

APPENDIX 5

Comments & Evaluations Received

from

Toledo Harbor Project

County Steering Committees

Question 1 What Were The Positive Aspects And The Accomplishments Of The Project?

Worked with some new individuals who were attracted to some new programs

It allowed districts to come up with innovative projects on their own.

A reduction in sediment entering our streams. A better awareness of dredging in the Toledo Harbor and the cost associated with it.

The Sediment Committee's were a great idea. These groups when working properly help set goals and objectives. The Sediment Committee in turn helped sell the project to the landowners.

The SWCD Board and local cooperators became actively involved in the project. They became more informed regarding the problems being created in the harbor. It gave the staff a door opener with landowners and provided an opportunity to work with more landowners.

The opportunity to work with new landowners in the northern part of our counties Maumee River Basin area. Many individuals have become active participants.

The sediment committee resulted in strengthening of existing partnerships and the advancement of the District's overall watershed program.

That the local District, through the Sediment Reduction Committee, was able to develop our own plan and identify practices that will work for our county.

The project had strength through its local leadership process

Question 1 (Continued)

A positive aspect of the program was the promotion of the benefits of conservation tillage, specifically no-till corn and zone till corn.

We were able to partner with The Andersons and BASF corporation for several programs.

Flexibility, we determined aspects of what we would do locally.

Provided funds to install filter strips and use conservation tillage. In our county provided a conservation system rather than individual practices. Provided flexibility in developing programs for local needs and the target area was decided by the local committee.

The project made individuals in the affected area aware of problems of sedimentation existing even on the relatively flat soils found in most areas of the Maumee Basin. One of the most effective tools used was the involvement of local individuals in the Project Steering Committees.

Some new techniques were tried and established methods supported. New things were discussed that were in question by some producers, were supported by producers who had found them to be effective.

The filter strips installed do a good job of keeping sediment out of the water, gives better access along ditch banks, and gives deer a place to walk instead of in the standing crops. An area that I had problems with surface water cutting the streambank, the added width of the filter strip solved the problem.

The filter strips made a showcase for streambank protection. I had several neighbors comment that all ditches should have this type of protection.

Question 2 What Were The Negative Experiences and/or Limitations Of The Project?

Lack of funds to do more conservation.

Some counties were short on staffing (NRCS & Districts). This hurt the implementation and follow-up documentation for each project.

A low amount of funds available to implement projects. With additional funding a greater impact of sediment reduction and water quality could be tracked.

Question 2 (Continued)

The timing of the project was terrible. It conflicted with existing efforts, especially staff time, on two existing watershed initiatives, NRCS's locally led process and CRP program signups.

No negative experiences. We felt the project was successful. Success wasn't hindered by limitations- funding was the only limitation.

The major limitation to the project was that it was not fully funded. This left the committee with a 3 year plan of work with no funding to implement the remaining portions,

Unpredictability of funding and the future of the project. It is difficult to sell project on large scale basis with no long term resources or guarantee of funding.

There wasn't enough funding for this county to put much effort into it.

Lack of organization by the project coordinator in regard to a defined way to complete paperwork and to apply for funding.

Uncertainty of project funding and difficulty in working with project coordinator.

Our long term demonstration is ongoing. We are just getting a good start. Hopefully it will be successful!

In the past we were asked for local input and then the project coordinator would pressure districts to implement his priorities.

Needed better information on grant guidelines and more structured guidelines to begin with.

Not enough money was allocated to carry out the program to its full potential. Not enough staff for the technical assistance.

Some local committees had difficulty forming consensus on what specifically was needed.

Relying on additional NRCS personnel to plan and oversee the project without additional technical assistance. They were already behind on the assistance requests and this project just added more work to the stack!

Although not used to its fullest potential, the educational component of the project was beneficial. This should have been a major component instead of the cost share aspect.

Question 2 (Continued)

The project ended with no real record of its effectiveness reaching the people involved. Suddenly there was no more funding to continue efforts or determine results. While I feel some of the things attempted have had a positive impact I have not seen any proof.

Too short of duration, uncertainty of funding always loomed overhead and diminished enthusiasm for the project.

This project lacked the manpower and funding to get out in the field and reach its full potential. This type of effort can not have a long term impact if it doesn't exist long enough to document the effect of the practices explored and tried,

We had no problems spending the initial funds, funding levels were somewhat limiting. Project guidance seemed to be very loose, especially since it was hindered by having to deal with three states and numerous counties.

Question 3 What Are Suggestions Or Ideas For Improving The Project?

Continue and increase financial support.

Local involvement should be continued

Adequate funding is needed to provide sufficient staff in the field to provide follow-up and support efforts.

Have improved communication from the coordinator to the participating offices.

In order to effectively carry out this program it needs to have up front funding; Provide work teams to assist with projects where there is limited staffing.

Need long term commitment of funding.

Perhaps more emphasis on public education of the non-farm sector would be appropriate.

Commitment to better follow-up and progress reporting is essential. We need to report project accomplishments not only to the agencies that funded the project, but to all project participants and to the general public.

Some of the staffers that worked on the project appear to be "burnt out" on the project. If they don't see a value don't fund them. Make people apply for funds and prove their willingness to ensue a successful program.

Pick up ideas that worked and offer them to other counties throughout the watershed.