

Root River 1W1P Planning Work Group  
November 28, 2017

In attendance: Bob Scanlan, Skip Langer, Aaron Gamm, Justin Hanson, Tim Ruzek, Daryl Buck, Adam King, Dean Schrandt, Adam Beilke, Caleb Fischer, Donna Rasmussen, Justin Watkins, Tiffany Schauls, Pam Anderson, Kim Lang

Root River IWM for 2018:

Pam Anderson, PCA, Supervisor with the Water Quality Monitoring Program – including SWAG; Kim Lang, PCA, with the Biological Unit in attendance. Bio-anchor sites are in the HUC12s; some state and local needs sites were fulfilled. If not, it may be due to delistings or no impairment or permitting. Some segments are only partial listings, i.e. invertebrates but no fish. A couple of sites were moved from previous 10X sites to align with permitting or other needs.

2018-19 SWAG would be a professional contract.

- 2 year contract
  - o Expenses paid for staff, including indirect
  - o There is money for monitoring equip., supplies, gear, lab analysis (must be certified lab), shipping costs, vehicle mileage,
  - o Would have access to State level contracting pricing with labs
- Average cost is ~\$3200 per stream site
- First sampling in May (through September) so want to start the contract now.
- Bacteria samples are taken three times per month in the first year, two times per month in the second year. We stated our concern with getting bacteria samples into incubator on time within the 6 hour timeframe. Pam explained that is not a hard deadline. It can be within 24 hours for assessment. The 6 hour timeframe is only for court cases.

We asked about which sites have chlorophyll-a and what extra steps needed to be taken. Pam informed us it's just an extra bottle to collect.

PCA would like Fillmore/Houston/Olmsted to talk about what sites if any we would like to do and possibly how we could collaborate on this project. Get back to Pam, PCA ASAP. Skip, Olmsted SWCD, is interested would like to know further details of what's all involved, staff time, etc.. Bob, Root River SWCD, is also interested in doing some sites. Skip, Bob, Caleb and Donna will talk further and communicate with Pam.

Root River HSPF model:

Justin Watkins talked on the HSPF Model. John Butcher, Tetra Tech – Lead on Root River HSPF Model; was in attendance over speaker phone.

There is a watershed model for every HUC8. Main purpose of the model:

1. Interpolate data across the whole HUC8 even if there is no monitoring at a particular location; can predict at those locations based on watershed-wide data.
2. Simulate alternative realities by designing scenarios to predict outcomes, e.g. 30% of the watershed treated with water and sediment basins.

Updates: the model was extended through 2015 with lots of new data, primarily weather data; Upper Iowa and Mississippi-Reno are added; better simulation of karst in DNR fisheries perennial and ephemeral segments; Belmont work obtained good match between sources so calibration points were added and data were added to other points. Of the 2013 scenarios, 1, 3, and 7 were vegetative practices with the largest reductions. New scenarios would be run with SWAT and scaled up to HUC8. The 2013 scenarios can be run with new data and calibrations. There is support for running a pond scenario; also buffers with full implementation of the law. Near channel can be distinguished from overland sources with additional analysis. Could also look at combinations of practices, such as increased no till, decreased pasture and hay, or increased soil health and resulting increased infiltration. Mower has run another model that combines no till, strip till, cover crop of 30% which showed a 30% reduction in runoff without structures. Can we compare different slopes or combine scenarios? Structural provides a certain level of permanence versus management practices. SAM is also available this winter and could possibly be used in the Root.

MPCA funds for civic engagement: Justin, Katherine, Caleb, Sheila, Nancy North and I met to discuss possible uses for funds that MPCA has available for WRAPS, TMDL and related tasks to work with LGUS to support program needs, and how to increase readiness in the watershed to do on the ground work.

A list of those ideas was shown to the group. Areas greater than a HUC8 eligible for the funding. It should be linked to WRAPS or the watershed plan. We could tie into the regional discussions regarding education and shared coordination by

the Water Resources Board. Tim mentioned the use of free outreach such as newspaper columns, Youtube and Facebook. A facilitated effort with groups such as the ag retailers, Farm Bureau, or Soybean or Corn Growers would need a plan for how to work together. The Plan Summary subcommittee along with Justin could look at the next steps. Everyone was in favor of technical resources for planning support tools, e.g. inventory of structures, culvert inventories (check with DNR-Jeff Weiss), LiDAR update, drone surveys (Olmsted?), would be very helpful in understanding what we have and where are the gaps. The structural inventory could help to prioritize structure cleanouts with additional design information.

**Plan summary:**

The group consensus was that the plan summary is ready to go to the Policy Committee for approval.

**Technical plan summary:**

Utilize the plan summary subcommittee again and base the format on the Upper Mississippi documents.

**Draft work plan and budget:**

Adam Beilke reported that the funding, policy and timeline recommendations have gone through the Clean Water Team, Local Government Roundtable and are being reviewed today by the BWSR Program and Policy Committee for final review and approval at the BWSR Board meeting December 20th. The five 1W1P pilots and 7 metro watersheds will receive the first round of funding using a formula based on the amount of private land in the watershed. The Root has the most private land so the initial amount is calculated to be \$838,900. The metro counties will each get \$300,000 for a total of \$1.2 million which will remain stable. It is expected that work plans should be completed within six months. Right now the match requirement is the same as Clean Water Fund grants at 25% non-state match; however it is being discussed today whether that should be reduced to 10%. Eligible activities will also include drainage grant activities and easements approved through BWSR equal or less than the RIM rates. They are also considering whether or not these watersheds are eligible for competitive grants. Non-structural practices will require a policy approved by BESR. A performance-based component is not related to the pilots' funding. Various factors are being discussed for future analysis. There are no restrictions on the amount that can be used for administration versus projects. PTMAApp will be going to a cloud-based web server to increase its speed. Additions are planned to the desktop version, and a training on the desktop version is planned for next summer.

**Noxious weed grant:** MDA concerns about Japanese hops from Preston to the Mississippi. I have talked with Bob Scanlan about putting in an application also so we can double the amount from \$30,000 to \$60,000; also consulting with MDA and Conservation Corps about coordinating efforts, some for sites only accessible by river and others by land. MDA already has agreements with 48 landowners in Fillmore County for access to apply herbicide for control. Should we be considering a CWMA for the Root? No action discussed.

**BWSR/NRCS Conservation Planning position for the Root:** NRCS and BWSR have an agreement to combine funding to hire watershed conservation planners in seven watersheds around the state, including the Root and the Cedar. There would be one fulltime planner in each watershed with funding for four years. BWSR will coordinate the program, and NRCS is committing office space, phone, computer, training and vehicle use. SWCDs will hire and supervise them; can be existing or newly hired staff. The planners will work with farmers to identify conservation needs to get them ready to sign up for cost share through EQIP and state programs. Local staff will determine where door to door communication with farmers will happen in priority areas.

A statewide coordinator position needs study by the MN Management and Budget office before the program goes into effect.

**Next meetings:**

**Advisory?** Later after more is known about funding. Probably not enough time to get a meeting set up before the Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> Policy Committee meeting.

**Policy:** Jan. 22, 2018, 9 am, Room 108, Fillmore County Office Building

**PWG:** before Policy? Tuesday, January 9, 2018, 9 am at the Conservation Building in Preston. January 4<sup>th</sup> is the District Managers' meeting. Could the subcommittee also meet then? Manager's meetings usually go into the afternoon, which may not leave much time for another meeting.