

Water Plan Task Force

Meeting Summary

November 24, 2015

Opening

The meeting of the Water Plan Task Force was called to order at 9:03 am on November 23, 2015 at the Waseca County East Annex by Kelly Hunt.

Present

Jeff Christensen, Wayne Cords, Paul Davis, Eric Gulbransen, Kathy Guse, Kelly Hunt, Gordon Jindra, Kris Langlie, Mark Leiferman, Dennis Mielke, Jenny Mocol-Johnson, Garrett Rohlfing, Kim Shermo, Craig Soupir, Amber Steele, John Stephanie, Tyler Polster

Meeting Objectives

- Introduce new members including Kelly Hunt, the new County Water Planner,
- Provide updates on the current status of County TMDLs, the completed Le Sueur River WRAPS document and summarize the new Buffer Initiative,
- Review and discuss the 2015 Water Plan Amendment Implementation Table,
- Select action items from the Implementation Table to focus efforts for the upcoming seasons, and
- Call for members who are interested in participating in a County Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force.

Presentations

The New Buffer Initiative – Jenny Mocol-Johnson of BWSR

A powerpoint created by John Jaschke was presented by Jenny Mocol-Johnson and can be found on the County website under the Planning and Zoning Department, Water Planning & Wetlands tab. This presentation focused on the following areas: the water quality benefits of buffers and the connection to The Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy, who will be involved in the implementation of buffers, and the timeline for local buffer implementation.

TMDL Update and the Le Sueur River WRAPS Document – Wayne Cords and Paul Davis of MPCA

Wayne Cords began his presentation by giving an overview on the purpose of WRAPS documents, at what scale they are completed, and the 10-year process of the document creation (intensive watershed monitoring, stressor identification, data compilation and

strategy table creation). He then discussed specifics of the completed Le Sueur River Watershed WRAPS including: the state of impairments of County waters and their primary causes, the strategies table, how it is up to local efforts to find a way to implement strategies based on local priorities, and the future of the report.

Paul Davis began his presentation by giving an overview of the purpose of TMDLs, the overall process of TMDL creation and impairment parameters, and those agencies involved. During his presentation, he showed an example of water that had been collected within the Le Sueur River vs. the way that the water is supposed to look according to the TMDL standard. It was also mentioned that the TMDL report for the Le Sueur River Watershed has been locally approved but is still in the process of being approved by the EPA.

Guided Discussion

After the presentations, members were allowed time to review the 2015 Water Plan Amendment Implementation Table to prepare for a discussion on where they would like to see priority efforts focused. Following the review period, the discussion focused on the following subjects:

- Potential for focusing efforts on implementing 2-stage ditches and sediment retention ponds – however, high associated costs
- Higher benefit in lower-cost on the ground projects to promote soil health implemented at a large-scale
- Targeting highly erodible lands for enrollment in CRP and RIM
- Offering incentives for growing non-conventional crops; seeking funds for use with cover crop education and demonstrations
- Civic engagement – building relationships with public to regain trust and work together to seek programs and funding for project implementation; focus on sub watershed scale and individual landowner meetings

In addition, the following members volunteered to be included as members of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Task Force: Kris Langlie, Craig Soupir, Dennis Mielke, Jeff Christensen, Gordon Jindra, and John Stephanie. It was also mentioned that Allison Gamble of the DNR would be a beneficial member to be included on the task force.

*Following the meeting, Allison Gamble and Tina Wolbers of the DNR were contacted and expressed interest in being members of the AIS Task Force.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 am.