

BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT One Watershed, One Plan Joint Advisory Committee/Planning Team Meeting June 19, 2019

A One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) Joint Advisory Committee/Planning Team Meeting was held on Wednesday, June 19, 2019, at 1:00 PM in the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville, MN.

Advisory Committee members present were Jill Wilkey, River Keepers; Annette Drewes, Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Jim Lahn, Area Certification Specialist East Ottertail Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)/Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA); Ryan Lemickson, MDA; Anthony Nelson, Pheasants Forever (PF)/Clay SWCD; Lynn Foss, Clay SWCD; Nicholas Brown, DNR; Erik Jones, BRRWD Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI); Brian Winter, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); Scott Schroeder, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA); Henry Van Offelen, Clean Water Specialist, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Sarah Hewitt, Conservation Programs Manager, Audubon Society; George Minerich, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) (via conference phone); Phil Doll, Private Lands Biologist, Becker SWCD, and Gerald Nordick, Citizen.

Planning Team members present were Brett Arne, Board Conservationist, BWSR; Kevin Kassenborg, Clay SWCD; Don Bajumpaa, District Manager, Wilkin SWCD; Peter Mead, District Manager, Becker SWCD; Aaron Larson, West Otter Tail (WOT) SWCD; Bruce Albright, BRRWD Administrator, Kathy Fenger, BRRWD Assistant Administrator; and Moriya Rufer, Scientist/Water Planner, HEI.

Policy Committee members present were; Jay A. Leitch, BRRWD President; Rick Drevlow, Supervisor, WOT SWCD.

Moriya Rufer, Scientist, HEI, called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and informed the committee that Matt Jacobson has moved on to be the new Clay County Planning and Zoning Director. Jacobson will no longer be a member of the Planning Team, but he has been appointed to the Advisory Committee, so he can still help with the 1W1P process. Rufer introduced herself and discussed some of her past planning experience. Rachel Olm, Scientist/Water Planner, HEI, who is out on maternity leave, will return in a month. We are transitioning from Jacobson to Rufer and Olm, and they will continue the planning process.

Rufer asked the group to introduce themselves and reviewed the meeting agenda items:

- Recap on Progress & Direction
- Plan Section 3. Measurable Goals
- Plan Section 4: Targeted Implementation
- Action Items and Next Meeting

The group reviewed the status of the 1W1P components:

- Completed:
 - Section 2 of the Plan
 - Finalized at June Policy Committee Meeting
 - Priority Issues in three levels (A, B, and C)

- Acknowledgement and outline of emerging issues
 - **Note: Priority Level C issues.
 - Section 3 of the Plan includes
 - 10 Goals
 - Planning Region Draft Prioritization
 - Draft metrics and targets
- Under Development:
 - Plan Section 4: Targeted Implementation
 - Work on actions under each goal and discuss goal targets and metrics.
- Up Next
 - Section 5 – Implementation Programs

Rufer explained the current transition from Measurable Goals to Targeted Implementation actions. The group made a couple of priority issues changes at the last meeting. Some Priority Level A and B issues were moved to Level C, and the Policy Committee unofficially approved those changes at the 5/29/19 meeting. Since they lacked a quorum, they will revisit this issue at their next meeting. Goals have been written for Priority Level A and B. Priority Level C issues are still in the Plan, but they won't have a measurable goal assigned to them.

The next topic for group discussion was on Measurable Goals Section 3. Existing data was used to prioritize actions for this section. The goals need to be consolidated in order to start targeting the next level. Goals are first prioritized by planning region, which gives flexibility in that planning region to do projects.

Peter Mead, SWCD, asked if there was a more consistent way to identify the priority areas. Rufer explained priority areas are identified by how each goal is measured, then the level of the priority area is determined.

Gerald Nordick commented that cooperation between agencies was not suitable to achieve flood reduction and asked if we could consider changing the language in the Plan to encourage better cooperation. Rufer explained that would come in as an action item under that goal. Nicholas Brown, DNR, commented that nine of the goals start with an action verb except the first one. The committee agreed to have it changed to "Improve Hydrology and Reduce Flood Reduction".

Rufer distributed an example of the Stabilize Lake Shoreland measurable goal report card for review and discussion. She explained that the report card is an easy way to view Goal information in a factsheet format. Rufer also explained that each of the goals that were discussed at the last meeting were condensed down to a one-page report card. It will show the issues that will be addressed in each planning region, according to priority ranking, including specific short- and long-term goals.

Rufer distributed a summary sheet that included Priority Goals A & B and proceeded to describe the metrics used to determine each goal.

1. Improve Hydrology and Reduce Flood Reduction
 - The red areas on the summary sheet were determined by the percent of the planning region and one hundred five-year-flood plain, the largest acre-feet run off, and the number of stream regions with altered hydrology identified as a structure.
2. Reduce Sediment Delivery and Load to Rivers and Streams
 - This was determined by sediment yield from the planning region, length of low restoration streams efforts for some of those suspended solids, and the length of streams on the threshold of impairment for sediment.
3. Improve Agricultural Soil Health
 - This goal was determined by the number of acres at risk for cropland erosion within each region. A map was created showing how erosion risk was calculated, showing the highest risk areas.

Nordick noted that Goal No. 3 only addresses wind erosion and thought that water erosion should be addressed, as it is caused by flooding. Rufer commented that it could be listed under Goal Nos. 2 and 3. Bajumpaa mentioned that there are hot spot areas in the low priority planning region that need to be targeted when identifying the action item for Goal No. 3. Rufer explained since there are other factors that determine where projects are implemented (such as landowner willingness), this prioritization is just a guide and does not limit working only in the red and yellow planning regions. Mead commented that areas in the region with no wind or water erosion, should not be used as a metric for measurement in targeting the priority areas. Rufer will work with the planning committee to improve the metric to identify the priority areas in Goal No. 3. She also explained by clarifying the goal, identifying actions will become easier. Henry Van Offelen, BWSR, commented that if funding becomes available, the committee is going to have to decide if they want to finance a project in a low priority area, rather than a higher priority area to make a collaborative effort to fix the problem. He also mentioned creating an action plan to develop a program to target the priority areas, that allows for estimation of erosion rates using field scale.

4. Stabilize Stream Banks and Channels
 - This was determined by the number unstable stream miles and specific locations that are the most unstable.
5. Reduce Total Phosphorus Delivery and Load to Lakes, Rivers and Streams
 - This was determined by the total phosphorus yield and pound per acre per year.
6. Restore and Protect Wetlands and Upland Areas
 - This was determined by using existing plans from the DNR Prairie Plan.
7. Stabilize Ditch Banks and Outlets (Legal Drainage Systems)
 - This was determined by measuring unstable ditch miles and the number of unstable ditch outlets.
8. Increase Dissolved Oxygen (DO) Concentrations
 - This was determined by the impairments.
9. Reduce Bacteria Delivery and Load
 - This was determined by the existing/potential impairments in that area.
10. Stabilize Lake Shoreland
 - This was determined by the 50ft buffer requirements.
 - Certain lakes were specified as focus areas for shoreline restoration.

The group had a brief discussion regarding possible language change in Goal No. 10 to make it easier to have protection before shoreland development and to insure shoreland stabilization. Rufer recommended that the change should be an action item under measurable Goal No. 10. Rufer will work with Mead and the Planning Committee to create an action item and bring it back to the Policy Committee for review at their next meeting

The group discussed adding a goal for ground water protection. Van Offelen commented a goal for ground water protection did not exist in this Plan because it falls under Priority C goal level and not under Priority A & B Goals. George Minerich, MDH, commented that for ground water protection to be a measurable goal, the following measurements could be utilized such as well sealing, pastured stewardship plans to measure acres, and if BMPs could be introduced into that area. Rufer called for a group consensus to have ground water protection as a goal, and there were no objections.

Jay Leitch added a correction for the record that Winnipeg does not get its water from the Red River, instead it comes from Shoal Lake which is part of Lake of the Woods.

Section 4.0 – Targeted Implementation

- Who, What, Where, When, Measurable outcome, and Cost.

Section 5 – Implementation Programs

- Projects and Practices Incentives
 - Structural practices and management practices on the landscape to make progress toward measurable goals. These are much smaller than Capital Improvement Projects.
 - Examples:
 - Grassed Waterways
 - Side Water Inlets
 - Rain Gardens
- Capital Improvements
 - Large, permanent projects that are not ongoing practices.
 - Examples:
 - Stream restoration
 - Livestock Waste Facilities.
- Education & Outreach
 - General Public Campaign
 - RiverWatch
 - Envirothon (All)
 - County Fairs (All)
 - Landowner/Producer Campaign
 - Educational workshops for landowners and contractors promoting proper shoreline protection methods.
 - Technical assistance to address sedimentation issues.
 - Conservation practice and project outreach programs.
 - Groundwater educational programs.
 - Ag BMP and Buffer Initiative outreach/education.
 - Data Collection & Monitoring
 - Regular monitoring, filling data gaps, inventories.
 - Examples:
 - Observation well monitoring
 - Water quality monitoring
 - Wetland delineation
 - Culvert Inventory
- Regulation & Enforcement
 - Statutory responsibility, local ordinances and rules and zoning.

The committee broke up into smaller groups based on expertise/interest to work on the draft goals. Rufer collected the worksheets and will combine them to create a draft of the implementation table for review.

The Planning Committee will be meeting July 16th, 2019, to work on implementation costs and final goal numbers.

The Policy Committee will be meeting July 24th, 2019 to approve goals and introduce Plan Administration.

The next Advisory Committee is scheduled on August 28th, 2019, at 1:00 – 3:00 PM in the BRRWD office. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 PM.