

New River Valley Green Infrastructure, Committee Meeting

New River Valley PDC, May 21, 2008, 9:00am – 11:00am

Attendees:

Karen Drake, Town of Blacksburg
Ursula Lemanski, NPS- Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
Holly Lesko, Town of Blacksburg Planning Commission
Nichole Hair, Town of Christiansburg
Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg
Jerry Moles, LandCare
Joey Fagan, DCR- Karst Heritage Program
Doug Warren, Pulaski County Planning Commission
Randall Rose, Virginia Tourism Corporation
Courtney Kimmel, VT- Dept. of Forestry
R. Bruce Hull, VT- Dept. of Forestry
Beth Obenshain, New River Land Trust
Krystal Coxon, DCR- Soil and Water
Kim Steika, VT Community Design Assistance Center
David Richert, VA DOF
Susan Garrison, Town of Blacksburg
Craig Whittaker, Giles County
Glen Stevens, Conservation Management Institute
Melissa Skelton, City of Radford
Laura Belleville, Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Blaine Keese, Draper Aden
Regina Elsner, New River Planning District Commission
Dave Rundgren, New River Planning District Commission

1. Welcome and review of meeting agenda

Regina welcomed everyone and reviewed the meeting agenda. This was the first meeting of the committee to begin tasks associated with Phase II of the Green Infrastructure initiative. The following points were to be discussed during the meeting:

1. GI initiative and committee structure
2. Brainstorming goals for the NRV GI “assessment”

2. Update on regional projects

Regina then introduced individuals in conducting other green infrastructure projects within the region to give the group an update on their progress.

a. Radford/urban forestry – David Richert

David Richert is working on an urban forestry project with the City of Radford. The project is broken into 3 Phases; the first to kick off in June or July and continue through the other Phases until July 2010. During Phase 1, partners will work to create an inventory and evaluation of ecosystem benefits supplied by Radford’s green infrastructure. Phase 2 involves the prioritization of criteria to maintain and improve the

City's green infrastructure. During Phase 3, the partners will work to demonstrate best management practices through several demonstration projects within the community.

b. Appalachian Trail Conservancy – Laura Belleville

ATC received funding from a private foundation and will be using those funds to host a "Your Town" workshop facilitated by the National Endowment for the Arts. This will be participation by invitation. Planning is currently underway for this 3-day workshop in the fall. Your Town works to engage community leaders and gives them the tools to shape the future of their community.

c. Sustainable Land Development Workshop for Southwest Virginia – Regina/Laura

Part of the money from the private foundation has assisted in the planning of the Sustainable Land Development Workshop to be held May 29 and 30, 2008 in Christiansburg. At this workshop, participants will work to create an EarthCraft criteria set for the mountain region of Virginia. Issues to be addressed include the specific characteristics of the social and physical landscape in the New River Valley.

d. New River Land Trust – Beth Obenshain

The PDC and New River Land Trust received money from DOF to continue work on the Green Infrastructure initiative. NRLT will use its share of the funding to update their computer and mapping capabilities to further the goals of the organization and the regional committee.

e. New River Valley Planning District Commission

The PDC will be using its share of the DOF funding to continue the regional assessment and create a long-term structure within the region to address future issues. In the next year, the PDC will be focused on the identification, prioritization, and mapping of current green infrastructure in the NRV, based on input from the committee and other stakeholder groups.

3. GI initiative timeline and committee structure

a. PDC project scope of work and project timeline

b. Committee structure and role

Regina distributed and reviewed a project timeline outlining the work of the PDC and the committee until June 2009. This handout is included at the end of this document (Attachment 1). Discussion emerged on the education and outreach started during Phase I and how to continue or enhance these objectives as the steering committee efforts are focused on the green infrastructure analysis during Phase II. Bruce Hull of Virginia Tech Department of Forestry has drafted an organizational memo outlining the objectives and possible work tasks for this proposed subcommittee. This memo will be circulated among the steering committee members prior to the next meeting for approval.

Discussion after the meeting suggested the need for a second subcommittee for Grant Coordination and Administration to help facilitate the communication between agencies serving as primary investigators on the multiple projects in the region. A third committee will focus on the original GI scope of work involving data collection and analysis. These

subcommittees will consist of members from the GI steering committee (i.e., steering committee members may serve on one or more of the subcommittees). Subcommittees may find it necessary to schedule additional meetings to conduct business between the five identified steering committee meetings. The steering committee will function to review and approve the work of the various subcommittees. A potential organizational diagram is included at the end of this document (Attachment 2).

Discussion emerged regarding the drafting and approval of resolutions of support to present to Boards of Supervisors. These will be drafted and provided for comment prior to the next committee meeting. A strategy for presenting these resolutions will be developed at the next meeting. There was mention of drafting a MOU to be the guiding document for the steering committee, outlining support, roles, and responsibilities. Drafting both of these documents may come under the role of the new Outreach and Education committee. Comments on these documents will be taken using the Basecamp site and a final draft will be ready for approval at the next committee meeting. If you do not have access to Basecamp or need reminder information to access the site, please contact Regina (relsner@nrvc.org).

4. Moving forward

a. Goals of the Green Infrastructure Initiative

Following the discussion of committee role and structure, Ursula facilitated a brainstorming session to determine the goals of the green infrastructure initiative. Specifically, members listed those components important to them to protect or enhance in the New River Valley. An extensive list of specific components was generated. Regina will be working to categorize and summarize this list into a set of goal statements. This set of goals will form the basis of future network design discussions and provide the foundation to develop regional maps and decision support systems. The list of goal statements will be posted to Basecamp for comment and will be refined based on those comments. At the next meeting, the committee will work to create more detailed descriptions and definitions of each goal statement.

5. Recap and Adjourn

In the coming weeks, Regina will work on the following documents:

- Committee Structure
- Resolution of support
- Committee MOU
- Goal Statements.

Committee members should provide comment on these documents to ensure that they reflect the true opinions of the committee. Once the committee structure is approved, volunteers will be taken to serve on the Outreach and Education and Technical Committees. Additional activities and tasks are currently being planned and will be announced as they emerge.

Attachment 1

NRV Green Infrastructure Project Timeline

Tasks	2008									2009					
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Committee meetings															
<i>First meeting: Kickoff</i>															
<i>Second meeting: Goal definition, data identification</i>															
<i>Third meeting: Review data products</i>															
<i>Fourth meeting: Review final products</i>															
<i>Fifth meeting: Phase II evaluation, strategies for Phase III</i>															
Data products															
<i>Gather data from various sources</i>															
<i>Evaluate data elements</i>															
<i>Identify data to be generated from analysis</i>															
<i>Conduct map analysis</i>															
<i>Conduct input process for PC and elected officials</i>															
Final products															
<i>Create final products</i>															
<i>Revise report based on committee/stakeholder input</i>															
Committee Tasks															
Attend committee meetings as possible															
Provide technical advise and expertise, as requested at committee meetings and personal contact															
Act as liaison to organization															

Attachment 2

Proposed Committee Structure

