

GESC AND ESC/HERF MEETING

October 30, 2014

Reinstein Woods Environmental Education Center
93 Honorine Dr. Depew, NY 14043

DATE/TIME: 30 October 2014/10am

LOCATION: Reinstein Woods Environmental Education Center

ATTENDEES: Steve Schoenwiesner (NYPA); Ben Lenz (NYPA); Timothy DePriest (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation); Dave Frazier (Gomez and Sullivan Engineers); Erin Redding (Gomez and Sullivan Engineers); Paul McKeown (NYSDEC), Scott Schlueter (US Fish and Wildlife Service); Rene Rickard (Tuscarora Nation); Kerrie Gallo (Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper); Laurie Stillwell (Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper); Jajeon Rose-Burney (Western New York Land Conservancy); Nancy Smith (Western New York Land Conservancy); Meagan Boice-Green (NYSDEC - Reinstein Woods); Jerry Krajna (Friends of Reinstein Woods) Ken Podsiadlo (USACE); Andy Rapp (City of Buffalo); Meg Janis (NYS OPRHP); Eryn Iacovitti (NYS OPRHP)

AGENDA:

I. HERF Proposals

A. Wetland Management and Plantings at Tifft Preserve

Dave Spiering (Buffalo Museum of Science) presented this proposal to the HERF Committee.

1. Project goals include:
 - a. Long-term cost effective invasive species control
 - b. Increase diversity of wetland vegetation
 - c. Enhance native animal habitat
 - d. Increase educational opportunities
2. Project components include:
 - a. Native wetland species plantings
 - b. Water pump assessment and repair
 - c. Weather station installation
3. Project schedule will include:
 - a. Two year project installation (planting of 1.5 acres/year)
 - b. Ongoing, long-term maintenance and monitoring
4. Requested funding total of \$94,000
 - a. \$19,000 cost sharing
 - b. \$113,000 total project value

B. Control of *Phragmites australis* in Reinstein Preserve Wetlands

Meagan Boice-Green (Reinstein Woods) presented this proposal on behalf of Friends of Reinstein Woods.

1. Project goals include:

- a. Control invasive *Phragmites australis* (common reed) within the Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve.
 - 2. Project components include:
 - a. 2 years of treatment with glyphosate and imazapyr herbicides (performed by hired contractor)
 - b. 2 years of mowing and *Phragmites* thatch removal (performed by hired contractor)
 - c. monitoring and spot treatments (beginning in year 3) (Reinstein Woods staff and volunteers)
 - d. potential restoration of native shrub and herb species
 - 3. Requested funding total of \$54,000.
 - a. \$7,500 cost sharing
 - b. \$61,000 total project value
- C. Has the Northern Sunfish (*Lepomis peltastes*) Hybridized with other *Lepomis* Species in the Niagara River Watershed? Funding Request
 Discussion led by Tim DePriest (NYSDEC) on behalf of The College at Brockport. (*This project was discussed at the end of the meeting, during IV. Project Discussion only*)
- 1. Project goals include
 - a. Continuation of the previous study Status of Longear Sunfish in Lower Tonawanda Creek, Niagara Basin
 - b. Determine whether northern sunfish in the Niagara Basin have hybridized with pumpkinseed or green sunfish or whether some of the “hybrids” sampled are actually northern sunfish that have evolved morphologies adapted to conditions in lower Tonawanda Creek or other tributaries of the Niagara River
 - 2. Project components include
 - a. Genetic characterization of likely hybrids
 - b. Data analysis
 - 3. Requested funding total is \$23,603
 - a. \$8,238 cost sharing
 - b. \$31,841 total project value

II. Pre-Proposal Presentations/Consultations

- A. Beneficial Reuse of Dredge Material for Wetland Restoration
 Ken Podsiadlo (US Army Corps of Engineers) and Andy Rapp (City of Buffalo) presented a project concept to the ESC for feedback before preparing a formal application.
 - 1. Project goals include:
 - a. Restoration of 5 acres of wetland on Squaw Island, Buffalo, NY
 - b. Improve public safety in restoration area
 - c. Improve aesthetic of Squaw Island Park
 - d. Reuse 100,000 cubic yards of dredged material in a beneficial way
 - 2. Potential Project components include:

- a. Placement of 100,000 cubic yards of dredged sediment into the deep pool at the north end of Squaw Island
- b. Ongoing operations and maintenance
- 3. Estimated project costs total \$2,963,701
 - a. Federal share: \$1,923,981
 - b. Non-federal Lands, Easements, Right-of-Ways, Relocation, and Disposal: \$3,730
 - c. Non-federal Share: \$1,035,990

B. Use of Greenway Funds for Ecological projects in State Parks
 Meg Janis and Eryn Iacovitti (NYS OPRHP) met with the Committees to discuss the potential use of Greenway Funds for projects within State Parks.

III. Project Updates

- A. Stella Niagara Preserve
 Nancy Smith and Jajean Rose-Burney (Western NY Land Conservancy) presented an annual project update for the Stella Niagara Preserve Project
- B. Niagara River Riparian Restoration Program, Phase II
 Laurie Stillwell and Kerrie Gallo, (Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper) presented the second annual update for the NRRRP Phase II Project

III. Project Discussion

- A. The Committees discussed the projects that were presented during the day's meetings as well as the following:
 - 1. Frog Island Habitat Improvement Project disposition
 - a. Who legally owns Frog Island
 - b. How should the sensitive habitat be protected from boaters and jet-skiers?
- B. The Committee members reached the following consensus (subject to approval by absent Committee members from the Tuscarora and Tonawanda Seneca Nations)
 - 1. Approved funding for Wetlands Management and Planting at Tiff Nature Preserve
 - 2. Agreed to request a full proposal for the project Control of *Phragmites australis* in Reinstein Preserve Wetlands.
 - 3. Approved funding for Longear Sunfish Hybridization study
 - 4. Agreed that more information is needed from the City of Buffalo and USACE regarding their Beneficial Use project (i.e. Why can funding not be asked for from the City of Buffalo's Greenway funds?)
 - 5. Agreed not to fund projects in State Parks until the ORPHP district director explains to the Committee why Parks' Greenway funds are not being used for ecological projects within the Parks.

6. Agreed to give feedback to Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper regarding changes in project and progress made on Living Shorelines sites before releasing funding for Year 3.

IV. Action Items

- A. Steve Schoenwiesner will consult with the NYPA Real Estate department regarding a written statement of Frog Island ownership.
- B. Steve Schoenwiesner will follow up on the creation of informative signs for Frog Island.
- C. Tim DePriest will provide the Western New York Land Conservancy with a Status Report template for completion
- D. Tim DePriest will contact Tuscarora and Tonawanda Seneca Nations for their consensus on funding decisions.
- E. Tim DePriest will inform grant applicants of decisions following full consensus (Action Item D).