

Planning Work Group for Root River, One Watershed One Plan
Wednesday August 5, 2015, 9:00 AM
Fillmore SWCD/DNR/MDA Conservation Building, 912 Houston Street NW, Preston, MN

In attendance: Natalie Siderius, Sheila Harmes, Rachel Olm, Mark Deutschman, Daryl Buck, Tom Gile, Dave Walter, Adam King, Jennifer Ronnenberg, Donna Rasmussen

Adam King, facilitator, opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Old Business

New Business

Targeted Implementation Schedule Structure

- Mark reviewed an example from the Targeted Implementation Schedule and explained that there will be two kinds of goals: quantitative such as those that are linked to load allocation reductions or numbers of BMPs on the landscape, and qualitative that measure things such as participation in education and outreach activities.
- The schedule is set up to finish in March, and review time is scheduled into the timeline. Discussion followed on how to schedule Advisory Committee and Policy Committee meetings to fit into the timeline. The consensus was to have the PWG and Advisory Committee meet together to get comments to pass along to the Policy Committee, which will have the comments when they review the plan sections. This requires that the Advisory Committee meet before the next Policy Committee meeting on August 31st.
- A draft implementation program budget was prepared by Mark using what's available from existing funds based on the percentage of each county in the watershed. The additional \$100,000 to each SWCD was not part of the calculations or any other additional BSWR funding. Another column had estimates of what is needed for the implementation activities to show what is still needed for funding. BWSR is working to "fund the plan" to get dedicated funding for implementation while maintaining current Natural Resources Block Grant and SWCD base funding. However, dedicated funding must be approved by the legislature. There was extensive discussion about whether or not the budget discussion should come before the governance discussion. The Planning Work Group should discuss more to decide.
- There have been a number of comments on the Protection strategies, which were included to match funding sources mentioned in the Nonpoint Priority Funding Plan and the Clean Water Road Map. Mark will incorporate the agency comments. HEI has a computer model that can identify the categories listed, i.e. fully supporting, exceptional, etc.

Mark showed PTMapp results for the Root River which has been completed for the entire watershed. The application takes weeks (hundreds of hours) to process the data. It can show pollutant reductions at multiple special scales: at the BMP location, at the subwatershed scale, the HUC10 scale and at the outlet of the Root at the Mississippi, along with practice types and costs. HEI will run one HUC10 scenario. Others, including at smaller scales, can be run by local staff who receive the training. The tool's calculations can help to assess progress toward a water quality goal.

Review of Plan Section 5

- The initiative categories will be renamed to align with the Priority Resources of Concern. These will be listed along the top of the table 6 on page 70. For each practice on the list, there will be an “x” for each applicable initiative.
- The programs in table 5 on page 57 will also be tied to the Priority Resources of Concern.
- Section 5 will be reorganized to lump the Implementation Initiatives, Capital Improvements and Outreach/Education/Data at the beginning of the section followed Admin and Coordination, then the existing programs and ordinances that will continue to be implemented by the counties and SWCDs.
- On page 34 in the Amendment process, there is an opportunity to redefine what constitutes the need for an amendment and what needs public input so that the process is flexible enough to allow changes that do not change the overall goals or direction of the plan.
- The practice list will be revised to include some other key EQIP and CSP practices while some practices that are components of others can be omitted, such as specific managed grazing practices.
- Capital improvements were discussed that can be added in a table for implementation: the Lanesboro Dam, East Willow Creek flood control structures, Crooked Creek public use area and a structure not funded by NRCS, City of Mabel proposed flood control, Bear Creek structures with preliminary designs (check with Winneshiek SWCD), South Fork proposal from the 1960s, flood prone areas from the highway departments, and DNR fish barriers.
- Data Development (5.2.7.3): Add needs for analysis of existing data to identify trends and gaps, a data clearinghouse, data maps, and PTMapp training. Identify monitoring activities to continue, such as the Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network, lysimeter network, etc.
- Outreach: include something about schools, education days, Envirothon, DNR watershed education program, wellhead protection education and karst displays and trunks.

Summary of Meeting Decisions: Sections 1,2 and 5 of the plan will be reviewed by the Policy Committee on August 31st. Prior to that, the Advisory Committee meeting will be held on August 21st so their comments can be sent to the Policy Committee on August 24th for the August 31st meeting. HEI will have section 5 revisions completed in a week to send to the Advisory Committee. The PWG will meet the afternoon of August 21st to begin review of section 3 of the plan.

Adjourned at 1:45 p.m.