

Success, health & resilience

Values & definitions for a successful project and a healthy & resilient creek

In service to the members of the Badger Mill Creek Stakeholder Group as they discuss their draft portfolio of projects, we compiled information from earlier discussions about a successful project and a healthy & resilient creek. The details of those discussions are captured in the appendices, and the months of those discussions are cited, in case members would like to return to the notes from the original conversation. –Alison & Mike

Background

Group members have worked to articulate visions of a successful project and of a healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek. This includes:

- Sharing stories about water -- and the values and experiences illuminated by these stories (Sept)
- Sharing definitions of success for the project (Sept)
- Sharing definitions of a healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek (Nov/Dec)
- Selecting desired uses for the portfolio of projects (Feb/Mar)
- Selecting project categories for the portfolio of projects (Feb/Mar)

Information gathered

What did we learn about what a successful portfolio of projects would include and value?

Values and experiences shared by group members

See Appendix A

- Connections between people & between people and water
- Serenity & reflection
- Adventure
- Stewardship & empowering people to be stewards
- Vitality & life

Definitions of project success shared by group members

See Appendix B

- Durable, holistic, effective projects – given our limited time and scope
- Have a solid plan with support from all stakeholders
- We've (begun to) rebuild trust and we can work together in the future

Definitions of health & resilience shared by group members

See Appendix C

- Provide a nature like system that accounts for water quality, ecological community (natural reproduction and recruitment of trout), and ecosystem services that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and long-term changes.
- A healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek will at a minimum provide the quality and quantity of water to maintain existing aquatic and riparian ecosystems including an ability to recover from disturbances due to urbanization and climate change.
- An ecosystem that supports the ability to respond to short- and long-term changes and considers the full range of plant, animal, and microbial life across geographic scales.
- Natural community / strongest it can be, Simple definitions: support ecological/natural community, provide ecological services, recreational benefits.

Desired uses selected by the group

See Appendix D

- Nature-based recreation
- Scenic beauty
- Stormwater management
- Trout stream (Class II)
- Wildlife habitat

Project categories selected by the group

See Appendix E

- Baseflow Augmentation
- Groundwater Recharge
- Watershed Management Plan
- USGS Monitoring

Uses of information gathered

Group members may use this information to help them assess the project portfolio against original goals as they find helpful. Useful questions may include:

- In what ways do our projects help connect people to each other and to water? How do they empower people to be stewards? Promote vitality, adventure, reflection?
- In what ways are these durable, holistic, effective projects – given our limited time and scope? How does this portfolio reflect the contributions of all members?
- In what ways have we begun to rebuild trust? How can we use our experiences to support other groups like ours in working successfully across differences?
- In what ways does this portfolio of projects move us closer to desired water quality, water quantity, ecosystem services, recreational benefits, and healthy wildlife and plants – in the stream, on shore and in the watershed?

Appendix A: SHARING VALUES and EXPERIENCES

Exercise: Each participant shared a story about a special time in their life that involved a body of water. Based on those stories, we identified values that will be important to this group (and the organizations and larger community represented by this group) in our work together. We expect these values to help inform the goals of the projects selected. Bolded values were mentioned multiple times or were noted as particularly important for one or more organizations. (Sept)

- **Connections between people & between people and water**
 - Community
 - **Places to live, work and play**
 - Formative (memories)
 - Childhood
- Serenity & reflection
 - Beauty
 - Wonder
- Adventure
 - Recreation
 - Freedom
 - Exploration
 - Accomplishment
- **Stewardship & empowering people to be stewards**
 - **Protection over time**
 - **Conservation**
 - **Sustainability**
 - Passion
 - Ecosystem services
- **Vitality & life**
 - **Health**
 - Nature

Appendix B: SHARING DEFINITIONS of PROJECT SUCCESS

Exercise: Participants shared information about how they would initially define success for the project, responding to the question: This project will be successful if, at the end, we can say... [what?] (Sept)

- Durable, holistic, effective projects – given our limited time and scope
 - We have identified projects and we believe they will achieve our goal
 - Solutions acknowledge that we have limited time and scope
 - Take into account the watershed as a whole
 - We've identified organizations to move projects forward
 - We're minimizing backsliding
 - Minimized damage to the trout population
- Have a solid plan with support from all stakeholders
 - We've built a shared definition of success that is rich, nuanced, informed
 - Our common goal acknowledges everyone's perspectives and needs
 - Everyone's vision is in the solution
- We've (begun to) rebuild trust and we can work together in the future
 - This experience can be a litmus test – or a model – for how groups like this can work together across differences.
 - Repairing trust is important. We want to see respect, honest, transparency.

Appendix C: SHARING DEFINITIONS of HEALTHY and RESILIENT

Exercise: Working from everyone's individual definitions, each table developed the following definitions of Health & Resilience (Nov/Dec)

- Provide a nature like system that accounts for water quality, ecological community (natural reproduction and recruitment of trout), and ecosystem services that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and long-term changes.
- A healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek will at a minimum provide the quality and quantity of water to maintain existing aquatic and riparian ecosystems including an ability to recover from disturbances due to urbanization and climate change.
- An ecosystem that supports the ability to respond to short- and long-term changes and considers the full range of plant, animal, and microbial life across geographic scales.
- Natural community / strongest it can be, Simple definitions: support ecological/natural community, provide ecological services, recreational benefits.

Together the 4-table representative agreed upon the draft definition of Health & Resilience:

- Maintain a nature like system that accounts for water quality, ecological community, and ecosystem services (riparian, in-stream, and in the watershed) that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and long-term changes.

That definition was then shared via survey and the following questions (Q8 & Q9) were asked and the following responses were gathered:

Q8. Here is the draft definition of a healthy and resilient Badger Mill Creek that you created together at our last meeting:

Maintain a nature like system that accounts for water quality, ecological community, and ecosystem services (riparian, in-stream, and in the watershed) that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and long-term changes.

How well does this definition work for you and your organization? (This is a non-binding straw poll)

[More Details](#)

● Love it!	2
● I can live with it.	5
● I need more information.	3
● I'd prefer not.	0
● Deal-breaker.	2



Q9a. If you need more information, what information do you need?

- For me the term "long term changes" requires a definition of what long term means - i would argue we cannot reasonably estimate anything with any level of accuracy beyond 20 years and any real useful degree of confidence beyond 5 years. To say it can withstand long term changes implies to me that despite lots of changes that are well outside of anyones coordinated control we expect the stream to remain unchanged - this is not a realistic expectation (in my opinion). If we want that type of control, then we want an "engineered" system where we "force" one condition on a system despite changes around it. That is not what this system is. My suggestion would be "that provides stability to withstand short term disturbances and is able to remain an environmental asset in the long-term"
- Does "Maintain ecological community" include natural reproduction and recruitment of trout?

Q9b. If you would prefer not or this was a deal-breaker, what changes would enable you to be able to live with it or even love it?

- The changes must indicate that BMC is currently a robust Class 2 trout stream and any effort to sustain its health must seek to maintain that condition. "A Class 2 trout stream" can be considered a term of art and might not be understood by many folks who care about BMC. An acceptable alternative could note that BMC currently hold a healthy population of wild brown trout with significant and successful natural reproduction. Any effort to sustain the health and resilience of the creek must maintain that population and reproduction.
- We will be presenting a definition that is measurable and specific with certain metrics. We believe that we need to agree on a definition prior to looking for solutions. We would appreciate time at the beginning of the meeting to discuss what the definition should be, before continuing on to possible solutions.

Q9c. If you can live with it, what changes would make you love it?

- Not sure what changes but my gut says it's a vision/future that involves many variables, organizations and individuals. How will success be measured or achieved...and is it too much for this undertaking/group?
- We recognize that this is a difficult process and that it will be difficult for all stakeholders to agree on a definition that they love.
- Water quantity and water quality specifically mentioned

Appendix D: SELECTING DESIRED USES

Decision: The group will focus its efforts on potential projects and information gaps related to these five Desired Uses identified by stakeholder group members (in alphabetical order).

(Feb/Mar)

- Nature-based recreation
- Scenic beauty
- Stormwater management
- Trout stream (Class II)
- Wildlife habitat

Appendix E: SELECTING PROJECT CATEGORIES

Decision: The group will focus its efforts on potential projects and information gaps related to these Project Categories identified by stakeholder group members. (Feb/Mar/Apr) Note that group members selected these Project Categories by allocating 100 points across potential project categories to identify higher-scoring categories – and then by self-appointing themselves to a project category.

- Baseflow Augmentation
- Groundwater Recharge
- Watershed Management Plan
- USGS Monitoring

