



Minutes
Water Quality Advisory Council
April 12, 2016
Missoula City-County Health Department
301 West Alder 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Bev Young – WQAC	Stephen Speckart	Daniel Westberg – WQAC
Peter Bierbach – WQAC	Jen Harrington – WQAC	Kali Becher – WQAC
Ron Russell – WQAC	Rebecca Paquette - WQAC	Casey Ryan – WQAC
Bruce Sims – WQAC	Patrick Hurley – Watershed	
Michelle Hutchins – WQD	Consulting	

Floating Island Sustainable H2O (FISH) Education Program, Rebecca Paquette

The Watershed Education Network developed a pilot project proposal that would involve high school students in installing and monitoring BioHaven floating island treatment systems in the Pattee Creek detention pond. Partners for this project include Watershed Consulting, City of Missoula and the Water Quality District. Elevated nutrients were identified in 2011. Pattee Creek flows partially underground to Bancroft Pond, and into irrigation ditches and culverts. Creek flow does not reach the river. There is an isolated population of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout in Pattee Creek.

These floating islands mimic natural floating islands. They provide a matrix for planting wetland vegetation, and for biofilm formation, which improves water quality by helping to reduce BOD/TOC, settle particles out, take metals out of solution, and reduce excessive algae growth by competing for nutrients and blocking sunlight. Matrix is made from recycled pop bottles. Plants will include rushes, sedges and other emergent vegetation.

Seven small, tethered islands are proposed, totaling about 300 square feet. Students would plant the islands and then monitor water quality over a period of several years.

Council members’ questions/Project manager responses:

- Plastic degrades over time; could it end up polluting the pond?/ Recycled PET plastic is inert, and the plant material will shade the matrix and protect it from degradation.
- What about using a natural material instead of plastic?/ Natural material would break down and not support the plant material and biofilm for very long.
- Would there be an interpretive sign explaining the project?/ Yes a sign is planned.

WEN would like input and suggestions for improvements and additional potential sites and participating high schools.

- County Parks?
- Seeley/Swan Lakes?

Launch date will be announced after funding is secured. Applying to Washington Corp.

Motion to write a support letter (to be sent around via email) passed unanimously. Rebecca could offer a sample letter for Council to consider.

Update on progress toward permanent household hazardous waste facility, Michelle Hutchins

A couple of large contributions have been obtained from Phillips 66 and Republic Services. Presentations will be made at upcoming Health Board meeting on April 21. An MOA between WQD and the City is being processed to secure terms of locating the site on City property at WWTP. Once that is approved, facility planning and design can begin. Plan is to offer hazardous waste collections four times per year after facility is completed – probably 2 in spring/early summer, and 2 in late summer/fall.

Council members urged careful planning to make sure facility is safe and meets codes for whatever storage quantity and time period is anticipated. Also important to scope out all applicable regulations that might apply, including floodplain. Staff will send Health Board meeting agenda to Council members in case they would like to be there for the discussion about the facility.

Motion of support for moving forward on permanent facility passed unanimously.

Next meeting: Staff suggested having Paul Parson present regarding issues and work being done in the Nine Mile. Council members would like an update on the Rattlesnake Creek pipeline crossing at next meeting, and also suggested a WWTP poplar plantation tour for a future meeting.

Submitted by: Michelle Hutchins