

Planning Workgroup for Root River One Watershed, One Plan
July 29th, 2022 @ 10:00am
Location: Conservation Building (912 Houston St NW, Preston)

DRAFT Notes

Attendees: Adam Beilke, BWSR; Jeff Weiss, MN DNR; Adam King, Dodge SWCD; Sara West, Fillmore SWCD; Mindy Williamson, Fillmore SWCD; Nikki Wheeler, Fillmore SWCD; Maggie Windingstad, Fillmore SWCD; Cody Fox, Mower SWCD; Skip Langer, Olmsted SWCD; Sheila Harmes, Winona County; Wanda Anderson, Winona County SWCD; Amanda Gentry, Winona County SWCD

- 1) Meeting Start: 10:07 a.m.

- 2) Discussion about 5-year RR 1W1P Plan Assessment (BWSR):
 - a. The Planning Workgroup discussed what data needs to be compiled to be used for the 5-year assessment.
 - i. E-Link reports
 - ii. Yearly Milestones document
 - iii. MPCA Healthy Watersheds website/interactive map
 - iv. PRAP
 - v. Mower SWCD PR work
 - vi. PTMApp
 - vii. WRAPS Cycle 1 and Cycle 2
 - b. The Planning Workgroup discussed what work will need to go into developing the 5-year assessment once the data is collected. The 5-year assessment will go to the Advisory Committee, elected officials and other stakeholders once complete, with the goal of a good, concrete report of the benefit of 1W1P and promoting the continuation of funding for this work.
 - c. In discussion of what will be needed by staff to complete the 5-year assessment, the following discussion points and concerns were brought up:
 - i. The recent amount of staff turnover at several Root River 1W1P SWCD offices, and the amount of training currently occurring due to the turnover.
 - ii. Following staff turnover, several RR 1W1P SWCD offices currently do not have a full staff, and therefore the capacity of those offices is limited in regards to taking on more projects or tasks.
 - iii. With the large number of running 1W1P's in the Southeast, a regional position whose task is solely financials/tracking/media outreach of the 1W1P's was discussed.
 - iv. Bringing in a consultant to complete the 5-year assessment, with the data gathered by staff. Once the data is gathered, putting it together in a report is what consultants typically do, meaning: they would not need full training of what we as a 1W1P do.
 - v. Concern was raised about the potential for inherent bias in the 5-year assessment if SWCD staff complete it; a 3rd party would not have bias and would not have data representation skewed towards any particular entity, because they know the same amount of data about each entity, rather than staff knowing more about their own projects than other districts projects.

- vi. At the last RR 1W1P Policy Committee meeting, the Policy Committee gave staff direction to use 1W1P WBIF interest funds for staff time to put the 5-year assessment together; the PWG feels that the money would be much more effectively and efficiently spent on hiring a consultant to complete the 5-year assessment.
 - vii. Due to the staff turnover at multiple RR 1W1P SWCD offices, the amount of training new employees are currently undergoing, the increased workload of existing staff who have new staff in training, and the increased workload of staff who have yet to fill their open positions, staff cannot both put projects in the ground, AND complete the 5-year assessment.
 - d. PWG SWCD staff will speak with their SWCD board members about the necessity of hiring a consultant to complete the 5-year assessment, as well as county commissioners.
 - e. Fillmore SWCD staff will look for digital copy of RR 1W1P.
 - f. Mower SWCD staff will reach out to North Fork Crow 1W1P for their RFP for consultants for their 5-year assessment.
- 3) Update on 2022-2023 WBIF grant funds:
- a. Ready to go!
 - b. Funding pools are still left in the 2020-2021 WBIF, please use this up first. The first 50% has been spent, we are in the 40%. An extension/amendment will be requested to extend the end date of the 2020-2021 WBIF from December 31st, 2022 to December 31st, 2023, with SWCD staff understanding to use the funding up ASAP.
- 4) Next Meetings:
- a. Advisory Committee Meeting:
 - i. To be held **after** the September 26th, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting.
 - b. Policy Committee Meeting:
 - i. September 26th, 2022 at 9:00am in Preston, MN (County Building, Room 108).
 - c. Planning Workgroup Meeting:
 - i. To be held over Zoom **before** the September 26th, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting.
- 5) Other:
- a. New round of RCPP available if interested in applying; same amount of funding (~\$500,000 for the Root River Watershed) as previous round.
 - b. Winona County SWCD re-posting position for Administrative Assistant.
 - c. Fillmore SWCD has open posting for District Administrator, posting closes August 1st, 2022.
- 6) Meeting End: 12:17 p.m.