

Brownfields Community of Practice Meeting
Hosted by Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
November 14, 2014
DuPont Environmental Education Center
Wilmington, DE

Attending:

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Urban Waters Federal Partnership Updates:

Simeon Hahn briefly described the five Communities of Practice organized under the UWFP – Brownfields Revitalization COP; Water Quality and Quantity CO; Trails, Parks and Open Space COP; River Protection and Restoration COP; and Climate Resiliency COP

Each COP is intended to include a broad approach and information sharing since the intent of the UWFP is to work across existing silos in a more collaborative way. Participants are welcome to attend multiple COPs

2. Regional Programs

Living Shorelines - Partnership for the Delaware Estuary,

Danielle Kreeger presented a slide show illustrating a variety of approaches to creating a living shoreline; discussed the long term benefits to the watershed in protecting the shorelines from flooding and erosion, including the potential economic benefit of reduced flood insurance premiums for living shorelines. Specific discussion on needs and challenges in the urban area occurred. “Living shoreline” approaches should be encouraged and used at Brownfield sites along rivers and streams as part of clean-up or revitalization efforts to meet regional goals in the

Estuary including those in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan under the National Estuary Program. There are opportunities to partner with agencies involved in regional sediment management and beneficial reuse of dredged material as part of these efforts. There are significant permitting issues that could impact how living shorelines are utilized and/or designed. The CoP discussed developing a “white paper” on living shorelines for Brownfield sites for various uses including regional restoration planning, facilitating permitting, progress towards and monitoring of CCMP goals, etc.

3. Local Activity -What is happening in Wilmington

Christina Riverfront –DNREC,

Bob Meadows presented a slide show illustrating the rebuilding of a working marsh at the Riverfront Peterson Wildlife Refuge, where Phragmites dominated the landscape. Bob discussed the careful elevations required to rebuild a working marsh. The marsh was visible from the windows of the meeting room as was a major portion of the Riverfront redevelopment of the brownfields where a thriving commercial venture adjoins the working marsh .

South Wilmington Wetlands/WATAR - DNREC,

Todd Keyser discussed the flooding issues in South Wilmington and the marsh restoration initiative to mitigate flooding for a large percentage of the homes in the area. We were also able to see this area from the windows including large areas of brownfield abandoned industrial sites clustered around a smaller marsh that can potentially be restored and used to create a collective storm water facility for the brownfield redevelopment.

Brandywine Riverfront - Old Brandywine Village, Inc.(OBV)

Bobbi Britton discussed the built up environment along the Brandywine where neighborhoods have been entirely cut off from the water eliminating the resource that the Brandywine can be to the neighborhoods. These benefits directly impact the residents of these poor underserved neighborhoods from a variety of perspectives -- economic development, environmental stewardship and the social “quality of life” benefits that lead to healthier lifestyles. At the community level, OBV is trying to mirror the federal collaborative effort by bringing a collaboration of resource partners to the community projects. That initiative is being conducted through a working group that the City of Wilmington and OBV have put together – The Brandywine Coalition.

Reaching Out to the Community

Simeon Hahn briefly described three local initiatives:

Canoemobile on the Brandywine –OBV piggy backed on the UWFP Canoemobile by including a special trip to Wilmington and provided access to the Brandywine – over 300 rides were given that day.

Shad Program

Lil' Dribblers

4. Creating "Brownfield Community of Practice" tools – DNREC

Jim Poling discussed creating a Brownfield Triple Bottom Line Analysis tool for any one to use. The concept includes quantifying the social benefits, environmental improvements as well as the economic development that occurs as a result of brownfield redevelopment. The New Jersey Institute of Technology will participate in creating this tool.

The COP would like to investigate other tools that might be created using specific experiences within the watershed.

5. Grant Opportunities

EPA Grant Update,

Kristeen Gaffney, EPA Region Three briefly described the package of seven grant opportunities available through the EPA: [Assessment and Clean Up grants](#); [Brownfields Area-wide Planning grant](#); [Job Training grants](#); [Land Revitalization Assistance grants – all competitive grants](#); and [Targeted Assessment program](#); [Revolving Loan Fund](#); and [Direct Clean Up program](#)

Currently an RFP is out for Assessment and Clean Up grants. The next RFP will be for the Job Training grants.

UWFP National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grants

Simeon Hahn noted this grant opportunity

Flavia Rutkosky (USFWS) presented information regarding federal policy re: pollinators and highlighted the opportunity to address habitat for pollinators at Brownfield sites.

6. Tour at the Riverfront along the trails at the Peterson Wildlife Refuge.

The next Brownfields Revitalization COP meeting will be held in Philadelphia.