



# **MINUTES**

## **Upper Fox River Watershed Planning Stakeholder Kickoff Meeting July 6, 2022** **Held at the Fox Waterway Agency Headquarters**

*Meeting called to order at 1:05 pm*

### **Joe Keller, Executive Director, Fox Waterway Agency**

Mr. Keller gave a brief introduction to the size and scope of the waterway and the creation of the Fox Waterway Agency assigned with the management of the Upper Fox River. He noted that approximately 100,000 cubic yards of silt materials are dredged annually. The agency began applying for an IEPA (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency) Section 319 Grant to create a watershed-based plan in 2018 and was awarded it in the spring of 2022. It is a 60%/40% matching grant. Once the plan is completed in about 2 years, the projects identified may be eligible for additional funding.

Those participants in the room introduced themselves while others were on the Zoom meeting platform. A partial list of those present can be found at the end of the minutes.

Joe Keller introduced Jeff Boeckler, Northwater Consulting

### **Jeff Boeckler, Northwater Consulting**

Mr. Boeckler explained the goal is to produce a plan that is actionable. The IEPA has already determined that the top issues within the system are Phosphorus, Sedimentation and Nitrogen levels which are causing impairments to the Quality of the Waterway and will also respond to water quality issues identified in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy plan (which focuses on Nitrogen and Phosphorus). Northwater will be making recommendations as part of the process.

Mr. Boeckler continued to explain that the area of the watershed-based plan includes Four HUCs (Hydrological Unit Code), involving 14 municipalities (formal and informal), mostly in

Lake County, IL. This area has no watershed plan in place, but several watersheds adjacent to this system have completed their watershed plans. Approximately 40% of this plan area is water or existing wetlands which is a much larger percentage than most plans. The plan will end at the State Line on the northern boundary. This plan will not include actions applicable to adjacent states as Illinois has no jurisdiction.

Northwater Consulting will be crunching the data, identifying trends, and modeling possible solutions. The plan will provide the roadmap for reducing Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) overages to improve the water quality. TMDL has been determined by the IEPA for Phosphorus and fecal coliform in this watershed. TMDL have not been determined for nitrogen or sediment. The plan will most likely include multi-jurisdictional cooperation to accomplish some of the infrastructure projects.

An inventory of existing conditions is underway, and photos taken along the shores of the waterway are totaling about 1000 point so far. All were collected at summer pool water levels. Other items further upland in the watershed will need to be identified. Northwater Consulting will meet with some of the larger businesses and municipality stakeholders/landowners and delineate some sub-watersheds where needed for specific projects. The Fox Waterway Agency project manager and volunteers are focused on the stakeholder Education and Outreach requirements of the grant.

### **Randy Stowe, 319 Project Coordinator**

Mr. Stowe provided a handout with a variety of web resources providing samples of possible ways for this process to move forward. The Fox Waterway Agency staff will be working to get the word out via Social Media and coordinate the project descriptions as they come in. The idea is to prevent the sediment and other pollutants from entering the system to begin with, but we can't control the north reaches of the watershed.

Mr. Stowe noted that his experience was with a smaller watershed that went through a somewhat informal process to create their plan. A Lake County Stormwater Commission representative suggested that all meeting be hybrid to maximize attendance and involvement.

### **Joe Keller, Executive Director, Fox Waterway Agency**

Mr. Keller highlighted the need for education throughout the system of the reasons behind the projects, so everyone knows the goal is Water Quality for everyone.

### **Pat Smarto, Chairwoman of the Fox Waterway Advisory Committee**

Ms. Smarto shared that the Advisory Committee members and volunteers will be working on planning the Educational Public Outreach programs. It was suggested that the agency reach out through email to sticker holders.

All of the speakers emphasized the need for input from all stakeholders to create the unique data sets to develop the final plan.

*The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm*

*The second meeting started at 6:00 pm and ended at 7:15 p.m. and covered the same slides and materials.*

**Partial List of Attendees:**

President of Algonquin  
IDNR Fisheries representatives  
Fox Waterway Advisory Committee members (John Fisher, Anne Basten, Dave Corrigan,  
and Rob Bryson)  
Lake County Stormwater Commission staff  
Representative Tom Weber  
Senator Craig Wilcox  
President Schmidt of Fox Lake  
Grant and Antioch Township Supervisors  
McHenry County Water Resource Manager, Joanna Colletti  
Manitou Creek Watershed volunteer  
Jason Hetterman, Fox Waterway Director  
Rob Bowman, Fox Waterway Project Supervisor  
Wes Cattour, IDNR Water Resources  
Michelle Goldstein  
David Gilmore  
Rick Pohlman  
Joel Krause  
Robert Springer  
Logan Gilbertson  
Arthur Malm  
Judy Goffo  
Jeanine Pilazgle  
Sue Bergeson  
Judy Martini  
Bob Mazzelli  
Mary Pat Thollay  
Celeba Close  
Andrew Pauley  
Leanne Soltau  
Chris Stochl, Fox Waterway Director