

Watershed Committee of the Ozarks, Inc.

Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 1, 2017

Midtown Carnegie Library

Ms. Greene called the meeting order at 7:30 AM

Agenda

Roll Call

Review of Minutes—August minutes were reviewed.

Watershed Committee Update— Mr. Kromrey said the October 6 meeting will be held at the Watershed Center and the Summer Newsletter is out.

“The Nature Conservancy: a shared conservation agenda,”— Holly Neill, External Affairs Manager, The Nature Conservancy and Drew Holt, Western Watershed Coordinator, The Nature Conservancy — Ms. Neill said The Nature Conservancy’s mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. Every state has a chapter and she and Drew work for the Missouri Chapter. Their five organizational priorities are 1) protect land and water, 2) tackle climate change, 3) provide food and water sustainability, 4) build healthy cities, 5) connect people and nature. Ms. Neill said the three themes are protect, transform and inspire. The Nature Conservancy has been around 65 years, has 1 million members, 600 scientists, 100 million acres conserved, working in 72 countries. The conservation team at the Missouri level develops goals and measures milestones, working holistically with all staff on the five organizational priorities. She said her job is to further develop existing relationships and develop new relationships to move the priorities forward. She also watches the legislative sessions to keep track of legislation that might affect conservation. Ms. Neill showed a map of the Nature Conservancy lands in Missouri which included protected lands and eco regions. An example of a grasslands area is the Dunn Ranch Prairie, and example of a woodlands area is the Chilton Creek area near the Current River, and fresh water areas include the Meramec and Current rivers. Mr. Holt said Western Ozark Waters Initiative was launched in southwest Missouri in 2015 (he came on board in November of 2015) with priorities in the Spring and Elk watersheds. The initial funding was provided by Tyson Foods. He said the Elk and Spring river systems are among the most biologically rich in the country. There has been plenty of coverage about the stream restoration projects and the importance of the rivers from the local papers. He showed an aerial image of one area of the Elk river above Noel, that is about seven acres in size, ten feet deep. The 1,000-foot bank has one of the worst erosion rates on the River. He said the Conservancy is working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the project will cost just shy of \$750,000.

Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) Update — Andy Austin— Mr. Austin said September 11 will be the final treatment day for hydrilla at Fellow’s Lake and most other ponds where hydrilla was found were done with treatments. He said House Bill 19 did not pass which means money needs to be shifted around to continue programs that assist landowners, but that means no capital improvements and other programs may lose money. September 9-10 is the Bass Pro Shops Greater Outdoor Days. September 9 is Day at the Range at Dalton Shooting Range, September 30 is Girls Fishing Day at Bennett Springs and October 10 is the MDC Open House at the Nature Center, 6pm-8pm.

Regional Issues — Darlene Haun said Saturday, September 10 is the Stockton Lake cleanup, the Niangua River cleanup is September 11 and the Taneycomo cleanup is September 16. More information at mostreamteam.org. Brent Stock said James River Basin Partnership is looking for James River Watershed feedback with their survey, jamesriversurvey.info. The Sunset Soiree is Saturday, September 30 on the Finley River Bridge. Mona Menezes said Ozarks Water Watch State of the Watershed booklet is available.

Other Business— none

Meeting adjourned 8:37 a.m.

Minutes taken by Kelly Guenther