

Planning Work Group for Root River One Watershed One Plan
Thursday, August 29, 2019 9:00am
Conservation Building Meeting Room, Preston, MN

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Dan Wermager, Daryl Buck, Sheila Harmes, Katy Taylor, Jennifer Olson, David Schmidt, Andy Robertson, Shaina Keseley, Adam Bielke, Emily Zanon, David Schmidt, Laura Christensen

Emily Zanon (MPCA), Katy Taylor (TetraTech), and Jennifer Olson (TetraTech) started the meeting off with updates regarding the Upper Iowa Watershed and Reno Watershed TMDL's. The Upper Iowa contains seven e. coli and one Total Suspended Solids (TSS) impairments while the Reno contains two e. coli and one TSS impairment. These two watersheds will be combined into one Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) document. Emily overviewed the TMDL and WRAPS processes. Proposed TMDL drafts are shared then sent to the MPCA for review, then the EPA for review, and then put out for public notice. The WRAPS undergo the same process minus the need for EPA review. The public notice goal for the Upper Iowa/Reno is December 31, 2019. WRAPS components, conditions, and prioritization were gone through and organized at a HUC 10 level. No long term monitoring stations were available in these watersheds to evaluate trends so calibration was done using the Root River data (WPLMN, HSPF models). Catchment level pollutant yields were used from the updated HSPF model. The planning workgroup was introduced to Tableau, an existing BMP inventory. TetraTech also used a Nitrogen and Phosphorous BMP tool developed by the University of Minnesota to create scenarios to achieve the Nutrient Reduction Strategy milestone. To reduce duplicative efforts, strategy tables only incorporate strategies for NEW impairments and protection recommendations. Planning workgroup members will provide Emily input regarding WRAPS.

Andy Robertson (St. Mary's University) gave a presentation on the work his Geospatial Services team has been working on and how this work relates to PTMapp. Andy spoke about working in the Nemadji Watershed to identify and rank BMP opportunities. He explained related tools such as ACPF and NRCS tool for Nitrogen and Phosphorous output. He believes his team could use PTMapp directly or supplementally to complete the work the Root River 1W1P would like to see accomplished. The limitations of PTMapp were addressed included the lack of capability to assess forestry and bacteria aspects. It was mentioned that Bridget had previously been running PTMapp in Southfork and Riceford Creek, but that service is no longer available. During this conversation, it was also mentioned that it would be beneficial to have the WRAPS (cycle 2) done just before new Root River 1W1P implementation funds roll out.

David Schmidt (The Nature Conservancy) brought forth a proposal to apply for a U.S. Forest Service grant in conjunction with our Root River 1W1P efforts. He expressed the limitations of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in not being able to gain private landowner project momentum. David recognizes this is an area Soil and Water Conservation Districts excel and proposed creating a position with these grant dollars to create a position that serves as "the jack of all trades" when it comes to conservation needs acting as a funnel to bring all conservation possibilities from available entities (local, state,

federal, private, etc) into one position. These dollars would not be for cost-share projects, but for outreach efforts. It was mentioned that SWCD staff in general, already act as this funnel. It was mentioned that Dan Wermager's position was almost identical to what he was proposing. This grant would require a 1:1 match. The proposal would be to use non-federal implementation dollars from the Root River 1W1P projects specific to the targeted watersheds. If successful, these grant funds would become available October 2020 and run through 2023. The idea was brought up to use these funds to extend Dan Wermager's planning efforts versus creating a new position.

Daryl Buck (Winona Soil and Water Conservation District) gave an update on the current status of Root River 1W1P Implementation dollars.

Adam Beilke (Board of Water and Soil Resources) provided an update of the watershed-based funding status. He provided handouts on the draft Watershed-Based Implementation Funding Policy and highlighted areas of change/additions. The Root River 1W1P Policy Committee will be receiving this information via email.

Next RR1W1P Workgroup meeting will tentatively be set for October.