

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

One Watershed, One Plan

Joint Advisory Committee, Policy Committee, and Planning Team Meeting

November 28, 2018

A One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) Joint Advisory and Policy Committees/Planning Team Meeting was held on Thursday, November 28, 2018, at 9:00 AM in the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) office, located at 1303 4th Avenue NE, Barnesville, MN.

Advisory Committee members present were Ryan Lemickson, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA); Annette Drewes, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Jim Lahn, East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD); Lynn Foss, Clay SWCD; Scott Schroeder, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA); Mike Sharp, MPCA; Nicholas Brown, DNR; Jim Grier, Biologist, North Dakota State University (NDSU); Jill Wilkey, River Keepers; George Minerich, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH); Ed Musielewicz, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Brian Winter, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); Erik S. Jones, District Engineer, BRRWD and Anthony Nelson, Pheasants Forever (PF), Clay SWCD.

Policy Committee members present were Jerome Flottesch, Becker SWCD Supervisor; Barry Nelson, Becker County Commissioner; Julian Sjostrom, West Otter Tail SWCD Supervisor (Alternate); Jay Leitch, BRRWD President; Peter Fjestad, BRRWD Vice President (Alternate), and Randy Schellack, Clay SWCD Supervisor (Alternate).

Planning Team members present were Henry Van Offelen, Clean Water Specialist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Brett Arne, Board Conservationist, BWSR; Kevin Kassenborg, District Manager, Clay SWCD; Aaron Larsen, Project Manager, West Otter Tail SWCD; Peter Mead, District Manager, Becker SWCD; Don Bajumpaa, District Manager, Wilkin SWCD; and Rachel Olm, Scientist, and Matt Jacobson, Water Planner/Scientist, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI).

Others attending: Kim Melton, District Technician, Wilkin SWCD.

Matt Jacobson, Plan Writer and Facilitator, HEI, called the Advisory Committee meeting to order at 9:03 AM and asked the group to introduce themselves. He reviewed the meeting agenda items, including the draft Issues Table, draft Land and Water Resource Narrative, the draft Participation Plan, and the Public Kickoff meeting.

The group reviewed the draft Issues Table. Rachel Olm, HEI, explained that the Issues Table represents an early step in the process to draft a set of prioritized issues for the watershed that can be addressed through the development of measurable goals and implementation actions. Jacobson explained that this document is a result of an aggregation of watershed issues from a variety of sources including local water management plans, MPCA Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies Reports (WRAPs), Total Maximum Daily Load Studies (TMDL), 60-day Plan notification responses, and other reports and studies relevant to the watershed. Public input will be gathered during the public kickoff meeting in January where landowners will be asked to "vote" for or add issues, using large wall maps of the BRRWD's planning regions as a reference. The BWSR guidance regarding the identification of "Issues" in association with the 1W1P states that the Plan should include "problems, risks, or opportunities for your watershed's priority resources that will be

addressed in the Plan." BWSR's definition of "prioritize" is "determining the relative importance and precedence of the resources and issues you have identified in your plan. This includes not only agreeing upon which items will be tackled first, but also those that will not be included in your plan." Jacobson also shared a list of base issues that BWSR requires for the Plan.

Jacobson and Olm compiled the group's comments on the Issues Table following the 11/1/18 meeting and incorporated them into the Table. The group discussed the comments and revisions.

Annette Drewes, DNR, asked the group if those who live in the watershed feel that the Issues Table has covered changes and concerns they have notice over the past 20 years. Kevin Kassenborg, Clay SWCD, felt that the issues table has incorporated the Clay County Water Plan issues. Peter Mead, Becker SWCD, agreed that their County Plan issues are included in the Issues Table, as did Don Bajumpaa, Wilkin SWCD. Henry Van Offelen, BWSR, noted that all the County Plans would have similar content.

Van Offelen suggested that Issue No. 1, which addresses "instability impacting public drainage system performance", could be split into three issues, addressing the public drainage systems, stream and river bank/channel integrity, and lake shore integrity. Bajumpaa agreed with the suggestion. Olm noted that issues could be listed and grouped according to specific measurable goals and a unique set of actions assigned to that issue.

Jim Grier suggested to combine Issue No. 3 with No. 1. Jacobson proposed that the term "excess" could be added to No. 3 in order to separate natural erosion rates from other factors. Van Offelen thought the upland contribution sources should remain as a separate issue with unique goals and actions, as compared to the "in-channel" sources addressed in No. 1.

Van Offelen suggested changes to Issue No. 9 regarding altered hydrology. After discussion, it was agreed that No. 9 could remain as listed because it addresses variations on the effects of altered hydrology. Issue No. 8 would represent the flooding issue due to altered hydrology.

Brian Winter, TNC, suggested that tiling should be listed as a separate issue reflecting an altered hydrology problem that has significantly increased in the last 10 years. The group discussed the causes and effects of tiling on hydrology and agreed not to list tiling separately as it is a component of many of the other listed issues. Jacobson suggested that it could be included as an emerging issue in Plan Section 2.

George Minerich, MDH, questioned if the issue of groundwater recharge/discharge will be addressed in the Issues Table. Jacobson noted that Issue No. 15 addresses groundwater depletion, but Minerich felt that item only addressed over-pumping. Drewes noted that urban stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces should be addressed somewhere in the table. Olm noted that issues will be incorporated into the measurable goals for altered hydrology actions. The group agreed that groundwater storage, recharge, and quality should be addressed in the Plan in terms of surface to groundwater connections.

Issues No. 16 and 17 would be revised to focus on the lack of resiliency planning to climate change and extreme weather events.

The group discussed the Issues Table's formatting with Resource Concerns and Planning Region Focus columns/check boxes to show which resource is affected by an issue and where in the BRRWD the problem is occurring.

Anette Drewes pointed out that the DNR's issues statement was incorrectly summarized. She explained that the DNR's concern is about lakeshore development, which can result in erosion/sedimentation, as well as habitat loss. Jacobson will revise the statement and add it to the issues table.

The group discussed two original issues that were not included in the revised table involving water quality related to elevated concentrations of mercury, PCBs, and elevated concentrations of arsenic. Minerich commented that these issues might not be appropriate for the 1W1P to address, since even the State agencies don't have a solution. The group agreed to include the mercury, PCBs, arsenic levels, and other contaminants in a public awareness statement in Issue No. 18.

Jacobson spent some time summarizing the group's suggested changes to the Issues Table, as referenced above. He noted that he and Olm will revise the Issues Table according to today's feedback. Jacobson suggested that the Planning Team should meet to review the final revisions prior to the full 12/20/18 Committee meeting where the Issues Table could be recommended to the Policy Committee for approval. This final list will be a tool to start the issue prioritization process.

The group reviewed the comments/revisions for the Land & Water Resources Narrative. Jacobson noted that the maps will be resized so that they are legible. Olm described the content of the document, which is a BWSR 1W1P requirement. Drewes commented that some Watershed Districts have used the Resources Narrative to present a narrative or "story" describing the unique characteristics of the watershed, not just a simple listing of the watershed resources. The group discussed the format of the Resources appendix. Jacobson suggested that a good place for the "watershed story" could be in the Executive Summary or the Plan Introduction at the beginning of the Plan document, which would be more accessible to the public. The group agreed with this suggestion.

Van Offelen commented on Section 6.6, Altered Hydrology, in the Land & Water Resources Narrative. He noted that the discussion in this section has more to do with altered watercourses than hydrology. Other districts have used this section to analyze hydrology. He asked if a more detailed discussion quantifying altered hydrology issues would be addressed elsewhere in the Plan since the group decided to put more emphasis on altered hydrology in the Issues Table. Erik Jones, Engineer, HEI, noted that there is more information regarding hydrology in the Plan. Jacobson will add the data to this section. Van Offelen thought that since it is in the Issues Table, we will need to have quantifications to set goals and develop actions.

Minerich thought that Section 7, Groundwater, was well done in terms of groundwater interaction. Jacobson noted that the information the MDH provided was very helpful in preparing this section.

Nicholas Brown, DNR, was concerned that Section 6.4, Wetlands, emphasizes only permanent wetlands. He also noted a concern about the table used in Section 11.1, Threatened and Endangered Species. He thought it should be removed, as it is incomplete. Jacobson noted that he pulled that information from the DNR's webpage. Drewes offered to help expand and cleanup the narrative in this section.

Jacobson suggested that the Advisory Committee could agree to recommend the Land and Water Resource Narrative to the Policy Committee for approval today, pending the noted changes. The group consensus was to recommend the Narrative.

Jacobson presented the draft Introduction to the group. This document was included in the materials the Committee received prior to today's meeting for their review and comment. He noted that the Introduction could be crafted into more of a narrative about the Buffalo-Red River watershed, as discussed earlier in the Resource Narrative review. Olm discussed how the style format for the Plan will be created, which will add pictures and art to enhance the final document. Jacobson asked the group to consider sharing photos, etc., that they would like to see included in the Plan. Drewes commented that she thought the focus of the Introduction should be the watershed and not the Plan. Bajumpaa suggested that the terminology should transition from the "Comprehensive Water Plan" to the "1W1P", to reflect the inclusion of all the local watershed plans into One Plan. Jacobson explained that the group will have two weeks to review the Introduction and send Jacobson comments by 12/12/18.

The group took a short break and reconvened at 10:46 AM.

Jacobson called for any further comments or discussion on the Participation Plan. He asked if the Advisory Committee was ready to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the document. He noted that there are still a few openings on the Advisory Committee, but they can be added in the future with the approval of the Policy Committee. Leitch suggested that a Moorhead Public Service representative should be added to the Advisory Committee. Minerich will provide contact information to Jacobson. The Advisory Committee agreed to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the Participation Plan.

The Public Kickoff Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 8, 2019, at 6:30 PM in the BRRWD Barnesville office. The Issues Table will need to be finalized at the 12/20/18 meeting. The group discussed advertising and invitation options. Grier suggested local newspaper ads. Jones noted that the BRRWD office staff has mailing lists we used for the last Revised Watershed Management Plan (RWMP) notices. Flyers were also posted in various businesses and other venues. It was suggested that we contact the Cities within the BRRWD and that a video could be created to be used in advertising the meeting. Drewes commented the DNR can provide a GIS aerial view of the watershed. The group was interested in Drewes proposal. In addition, Jacobson will provide wall-sized maps of the planning regions for public review and a list of the associated issues for each region with various means for the public to provide input on priority issues. Van Offelen commented that the public input we gather at the January meeting is to be used by the Advisory and Policy Committees to help them make decisions about how issues are prioritized. He advised against promoting the idea of a public "vote" on the issues, which could possibly skew the results.

The next Advisory Committee/Planning Team meeting is scheduled for December 20, 2018, at 9:00 AM in the BRRWD Barnesville office. Agenda items will include Kickoff Meeting planning, issues prioritization, the Plan Introduction, and other components of Sections 2 and 3 of the Plan. Section 2 items include Resource Concerns Maps, a visual aid that places resource concerns on the landscape. The group will also discuss Emerging Issues, which are future concerns that might not be addressed in the 10-year life span of the Plan. Bajumpaa also suggested that when the groups meet, they could review the Plan timeline. The group decided to switch their next scheduled meeting to December 20, 2018. Jacobson will e-mail meeting materials prior to the next meeting. November meeting minutes will be made available before the December meeting.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 AM.