special regard to the South Airport crossing.

9. **Funding update: report, discussion (CRA/IT)** – Led by Beyer, the following was discussed:
   - The materials included in the packet were reviewed
   - A relatively high level of funding was expended in the 2018 fourth quarter to cover project related tasks
   - County Brownfields funding was paid to GTB to offset their upfront
   - Of eight project grants CRA is administering (equaling $3.6 million, six are closing in 2018
   - A local mechanism has developed to spend out remaining grant funds worked out between CRA, VanDamme, AECOM, and the GTCD (for work on remaining erosion sites)
   - Fundraising is tailing off with the exception of FishPass
   - Focus should be raising funds for bottomland and channel restoration, monitoring project effects, and working with the Watershed Center on the next phase of the overall project
   - A big THANK YOU to everyone for helping keep the funding plan and summary updated
9. **Funding update: (cont.)**

Colburn asked of the group at large whether or not there were efforts proposed to assess the project effects on the Bay. Crissman responded that the Watershed Center is currently collecting data in the Bay but it’s unlikely there’s any way to statistically correlate any effects with those data. Crissman continued that it would be good to get a firm idea on who’s doing what in the watershed via the Prosperity Plan (meeting coming up in May 2019). Fessell added that there are data collectors below the Sabin Dam site that may be helpful in determining what the river characteristics are discharging into the Bay farther downstream. Winkler added that caution should be used in pursuing the acquisition of data for data’s sake without a clear end use of those data.

Colburn continued that there could be great benefit to bring recreational partners into a framework of collaboration such as that done for Brown Bridge. Discussion topics could include topics like private use, small group use, and potential prohibitions on commercial uses to name a few. An example of a commercial use permit application being denied recently is a private outfit wanting to run tours on Boardman Lake and the lower river due to conflict with FishPass construction.

Bott suggested that the funds from the City, County, and Brownfields be illustrated in discrete amounts so it’ clear what the individual contributions to the project are.

Fessell concluded the overall discussion by commending Beyer on the routine provision of fundraising effort summaries. Stuber added that it would be helpful to his work to have a concise summary of fundraising efforts to date to share with colleagues. Beyer indicated she could provide a one-pager that would cover it.

10. **Open Forum: (IT)** – Beyer inquired of Plum as to the course of events leading to an updated FEMA floodplain map for the Boardman River. Plum indicated that the primary need is a final as-built survey for each of the three dam removal project footprints which then need to be forwarded to FEMA to complete the revision. The updated maps are important to have as landowners along the river are being incurred with unnecessary insurance costs that are unnecessary as the dams are gone, especially those that have homes along the former Boardman Pond. Bott added that he’d be meeting with Greg Byrd with County Emergency Management the following week to discuss this.

11. **Meeting Closing:** Meeting action items were reviewed and clarified by Winkler.

**Public Comment:** Charlie Weaver provided kudos for the effort in documenting the project finances.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.
Action Items

New:

- **Winkler** to distribute draft February IT meeting notes for review
- **Winkler** to have approved December IT meeting notes posted to the project website
- **Winkler** to distribute “The Drake” magazine article covering the project
- **Dituri** to check into status of Brown Bridge Dam project as-builts
- **GTB** and **MDNR** to apprise **Reid Swanson** of fish sampling schedules for 2019
- **Fessell** to distribute (via **Winkler**) materials related to the river re-emergence celebration planned for September
- **Beyer** to forward a one-page fundraising synopsis to **Stuber**

Pending:

- **County/Alpers** to file easements and Quit Claim Deed for Alpers’ easement
- **Shook** to distribute to IT (via **Winkler**) Brown Bridge large wood installation report once complete
- **Fessell** and **Heintzelman** to discuss future Boardman River fish sampling efforts
- **Crissman** to provide **Winkler** with final draft of the Boardman River Prosperity Plan
- **Fessell** and **Ratliff** to communicate regarding monitoring terrestrial habitats
- **Winkler** to forward copy of 2018 macroinvertebrate survey final report to the IT once complete
- **Winkler** to resend copy of sediment monitoring report from AECOM to the IT
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
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<td>Overall project engineer</td>
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<td>Brown Bridge</td>
<td>Brown Bridge Dam removal project area</td>
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<td>FishPass</td>
<td>Fish passage exploration project at Union Street Dam</td>
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<td>Michels</td>
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<td>Multi-faceted plan for the Boardman River watershed</td>
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