



ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MAINE COASTAL COMMUNITIES GRANT

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14, 2016 10:00 – 11:00 AM
AT DUNAWAY COMMUNITY CENTER, OGUNQUIT, ME

ADDRESSING BACTERIA CONTAMINATION IN THE OGUNQUIT RIVER WATERSHED (2015-2016)

1. THANK YOU / INTRODUCTIONS

Present: Perry Ellsworth (Town Manager, South Berwick), Bill Baker (Ogunquit Conservation Commission), Jon Carter (Town Manager, Wells), Kristin Feindel (Maine DEP), Meagan Sims (Maine Healthy Beaches), Karen Young (Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative), Doug Mayer (Great Works Regional Land Trust), Laura Diemer (FB Environmental Associates), Lauren Bizzari (FB Environmental Associates).

2. **GOAL:** Continue efforts to identify, monitor, and manage sources of fecal contamination in the Ogunquit River watershed.

3. REVIEW OF ALL PROJECT TASKS (FOCUS ON WATER QUALITY)

TASK 1: Multi-Town Collaboration and Meetings

- ✧ **GOAL:** Strengthen collaboration and open lines of communication among the watershed towns of Wells, South Berwick, York, and Ogunquit, as well as local land trusts (Great Works Regional Land Trust and Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative).
- ✧ Held 3 multi-partner meetings and have engaged in meaningful conversations about protecting a common resource – the Ogunquit River.

TASK 2: Septic System Database and Risk Assessment

- ✧ **GOAL:** Identify areas at risk from fecal contamination as a result of old/malfunctioning septic systems.
- ✧ **Final product:** spreadsheet of prioritized septic and sewer parcels for the entire watershed; risk assessment maps that highlight problem areas; brief memo describing results and town-specific next steps.
- ✧ At our last meeting, the towns were considering a loan program to help facilitate septic system replacements in priority areas (based on the database).
- ✧ *FBE will ensure that the towns have the updated septic/sewer database for their records. The memo and maps will be put up on the Town of Ogunquit's website.*
- ✧ *FBE confirmed that the Ogunquit Sewer District has been involved with monitoring and sewer/stormwater inspections in hotspot areas under the Phase I 319 grant.*

TASK 4: Water Quality Monitoring Expansion

- ✧ Expanded existing water quality monitoring program to identify and bracket potential sources of bacteria in hotspot areas and across seasons. Sampled 12 sites in spring (4 times), summer (6 times), and fall (4 times); half wet and half dry weather in each season. Also, collected samples for DNA analyses at a subset of 8 sites twice (1 wet, 1 dry) in each season.
 - Fecal contamination evident throughout the watershed, as all but two sites exceeded geometric mean criterion. Two sites (OR-18 and OR-15-1) showed consistently high bacteria during both wet and dry weather throughout the year. Minimal data collected at OG-pipe also showed high bacteria counts. Downstream sites (OR-15, OR-16, OR-Theater, and OR-13) showed high bacteria counts during wet weather in summer and fall.

- DNA analyses indicate that dog waste is a consistent contributor to fecal contamination at the outlet of Leavitt Stream. Dog waste at OG-pipe is a newly detected source (thought to be primarily from seagulls). High counts at OR-15-1 seem to be from wildlife.
 - **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Target OR-18 and OR-15/OR-16 areas for outreach on pet waste management and septic/sewer maintenance. Already in progress through a Phase II 319 grant.
- ✧ Conducted an upstream investigation (river walk) of the OR-6 drainage above Route 1; sampled at regular and key locations to bracket potential sources.
 - Hotspots of bacteria were found in more populated areas of the watershed: OR-10 (tributary west of I-95) and ORINV-07 (water sluice likely transporting water from landscaped pond on a hill above the river). Overall, we found low bacteria counts. 2016 was an extremely dry summer, which restricted the mobilization of bacteria sources from the landscape to waterways.
 - ✧ **Final product:** We will provide a final report documenting the watershed investigation, assessing the water quality results, and detailing next steps once remaining DNA lab results come in.
 - ✧ *Hotspot OR-18 was discussed by the committee. There are no known domesticated animals at Great Works farm north of OR-18 (only a community garden). Future monitoring should resample historical sites above and below Robbie's Pond (that drains to OR-18).*
 - ✧ *FBE will confirm with John Bucci from UNH what the avian "primer" covers, but it likely seagull and goose.*
 - ✧ *Meagan Sims from MHB pointed out that the high bacteria counts measured from OG-pipe could be from bacteria regrowth or from other sources besides human, dog, and bird.*
 - ✧ *Bacteria counts appear to be low in the South Berwick portion of the watershed. The Town is working to put areas into permanent conservation/land trust land to protect the rural headwaters of the Ogunquit River.*
 - ✧ *Suggestions for map improvements: use symbols to show which sites were tributaries or the Ogunquit River for the OR-06 investigation results map and add town boundary lines to all maps.*

TASK 5: Project Management and Reporting

- ✧ FBE = continuing to track budget and match, develop summary of work for State invoices, and submit progress reports on 12/31/2015 (complete), 6/30/2016 (complete), and 12/31/2016 (working on now). Will develop a case study and match documentation for submittal to the State no later than 1/13/2017.

TASK 6: Spatial Data

- ✧ All spatial data created through this project will be maintained by the town in an easily accessible format to the public. FBE will develop a list of spatial data created during this project and process by which these data can be accessed for the final report.

5. WRAP-UP / QUESTIONS



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