

**Upper Black River Watershed Restoration Committee**  
Minutes from the Meeting of February 17, 2005

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Attendance: Bud Slingerland, Paul Rose (Huron Pines RC&D), Morris Domke, Heather Enterline (USFWS), John Walters (Headwaters Chapter TU), Keith Rusnell (Headwaters Chapter TU), Wilfred Mandrick (Cheboygan Soil Conservation), Wayne Spray (Cheboygan Soil Conservation), Lonnie Weaver (Montmorency County Rd. Commission), Neal Godby (MDNR-Fish Division), Ann Baughman (Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council), Tim Cwalinski (MDNR-Fish Division), Brad Jensen (Huron Pines RC&D), and Mike Moreau

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Bud Slingerland.

**WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS**

**UPDATE ON 2005 SUMMER WORK PLAN**

Montmorency Conservation District will coordinate the summer work crew this year. The crew will work on both the Thunder Bay River and the Black River. This is just an interim arrangement for this year only, until a custodian can be identified for the committee and the committee organization is clarified.

The crew plans to work on the following projects in the Black River watershed this year: continue with large woody debris placement; remove beaver dams; work on Canada Creek Ranch; and work on the main branch and the east branch. Work on the Thunder Bay River includes four erosion sites and repairing work at old sites.

**PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT / COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION DISCUSSION**

Paul Rose clarified the role of Huron Pines RC&D in the committee. Huron Pines' goal is to bring the various participants together and get the group up and running.

A question central to the committee organization was raised: if funding were acquired, where would it go? The need for a custodial account manager was identified; this custodian would need to have 501c3 designation to receive funds.

Ann Baughman suggested we frame our discussion by reviewing the committee's mission, accomplishments, and our future goals.

**Organization History:**

1991. From the first management plan for Black Lake, a group, including angler groups and agencies, was organized to work on erosion sites. The group's first meeting was in the spring of 1992, organized by Perry Smeltzer.

**Mission Statement:**

"To restore and maintain the outstanding water resources and natural brook trout fishery of the Upper Black River watershed."

**The group decided that this mission statement is still applicable to the committee today, and should remain unchanged.**

The group then discussed its future plans, looking at both physical and organization work plans.

#### Physical Work To Do

- 1) Repair and replace road-stream crossings (and pave bridge approaches)
- 2) Update streambank erosion inventory as a stand-alone report, including road stream crossing information and old data
- 3) Explore establishing natural river status
- 4) Establish appropriate boating regulations (no Motors) with the DNR and townships
- 5) Continue beaver control efforts, inventory beaver dams (Morris Domke suggested annual meetings between the DNR and trappers)
- 6) Work with DEQ to have sites of concern included in their monitoring efforts
- 7) Inventory dams within the watershed, and pursue removal (a private dam on Tomahawk Creek was mentioned)
- 8) Assist the DNR in maintaining brook trout species management for the Black River
- 9) Annually place temperature loggers, establish a temperature monitoring system
- 10) Continue installing in-stream structures
- 11) Develop an inventory of sand traps and a maintenance plan
- 12) Investigate special fishing regulations for certain sections of the Upper Black River
- 13) Maintain good working relationship with neighboring groups

#### Organizational Work To Do

- 1) Determine who will hold the money for the committee (custodial account)
- 2) Maintain summer work crew
- 3) Increase volunteer involvement for instream and other committee work
- 4) Develop a new partnership agreement with definition of roles
- 5) Identify a new committee chairperson
- 6) Establish some structure for the committee
- 7) Enhance committee communications

#### Partnership Agreement

The need for an updated partnership agreement was discussed. The agreement will be nonbinding, and will show commitment and define roles. **Brad Jensen will bring some suggested formats to the next meeting.** A priority will be to create a custodial account.

**The following two motions were unanimously approved:**

- 1) All funds will flow through a custodial account unless otherwise agreed to by the committee.**
- 2) Under no circumstances shall funds be sought nor spent under the name of the committee without committee consent.**

## OTHER BUSINESS

Huron Pines RC&D and USFWS are working with county road commissions in the watershed to coordinate short- and long-term projects.

Suggested agenda items for the next meeting include: selection of a new committee chairperson; develop a new partnership agreement; and establish a custodial account.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, March 25, 2005, 9:30 a.m. at the Canada Creek Ranch