

**Landowner Incentives Committee
February 18, 2013, Meeting Minutes**

The committee met from 1:00-2:30 p.m. at the Oakland Town Hall. All members were present, including Kent Brown, Walt Christensen, Paul Dearlove and Jay Settersten.

Previously-disseminated background information (see “Proposed 2013 Landowner-Incentive Pilot”) was reviewed and discussed. The consensus was that finding additional ways to incentivize landowners to adopt targeted Best Management Practices would be beneficial. General inertia, bureaucratic hurdles, lack of time/money, and long lead times were all mentioned as current challenges. It was agreed that the guiding principles were to keep any new program simple, efficient, easy to understand, and aimed at removing as many of the decision-making and implementation barriers as possible for people.

Ideas that were tentatively explored during brainstorming included:

- 1) Forming a stormwater utility at the Town level for the purpose of raising funds and allocating credits to reward good behavior.
- 2) Creating a “Ripley Club” recognition program.
- 3) Identifying high-priority project sites and offering to cover 100% of the work and cost of installing desired BMPs (paid demos). The purpose would be to remove all barriers to implementation.
- 4) Inviting landowners to submit their own project/grant proposals in response to an offer of “giving away” a certain number of rain gardens or other BMPs.

The committee then started working on defining the problem statements and goals it wanted to focus on. Stormwater pollution, problem species, habitat loss, and recreational pressures were among the various issues discussed before running out of time. Dearlove said he would send each of the members a copy of the Executive Summary from the Lake Ripley Improvement Plan that outlines the District’s goals, objectives, metrics and targets. For tomorrow’s follow-up meeting, the committee agreed to spend its time trying to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the particular goal or need we want to address for this pilot?
- 2) What specific practice or practices should we target that will help get us there?
- 3) How do we motivate action?

Christensen was elected to serve as chair of the committee.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting: Tuesday, February 19th.

**Landowner Incentives Committee
February 19, 2013, Meeting Minutes**

The committee met from 9:00-10:30 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall. All members were present, including Kent Brown, Walt Christensen, Paul Dearlove and Jay Settersten.

Committee discussion led to the following areas of agreement:

1. **PURPOSE.** The purpose of designing a new landowner-incentive initiative is to make additional progress toward already identified/adopted goals from our Lake Ripley Improvement Plan. The major goals of interest: Goal #1 ("Clean, Clear Water") and Goal #5 ("A Well-Informed and Engaged Citizenry") as described in the Executive Summary. The Plan further supports this type of initiative through the following, specific recommendation: "Explore using additional incentive programs and community-based social marketing strategies to increase landowner participation rates relating to the implementation of watershed Best Management Practices."

2. **OBJECTIVES.** Our objectives for the purpose of this pilot mostly center on source control of stormwater runoff; but also include increased landowner participation and improved habitat. In reference to the Lake Ripley Improvement Plan, they are:

- a. reduce the delivery of pollutants to the lake [Goal 1, Objective 1]
- b. protect and restore groundwater-recharge zones and shoreland buffers that improve the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff [Goal 1, Objective 3]
- c. protect and restore native fish and wildlife habitat found in and around the lake [Goal 2, Objective 1]
- d. actively solicit community participation and involvement [Goal 5, Objective 3]

3. **METRICS/TARGETS.** The relevant metrics and targets will mirror those found in the Lake Ripley Improvement Plan. They specifically relate to:

Watershed landscape condition [Goal 1, Metric 4]

-Well-vegetated shoreland buffer areas are increased along all shoreline, stream and drainage-ditch corridors [Target: #2 bullet]

-Number of rain gardens and rain barrels used in residential areas is increased [Target: #5 bullet]

Fish [Goal 2, Metric 2]

-Increased number of littoral tree-drops to serve as coarse woody habitat [Target: #5 bullet]

Outreach tools [Goal 5, Metric 1]

-Social-marketing strategies that target specific, meaningful behavior changes are incorporated into existing outreach programs [Target: #9 bullet]

Volunteer and landowner participation [Goal 5, Metric 3]

-A critical mass of targeted landowners adopt recommended conservation measures as a result of outreach and incentive programs [Target: #2 bullet]

4. PRACTICES. The individual practices that are presently identified as possible targets for this pilot include: 1) rain gardens, 2) lakeshore recovery gardens, 3) ditch plantings, 4) rain barrels, 5) tree-drops ("shore reefs"), and 6) roof downspout diversions. Practices that may or may not still be under consideration relate to participation in the county's Farmland Preservation and tree-sale programs.

5. TENTATIVE GUIDELINES. It was reconfirmed that any incentive program should be easy to understand and relatively simple to administer. It should also attempt to remove most or all of the barriers that are currently keeping people from acting. These barriers could be cost, time, lack of awareness or knowledge, government bureaucracy, etc. One idea that appears to be gaining traction in recent discussions is for the District to "give away" a certain number of rain gardens (or other practices). Interested landowners would be invited to submit proposals that describe their plans and explain why they think they deserve to be selected. Winners would have all the work coordinated and paid for by the District. Winners would also be listed and recognized as members of the "Ripley Club," and would serve as ambassadors who could help further promote this type of lake-stewardship action. Additionally, there was talk of reaching out to potential partners, such as Agrecol, that could provide some standardized designs and/or give cost breaks for plants and materials. Publicity and promotion was viewed as being important to the success of any new incentive effort. It was generally agreed that special attention needs to be given to the lingo and marketing strategies we decide to employ.

6. ACTION ITEMS. Dearlove agreed to disseminate meeting summaries and try to schedule the next meeting. He will distribute summaries and internet links to any model incentive programs he is able to find prior to the next meeting. Walt agreed to talk to his contacts at NRCS and the County to find out more about the grant programs they implement and ways in which we might be able to partner. Jay offered to talk to possible business partners, such as Agrecol, to see how they might be willing to contribute to such an effort. Kent will get Paul a summary of his observations from a recent walking tour around the frozen lakeshore.

The committee decided that the next meeting will focus on the topic of incentives. This will include discussion on relevant program models, potential funding sources, and key stakeholders/partners.

Meeting adjourned.

Landowner Incentives Committee
March 4, 2013, Meeting Minutes

The committee met from 9:00-10:45 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall. All members were present, including Kent Brown, Walt Christensen, Paul Dearlove and Jay Settersten.

Christensen, committee chair, called the meeting to order. Minutes from the 2/18/13 and 2/19/13 meetings were distributed and reviewed. Settersten moved to approve the minutes as written. Motion seconded by Brown. Motion carried 4-0.

Committee members reported on the status of individual action items assigned at the prior meeting:

Christensen shared information he received from Dennis Vollmer at NRCS regarding existing agricultural programs that LRMD may wish to promote through added incentives. These included the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), each of which has a January enrollment deadline. For CRP, highly erodible sites can be signed up through May. Following discussion, Christensen offered to gather more information on program specifics, current participation rates in the Ripley watershed, and what could be offered to help encourage additional participation.

Settersten reported that he was in communication with Rob Llewellyn and Matt Weber at Agrecol. He said they seemed supportive of the idea of “giving away” a certain number of rain gardens or lakeshore plantings, and were open to the possibility of donating some plants or offering discounts to help promote the effort.

Brown said he was still typing up his observations from a recent walking tour of the shoreline. In summary, he thought there was a lot more shoreline work to do, including correcting upland erosion and improving overall aesthetics and habitat value. It was felt that a focus on rain gardens and lakeshore buffers could go a long way toward resolving these concerns.

Dearlove distributed a synopsis of model incentive programs from around the country. He pointed out a number of commonalities, including the types of practices targeted and incentive packages offered. Some of the more popular practices (i.e., rain gardens and rain barrels) mirrored what the committee was proposing to target, while others (i.e., tree planting and pavement removal) could still be considered. Surveying property owners or creating focus groups to get additional feedback on alternative incentive measures was also discussed.

Next, the committee reviewed and discussed the current list of practices that would be the subject of a new incentives pilot. Following discussion, the decision was made to remove “ditch

plantings” from the list given the negligible number of farm ditches and landowners it would involve. In addition, it was decided that “tree planting” and “pavement removal” would be added to the list. Still under consideration is whether to also add agricultural programs such as CRP, EQUIP or FPP to the eligible practices list. The list would then consist of eight practices: rain gardens, shoreline buffers (“lakeshore recovery gardens”), rain barrels, tree-drops (“shore reefs”), roof downspout redirection, tree planting, pavement removal, and NRCS/County farm-conservation program enrollment.

As far as program design, the committee favored the idea of offering a menu of options to qualifying landowners. Interested participants would then be invited to compete for limited funds by specifying which practices they were prepared to adopt within a set timeframe. An expert review panel could be set up to evaluate contest entries and select the winning contestants based on factors such as number of pledged practices, project location, and points scored on an environmental benefits index. This would allow incentives like rebates or paid demos to be targeted to areas of high strategic value. Winners would agree to certain conditions, such as possibly attending an LRMD-sponsored workshop, and/or agreeing to be part of public-demonstration tours and promotional efforts as “Ripley Club” members. Incentives would be awarded with few other strings attached, namely for the purpose of clearing hurdles and building excitement around the various practices to be promoted.

The meeting concluded with discussion on how to fund the pilot. The committee favored exploring the potential of tapping into general unrestricted funds to help pay for incentives and promotional efforts. There may be additional opportunity to raise money through sponsorship donations and grants. If the pilot proves successful, the Board could consider adding a new line item to the annual budget.

It was agreed that the next meeting agenda should consist of formulating recommendations to the Board. A recommendations summary would include: goals of the pilot; targeted practices; incentives; expected cost and possible sources of funding; and implementation design (including timelines).

Action items: Dearlove offered to type up the meeting minutes and draft a recommendations report to the Board. He would also talk to Lisa Reas, Ron Martin and others who may be willing to participate as sponsors and contributors. Christensen volunteered to get additional input from Dennis Vollmer on ways we can partner with NRCS to encourage additional participation in existing farm-conservation programs. Settersten said he would contact Kim Hoffman, a graphic designer, to see if she could help with the creation of logos and marketing materials. He also agreed to follow up with his Agrecol contacts. Brown promised to forward his shoreline-inventory findings to help identify specific project needs around the lake.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m. Next meeting: March 6, 2013.

Landowner Incentives Committee
March 6, 2013, Meeting Minutes

The committee met from 9:05-11:00 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall. Christensen called the meeting to order, noting that a quorum of committee members were present. Members present at roll call consisted of Walt Christensen, Paul Dearlove and Jay Settersten. Kent Brown arrived at 9:20.

Minutes from the 3/6/13 meeting were reviewed and approved.

There was discussion on the language that should be used to label targeted practices. At present and for purposes of consistency, practices will be described using their commonly-accepted nomenclature. However, the naming of these practices will be revisited prior to the launch of any larger promotional efforts.

Committee members reported on their action items from the 3/4/13 meeting:

Christensen reported that he still needed to follow-up with Dennis Vollmer at NRCS.

Settersten reported that Kim Hoffman of Beehive Graphics was interested in being a marketing partner and doing some pro-bono, graphic-design work for us. He said she has already volunteered time to brainstorm ideas. Christensen noted that a good tool for creating logo designs could be found at www.logogarden.com.

Brown reported that he had completed and forwarded his shoreline-inventory notes.

Dearlove reported that he drafted the minutes from the last meeting, and had prepared a recommendations report to the Board. The report was reviewed, discussed and revised during the remaining course of the meeting. This revised report and any key comments or questions are presented below:

Recommendations to the Board

Needs Statement

Investing in new landowner incentives and a related promotional campaign are both justified and recommended as a means of better engaging the community and increasing BMP-adoption rates. This will be done through the implementation of a pilot. A successful pilot can then be built upon and expanded over time as future budgets and partnerships permit.

Purpose of Pilot

The purpose of the pilot is to make additional progress toward specific goals and tasks outlined in the 2009 Lake Ripley Improvement Plan. These can be found under the Executive Summary goal headers: "Clean, Clear Water" and "A Well-Informed and Engaged Citizenry." The pilot is intended to supplement, rather than replace, the

existing landowner cost-share program as a means of inspiring action. Implementing the pilot will allow LRMD to gauge how well new incentives and promotional activities can engage the community and motivate the adoption of best practices.

Primary Objective

Enhance the infiltration of stormwater runoff.

[The benefits of focusing on this specific objective include: reduced soil erosion; reduced flooding; reduced pollutant delivery (e.g., phosphorus) to Lake Ripley; improved stream baseflow; moderated lake-level changes; increased runoff filtration; increased groundwater recharge; improved delivery of cooler, cleaner water to Lake Ripley; and a more balanced hydrologic cycle.]

Secondary Objective

Enhance fish and wildlife habitat in and around Lake Ripley.

Target Practices

- Rain gardens
- Shoreline buffers
- Rain barrels
- Treefalls
- Redirected roof downspouts
- Tree planting
- Pavement removal
- Conservation farming program enrollment (TBD)

Pilot-Implementation Design

Guiding principles

To be most effective, the program is designed with these goals in mind:

- It should be easy to understand
- It should avoid being overly complex or time-consuming to administer
- It should eliminate as many potential barriers to participation as possible (cost, time, complexity, etc.)

Basic framework

1. Promotional materials and entry forms are developed and broadly disseminated. Marketing of this limited-time opportunity is used to motivate eligible landowners to compete for participation rewards.
2. Interested landowners select from a menu of optional practices on a pledge form, make a case as to why they are ideally suited for an award, and then submit their entry forms by the established deadline.
3. An expert review panel reviews contest entries and selects award recipients based on established ranking criteria and available funding. Ranking criteria can consider such factors as number of pledged practices, strategic value of project location, degree of public visibility, and overall points scored on an environmental benefits index.
4. Award recipients are announced at a board meeting or special “Ripley Club” celebratory event. Each receives one or more redeemable vouchers that can be exchanged for the pledged practices if completed prior to the voucher expiration date. In return, award recipients agree to serve a role in ongoing recognition and promotional efforts. Remaining contestants who are not selected for a project award are automatically entered into a drawing for one or more donated gifts.

Proposed Timeline

March 16, 2013	Board approves pilot and authorizes fund transfer
March – June, 2013	Line up partners, solicit donations, and develop promotional materials
June – Sept., 2013	Distribute promotional materials, publicize benefits of participation, and include pilot as

Sept. – Nov., 2013	part of 2014 budget deliberation
Nov. – Jan., 2013	Assemble review committee, process applications, and select award recipients
Jan. 2013 – July 2014	Announce/publicize award recipients, conduct prize drawing, and distribute vouchers
Jul. – Aug., 2014	Landowner completion of projects
	Evaluate effectiveness of pilot and include as part of 2015 budget deliberation

Funding

The Board is asked to consider approving a transfer of money from general unrestricted funds to finance the pilot. A sum of about \$25,000 is recommended to help pay for project vouchers and the development of promotional materials. This start-up money would be used to leverage additional resources from possible grants and partner contributions that can go into a designated, restricted account. Consideration could also be given to adding a new line item to the 2014 budget.

Examples of what \$25,000 can buy:

- A) 25 rain gardens (200 sq. ft. x \$5/sq. ft.)
- B) 6 shoreline buffers (1000 sq. ft. x \$4/sq. ft.)
- C) 143 rain barrels (\$175 each)
- D) 33 treefalls (\$750 each)
- E) 625 redirected downspouts (\$40 each for labor and materials)
- F) 125 ball & burlap nursery trees (\$200 each)
- G) 6,250 sq. ft. of pavement removal (at \$4/sq. ft. incentive rate)
- H) 12,500 acres of enrolled farmland (at \$2/acre added signing bonus)

Motion made via email by Christensen, seconded by Dearlove, to approve the minutes as written on 3/12/13. Motion carried by a majority of the committee (no reply from Brown).

Landowner Incentives Committee
October 21, 2013, Meeting Minutes

Christensen called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall. Members present: Walt Christensen, Kent Brown, Jay Settersten and Paul Dearlove. Jane Jacobsen-Brown was also in attendance.

The stated purpose was to develop a general implementation strategy now that the pilot concept and \$25,000 in unrestricted funds were approved by the Annual Meeting. Recommendations were to be brought back to the Board for final approval. Questions under consideration included:

1. Is the committee comfortable with the number and type of practices?
2. How are project awards determined?
3. Who should make the project-award decisions?
4. What does the application process look like?
5. Who should be approached as potential partners?
6. How should the pilot be promoted?
7. Is the timeline appropriate for what needs to be accomplished?

In reviewing the objective of the pilot, a short list of goal statements was generated:

- Create a high level of fanfare and excitement within the community
- Remove traditional barriers to participation
- Offer entirely new incentives and promote as a limited, time-specific opportunity

The consensus was that the offering of no-strings-attached giveaways was both acceptable (authorized by Annual Meeting) and necessary to meet the pilot's goals and objectives. How much time and money to invest in promotion, the means of promotion, and communication-targeting strategies were discussed but left unresolved. Next, a potential implementation strategy was proposed and debated. It involved the following components:

1. Partner with the Cambridge Foundation to demo and launch the pilot program at Ripley Park Beach. Offer up to \$7,500 for water quality improvement work at the beach.
2. Host a plan-unveiling and pilot-kickoff event at the park. Present "Ripley Club" awards to recognize exceptional stewardship contributions. Solicit donations to help support ongoing Ripley Club activities. Distribute practice-commitment pledge forms that can be redeemed for prize-drawing tickets.
3. The number of practices to be given away in the prize drawing is based on the pledges received and money available.
4. Host a follow-up, prize-drawing event at the park to announce project winners.

There was concern about whether the Board would support funding a bigger project at Ripley Park to help launch the pilot. Prior to the next meeting, Settersten agreed to talk with Mike Rumpf of the Cambridge Foundation to broach the topic of possible partnership interests. The committee also agreed to strike the targeted practice titled “conservation farming program enrollment” given its inherent complexities.

A follow-up committee meeting was set for Thursday, October 31st, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Oakland Town Hall.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

**Landowner Incentives Committee
October 31, 2013, Meeting Minutes**

Christensen called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m. at the Oakland Town Hall. Committee members present: Walt Christensen, Kent Brown, Jay Settersten and Paul Dearlove. Also present: Jane Jacobsen-Brown and John Molinaro.

Settersten moved to approve the 10/21/13 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Brown. Motion carried 4-0.

In reviewing action items from the last meeting, Settersten explained he was still trying to connect with Mike Rumpf to explore possible partnership opportunities with the Cambridge Foundation. These included: 1) initiating a signature demonstration project at the Ripley Park beach (i.e., lakeshore buffer, rain gardens, etc.), and 2) holding a “Ripley Club” event and award ceremony at that location. Molinaro said he was hesitant about offering any money to the Foundation for a demonstration project, suggesting they had enough money to do it themselves. He proposed to instead consider offering technical or permitting assistance, and to make sure there was a clear understanding of the problems to be addressed. This led to discussion as to what a partnership arrangement could look like.

Before leaving the committee to continue with its business, Molinaro offered a few additional questions that he felt should be addressed:

- How do we justify or protect against projects that later disappear or fail to be maintained?
- Will there be a cap on awards granted to any single project or applicant?
- Are there other options for removing participation barriers that might be equally or more effective than eliminating contract requirements (i.e., offering no-bid approval procedures through certified contractors, or providing standard rain garden plans)?

The committee developed the following proposal—in the form of recommended action steps—to bring to the November 16th board meeting for input and approval:

Step 1 – [Nov-Dec] Identify potential partners. Partners can include suppliers, service contractors, marketing consultants, donors, volunteers, and a demonstration project provider.

Step 2 – [Nov-Feb] Contact partners to discuss participation benefits and negotiate commitment levels. Determine a cost per individual practice to be shared between the District and its partners (actual practices and related costs to be determined by pledges). Reserve \$20,000-22,000 to supplement partner contributions for project giveaways.

Step 3 – [Nov-Feb] Secure a keystone demonstration project based on location, public accessibility, project merit, and strength of relationship commitment. The project would be recommended by the committee and approved by the board. Reserve \$4,000 from Jacobsen-

Brown Fund donation to cover project costs. If feasible, the demo-project site would also serve as the location of an award-ceremony event to be held in early summer.

Step 4 – [ongoing] Conduct a media blitz to introduce the incentive program, recognize/solicit partners and donations, and promote the targeted practices.

Step 5 – [Mar] Send direct mailings that include promotional materials, pledge forms, and save-the-date announcements for the “Ripley Club” award ceremony. Reserve \$3,000-5,000 for marketing and event-hosting expenses.

Step 6 – [Mar-Jun] Process completed pledge forms as they arrive. Send out regular reminders about participation deadlines and the upcoming award ceremony.

Step 7 – [May-Jun] Identify individuals who should be granted stewardship awards. Send personal event invitations to partners, pledge signers, and stewardship award recipients. Target event date: July 5th.

Step 8 – [June] Determine voucher needs and associated Lake District costs based on submitted pledges. Prepare vouchers for prize drawings.

Step 9 – [Jul] Host “Ripley Club” award ceremony and partner event. Present stewardship awards and hand out vouchers to the winners of the prize drawings. No more than one project-giveaway voucher will be awarded to any single individual unless excess funds are available for distribution.

Step 10 – [Jul-Dec] Projects are completed and vouchers redeemed. Vouchers are valid until September 30th for planting-related projects, or by December 31st for other practices. The contractor signs and returns the voucher to the Lake District for payment upon project completion. Once completion verification is made by the District, any remaining share of the project cost is paid to the partnering contractor.

Step 11 – [Dec] Pledge signers, voucher winners and partners are surveyed for pilot-evaluation purposes.

Project-maintenance concerns were raised by some members, but no decisions were made on how they should be addressed.

The committee recommended that a process be developed to handle donations that may arrive later in the year or after the pilot is completed. It was recommended that landowner-incentive donations be held in the District’s ‘Lake Ripley Protection Fund’ to support future efforts.

Christensen moved for adjournment at 1:15 p.m. Motion seconded Brown. Motion carried 4-0.