

**Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee Minutes**  
**Tuesday, February 22, 2011 – 1:30 PM**  
**Benton County Commissioners Room – Foley, MN 56329**

The Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Chairperson Duane Cekalla at 1:30 p.m. at the Benton County Commissioners Room on February 22, 2011.

**Voting members present:** Wade Bastian - Benton SWCD, Craig Gondeck – Citizen at Large, Guy Spence – Citizen at Large, Duane Cekalla – Little Rock Lake Association, Ken Noda – Citizen at Large, Warren Peschl – Benton County Commissioner, Brian Kaschmitter – Elk River Watershed Board, John Bemboom – Elected Township Official

**Voting members absent:** None

**Voting member excused:** Jim Moshier – City of Foley

**Others Present:** Katie Winkelman – Benton SWCD, Michael Watercott – Elk River Watershed Resident, Joe Wollak – Benton County Commissioner, Gerry Maciej – Benton SWCD, Butch Bukowski – Benton County Commissioner, Tiffany Determan – ERWA, Kimberly Thielen-Cremers – Stearns County SWCD and Mississippi River Renaissance, Chelle Benson – Benton County DOD

(Three Priority Issues in Comprehensive Water Plan: 1) Groundwater quantity and quality, 2) Development, 3) Feedlots and Nutrient Management.)

**1. Welcome and Introductions:**

**2. Review / Approve Minutes:** Motion by John Bemboom, Second by Craig Gondeck to approve the November 23, 2010 minutes. Motion Carried.

**3. Agenda:** Katie Winkelman, Benton SWCD, requested the following changes to the agenda: We will not be covering the History of our Goal, Discussion of Broad Brush VS Site Specific nor Two Phase Survey due to the absence of Jason Weinerman, who was to be the conversation leader. A Low Impact Development Technique presentation will take the place of the removed agenda items. Motion by Craig Gondeck to approve amended agenda and Second by Guy Spence. Motion Carried.

**4. Reports:**

**a.) Elk River Watershed TMDL**

The TMDL document was submitted to the EPA on February 9<sup>th</sup>. The contract with MPCA is complete end of June 2011. Wenk Associates are working on completing the draft implementation plan for the Elk River Watershed, Tiffany did state that before the implementation is ready for review she is requesting that all comments made during the open comment period be incorporated into the implementation plan.

Tiffany Determan has completed the 2010 Annual Report for the Elk River Watershed Association (please see the attached document).

**b.) Mississippi St. Cloud Major Watershed Project**

The Major Watershed Restoration & Protection Project (MWRPP) is a State developed 10 year cycle program which provides an approach for State-wide assessment of water quality and aquatic life. The

Watershed approach is designed to intensively monitor streams and lakes within a major watershed (8 digit HUC Watershed, i.e. Mississippi (St. Cloud) Watershed) to determine the overall health of the water resources, identify impaired waters, and identify those waters in need of additional protection efforts to prevent impairments. Through this program monitoring sites are placed to provide methodical spatial coverage of monitoring sites within the study watershed therefore leading to more thorough assessment of main stem rivers and their tributaries. The goal of the new 10-year cycle is to address all impairments within 4-5 years from the start of monitoring. The next four to five years would be used to implement BMP's and other watershed restoration practices to address impaired watersheds. The whole cycle is then repeated. Most importantly this process will provide a communication tool that will inform stakeholders, engage volunteers, and activate citizens. Finally, this effort will help coordinate the efforts of local, state and federal efforts to most effectively manage watershed resources. The ERWSA, via Watershed Coordinator Tiffany Determan, will coordinate the efforts to complete this project which will require collaboration of agencies such as: Benton, Sherburne, Wright and Stearns SWCDs, Counties, USFWS, MN DNR, and Clearwater River Watershed District among other local government units.

#### 2010 Work Completed:

Phase I contract signed; the ERWSA Project Coordinator began planning efforts to execute the work plan as developed by the MPCA.

Began watershed wide collection of existing data.

#### Upcoming in 2011

1st — 'official' Local Partner Meeting: Coordinated by the Watershed Coordinator. Will be held to review the Phase I work plan with partners and to communicate on specific tasks required of the partners. Civic Engagement Planning Committee will be formed at this meeting.

*Watch* for a webpage on the Sherburne SWCD site about the Mississippi St. Cloud Major Watershed Project for updates and information [www.sherburneswcd.org/](http://www.sherburneswcd.org/)

#### **c.) Little Rock Lake and Little Rock Creek TMDLs**

Little Rock Lake TMDL document has been submitted to the MPCA who reviewed and returned comments back in January. The document was then edited accordingly and sent to the EPA in February. The contract with MPCA is complete end of June 2011. The implementation plan for Little Rock Lake will be combined with Little Rock Creek. Katie is working on gathering partners to assist with the Little Rock Implementation Plan, in addition to the Little Rock Watershed Stakeholder Committee.

Little Rock Creek TMDL Barr Engineering is developing the modeling strategy and locating more data. The first Technical Committee meeting for Phase III will be in March 2011. The MPCA contract end date is February 28, 2012.

Craig Gondeck went on the record that he was very impressed with the Little Rock Lake TMDL meeting, he felt it was well organized and had a good turn out. He also wanted to stress the LRLA involvement in meeting the lakes water quality goals is very good.

#### **d.) USDA Programs**

Gerry Maciej handed out an USDA report for the Water Resource Advisory Committee and went over the content briefly.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – This is NRCS’ primary cost share program to install conservation practices. The first scoring and ranking period will end on March 4<sup>th</sup>. To date applicants have signed up for the following practices:

- \*No-till, Irrigation Water Mgmt, Pivot Conversion, Cover Crops, Seasonal High Tunnel
- \*Invasive Specie Control
- \*Shelterbelt, Invasive Specie Control
- \*Animal Mortality Facility (Composting)
- \*Shelterbelt, Tree Planting
- \*Residue Management

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – This is the program where farmers earn payments for the conservation currently being done and new conservation “enhancements” on their farms. Currently there are 13 applications (5 “roll-overs” from last sign-up and 7 from this signup). NRCS is in the process of scoring these applications now.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – USDA’s 25+ year old program where landowners can enroll their properties into a 10 year contract and establish permanent cover (grasses and/or trees) on cropland. It was announced recently that another CRP General sign-up will be held March 14<sup>th</sup> - April 15<sup>th</sup>. There is also a request to get additional CRP-SAFE (acres to be high quality wildlife cover) acres into MN. (*Warren Peschl voiced the question if the CRP payment is competitive with the surrounding land rent payments and is anyone looking into raising the CRP payment.* After speaking to Pat Gehling about this question, yes the CRP payments have recently been reviewed, in fact it was very recently announced that the CRP payments will increase slightly, approximately by \$2.00 per acre)

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) – A cost share program for establishing or enhancing wildlife habitat on private land. We have one landowner that signed up to control buckthorn on his property. WHIP is a continuous sign-up but typically there is only one scoring period during a year, however that is dependent on funds available and applications.

#### **e.) Pharmaceutical Waste Program**

Katie Winkelman and Chelle Benson provided an update on the Pharmaceutical Waste Program that Benton, Sherburne and Stearns Counties are working to implement. Sherburne County is very close to up and running, if not already, Stearns will be up and running in approximately six months. Benton County is holding off at this time due to some concerns at the Sheriff’s office. However, Benton County is working on having a one-time Pharmaceutical Waste pick up event and will continue to work towards a permanent drop off program.

There was some discussion about recommended ways to dispose of pharmaceutical Waste - I have enclosed a flyer on the most recent recommended method from the MPCA.

#### **f.) WRAC Members Report**

Ken Nodo reported that he spoke with Eric Altena with the MN DNR who reported that the DNR is working on a project by the Sartell Wildlife Management Area Dam to build a bench, consisting of natural material to assist with the prevention of wash outs and stabilizing the bank. Gerry Maciej stated the project applications go through the Benton SWCD, he will work at forwarding information to interested parties.

### **5. Low Impact Development:**

Katie Winkelman presented a PowerPoint presentation on Low Impact Development Best Management Practices highlights.

Development is the conversion of land into residential, commercial or industrial land use. Development impacts are the actions that alter the water infiltration, storage, movement, or quality on the site in question. Low Impact Development (LID) is a site design strategy with a goal of maintaining or replicating the predevelopment hydrologic regime through the use of design techniques to create a functionally equivalent hydrologic landscape - Hydrologic functions of storage, infiltration, and ground water recharge, as well as the volume and frequency of discharges are maintained through the use of integrated and distributed micro-scale stormwater retention and detention areas, reduction of impervious surfaces, and the lengthening of flow paths and runoff time

Conservation Design - similar approaches as LID in reducing the impacts of development, such as reduction of impervious surfaces and conservation of natural features. Goals of Conservation Design protect natural flow paths and existing vegetative features, stormwater is not treated directly at the source, Conservation Design protects large areas adjacent to the development site and stormwater is directed to these common areas. Although this approach protects trees and does reduce runoff, there is still potentially a significant amount of connected impervious area and centralized stormwater facilities that may contribute to stream degradation through stormwater volume, frequency and thermal impacts. Therefore, the hydrologic and hydraulic impacts of this approach on receiving waters may still be significant, although the volume and flows will be less than without the conservation design. The stormwater control measures used in Conservation Design are off-site and therefore not the individual property owner's responsibility. However, maintenance is generally provided by the homeowners association and financed through association fees.

#### LID Techniques

- ❖ Bioretention and Rain Gardens – Benefits include: filter pollutants (excellent heavy metal removal rates), additional ecosystem benefits and reduce runoff volume and timing.
- ❖ Tree Box Filters/Tree Preservation - Tree box filters are mini bioretention areas installed beneath trees that can be very effective at controlling runoff, especially when distributed throughout the site. Runoff is directed to the tree box, where it is cleaned by vegetation and soil before entering a catch basin. The runoff collected in the tree-boxes helps irrigate the trees.
- ❖ Green Roofs – the plants help recreate the hydrologic function of open space by capturing and holding precipitation in the plant foliage, absorbing water in the root zone, slowing the velocity of direct runoff by extending the flow path through the vegetation, and cooling the temperature of the air and runoff. Vegetated rooftop covers can potentially extend the life of a roof by 20 years or more.
- ❖ Permeable Pavers – Interlocking concrete paver have demonstrated a 90% reduction in runoff volume and also have demonstrated the potential to remove metals such as copper, iron, lead, manganese and zinc.
- ❖ Rain Barrels and Cisterns – rainwater collection system that stores rooftop runoff to be used later for activities like lawn and garden watering, even car washing and window cleaning.
- ❖ Soil Amendments - Soil additives, or amendments, can be used to minimize development impacts on native soils by restoring their infiltration capacity and chemical characteristics. After soils have been amended their improved physical, biological and hydrological characteristics will make them more effective agents of stormwater management. Soil amendments can include not only compost and mulch but also top soil, lime and gypsum. These additional components help offset any nutritional deficiencies and control acidity. A thorough soil analysis of the native soil is required to

determine the optimum quantity for each component in order to obtain the maximum benefit from compost amending.

- ❖ Grass Swales, Buffers, and Strips – Trap and remove sediments and other pollutants and thus improve water quality, reduce peak runoff velocity, promote infiltration providing some ground water recharge, reduce erosion.
- ❖ Rain Gutters Placement – placement of rain gutters can either increase or minimize erosion.
- ❖ Pollution Prevention & Good Housekeeping

The committee reviewed before and after pictures of “problem sites.”

There was also conversation on nerp/sediment ponds. Mike Watercott, Farmer/Contractor who owns land in Benton County, is surprised not to see many sediment ponds in Benton County. The benefit of a nerp/sediment pond is water flowing into the pond slows down and the sediment drops to the bottom and as we know a lot of nutrients bind to sediment thus this can improve the water quality and clarity downstream. This conversation was tabled for it is off the subject of LID, however it is a subject that will be looked into in addressing the impaired waterbodies implementation plan.

#### **6. 2011 Mileage and Per Diems for WRAC Voting Members:**

Per diems will stay the same as 2010 - \$55 per WRAC meeting. 2011 mileage reimbursement will be at Benton County’s rate of \$0.45 per mile.

#### **7. Announcements:**

\*Bacteria Reduction Demonstration Project wanted – Please help spread the word that a project site is needed to demonstrate the effectiveness of bacteria reduction Best Management Practices. We will be gathering a list of interested parties and selecting up to two projects to be included in this rare demonstration site study. If you know if anyone who would be interested and would like additional information please contact: Tiffany Determan @ 763-241-1170 ext. 3 or [tdeterman@sherburneswcd.org](mailto:tdeterman@sherburneswcd.org).

\*Legislative support – Gerry Maciej asked that whenever possible contact your legislative representatives and ask for support in funding Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). Last year BWSR took an un-proportioned hit when compared to other agencies and Gerry stated that it is important to remind our legislators of that and remind them of the importance of BWSR to our environment.

\*Mississippi River Renaissance – The Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District's (SWCD) Mississippi River Renaissance Project is **asking for your support** on:

#### **Bill HF0400**

**House Authors Howes; Ward; Persell; Wagenius**

**Short Description : Environment and natural resources money appropriated.**

**Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) appropriation recommendations  
Senate companion TBD**

**We ask that you contact your Legislators today and ask for their support on Bill HF0400 and keep intact the “Mississippi River Central Minnesota Conservation Planning- \$87,000 the first year and \$88,000 the second year” for a total of a \$175,000.**

\*Watershed Technician – Benton SWCD competitive grant application was selected for funding by BWSR. Benton SWCD is thus in the progress of hiring a Watershed Technician. The duties of this position are assigned at the discretion of the District Manager. The primary purpose of this position is to provide

technical assistance and promote best management practices to land users in the Little Rock Lake and Creek watersheds in Benton and Morrison Counties. Emphasis will initially be placed on irrigation water management, manure management and fertilizer management. As these BMP's are being promoted and installed, additional BMP's are expected to be adopted by participants as well. These additional activities will also be the responsibility of the Watershed Technician. Specific duties of this position are expected to change as the needs of the area change.

\*Benton County Comprehensive Plan – Warren Peschl and Chelle Benson announced that Benton County will be updating the Comprehensive Plan, please stay tuned for more information.

**8. Set Topic for Next Meeting**

It was decided by the committee that Katie Winkelman decides what the next meeting topic will be. If Jason Weinerman is available we will go with the meeting topic originally set for February 22, 2011 meeting.

**9. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Craig Gondeck, Second by Warren Peschl. Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:25 pm.

**10. Next meeting:**

March 22, 2011, 1:30 at the Benton County Commissioner's room.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Katie Winkelman, Water Plan Facilitator

Approved by:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
WRAC Board Chairperson