

# ***BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT***

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## **BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee Meeting May 4, 2018**

The One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) Policy Committee held a meeting on Friday, May 4, 2018, at 9:00 AM in the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) office, located at 1303 4<sup>th</sup> AVE NE, Barnesville, MN.

Policy Committee Members present included Lyle Hovland, Wilkin County Commissioner; Barry Nelson, Becker County Commissioner; Wayne Johnson, Otter Tail County Commissioner; Jay Leitch, BRRWD President; Rick Drevlow, West Otter Tail County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisor; Jerome Flottesmesch, Becker SWCD Supervisor; Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay SWCD Supervisor; and Ross Aigner, Wilkin SWCD Supervisor.

Planning Team Members present included Brett Arne, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Bruce Albright, BRRWD Administrator, and Matt Jacobson, Water Planner/Scientist, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI).

BRRWD Administrator Bruce Albright called the meeting to order. He reviewed the Committee's actions at their 4/6/18 meeting: approval of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and the 1W1P Bylaws. The Planning Team (PT), made up of the four County SWCD District Managers, met on 4/18/18. The PT worked on the workplan, budget, and timeline for the Policy Committee's review and approval at today's meeting. Once the Committee approves these documents, they will be forwarded to BWSR for review and approval, then BWSR will issue the Grant Agreement and release 50% of the funding. The entire planning process should be completed by the end of April 2020. BRRWD staff created a 1W1P page on the BRRWD's website, which will be used to post Plan information. Albright distributed binders for the Committee to organize their meeting materials.

The Policy Committee elected officers: Lyle Hovland, Chair; Jerome Flottesmesch, Vice Chair; and Paul Krabbenhoft, Secretary. Albright explained the officers' duties.

Matt Jacobson, HEI, reviewed the workplan, which is an overview of the 1W1P process. The work is broken down into several Tasks. Task 1-Selection of Plan Consultants; Task 2-Committees, Notifications, and Initial Planning Meeting; Task 3-Draft Plan; Task 4-Formal Plan Review and Public Hearing; Task 5-Approval by BWSR; Task 6-Local Adoption; and Task 7-Grant Reporting. The group discussed each task and associated subtasks.

For Task 1, the Policy Committee agreed that HEI has been selected as the Plan Consultant. Task 2 calls for the establishment and maintenance of the Policy and Advisory Committee and the Planning Team. Albright is working on a flow chart of the referenced groups. The Policy Committee and Planning Team are in place, so the next step is to contact individuals to serve on the Advisory Committee. Another subtask is to notify Plan review authorities and other stakeholders of the Plan initiation and solicit input/comments. The group discussed holding a public information Kickoff meeting. Albright suggested that the Kickoff meeting could be held prior to a BRRWD Board meeting to provide just the basic information about the Plan process. Then, once we have substantial Plan information, the Committee could consider holding meetings in a few different locations throughout the BRRWD to attract more local attendance.

The group discussed how the Plan will address priorities. Brett Arne, BWSR, explained that the Plan will rely more on maps to identify specific target locations and be less narrative driven. The 1W1P should designate where to apply best management practices to produce the most impact. Using tools such as the Prioritize, Target, and Measure Application (PTMApp), problem areas can be identified and conservation practices can be put into action, without a voluminous written narrative describing specific locations. Albright noted that once the Plan is completed, a new committee will be organized that will meet to develop recommendations for target areas within the watersheds. Arne explained that the Plan will be organized into a list of goals with identified objectives to implement those goals. The specific targeted locations within the watersheds will be addressed later by a "post planning team", who will refer to the goals and objectives established in the Plan to develop annual workplans to utilize the annual BWSR funding. Albright pointed out that the Plan's lifespan is 10 years, and we probably won't get all the identified goals addressed in that time.

Wayne Johnson commented that it may be difficult to get significant landowner involvement in the Planning process. He thought we will have to rely more on the Advisory Committee and Planning Team to identify local problem areas. The group discussed the differences between the neighboring watershed districts in terms of relationships with agencies and landowners. Barry Nelson pointed out that the BRRWD has a reputation of trust and reliability that will go a long way towards building landowner input.

Albright pointed out that in a year from now, the Draft Plan should be in the final form for internal and external review. The group will need to decide if we will hold several public hearings around the District for public input on the Draft Plan. The group discussed conducting a public survey. It was agreed that postal surveys are not always the best way to gather public input. The group agreed that it might be more useful to present the Plan information to the public by attending annual Township meetings, publishing information in the monthly SWCD newsletters, etc.

Jacobson continued his review of the workplan by discussing the Plan approval process, which has a start date of October 2019. BWSR has 90 days from the final Plan submittal to complete their review, or December 2019. The local planning authorities has 120 days following BWSR approval to adopt the Plan for implementation.

The group reviewed the proposed Plan timeline worksheet that is divided into Pre-Planning, Planning, and Plan Review Phases, showing Task Start Dates, Duration, End Dates. They also discussed possible Goals that could be added to the Plan: land stewardship, including shoreland and riparian stewardship. Albright added that the State has priorities that they expect to be included in our Plan. Johnson noted that since Brett Arne and Henry Van Offelen, Clean Water Specialist, BWSR; are involved in our effort, they can make sure we have everything that the State wants in our final Plan before it goes to BWSR for review. Arne noted that the BRRWD's current Comprehensive Plan already covers most to the required State priorities and is a good base to build on.

The Committee also reviewed the 1W1P Grant Budget. Albright suggested that the Committee could approve the Workplan, Timeline, and Budget, so that it can be forwarded to BWSR for a final review and approval. Once that's accomplished, BWSR will process the Grant Agreement and make 50% of the grant funds available. **Motion** by Aigner to approve the referenced documents and forward them to BWSR for final approval. **Seconded** by Leitch. **Approved.**

Leitch asked about a timeline for organizing the Advisory Committee. Albright noted that the Committee should be in place by August. The number of meetings for the Advisory Committee will be determined by the topics they will be asked to address and how the process plays out. Johnson thought that the time commitment should be determined before we start asking people to serve. The group discussed the frequency and scheduling of the Advisory Committee meetings. They also discussed financial reimbursement to the

volunteer members of that Committee. Albright noted that reimbursement for mileage is included in the Planning budget.

Aigner asked if the 1W1P will replace the other local water Plans. Arne explained that the goal of the 1W1P is to create a Plan so that all the existing Plans get through the prioritization level that BWSR requires from the Clean Water Accountability Act. The group had an extended discussion regarding what requirements will be in place for County Water Plans, following the completion of the 1W1P for each watershed within the respective counties.

The Policy Committee will meet again as needed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.