

Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee Minutes
Tuesday, March 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 March 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 Nodo – Citizen at Large, Warren Peschl – Benton County Commissioner, Jim Moshier – City of Foley

Voting members absent: None

Voting member excused: Brian Kaschmitter – Elk River Watershed Board, John Bemboom – Elected Township Official

Others Present: Katie Winkelman – Benton SWCD, Michael Watercott – Elk River Watershed Resident, Joe Wollak – Benton County Commissioner, Gerry Maciej – Benton SWCD, Chelle Benson – Benton County DOD, Mark McNamara – Benton County DOD, Jason Weinerman – BWSR, Marshall Deters – MN DNR Waters, Steve Marod – MN DNR Fishery, John Henz – City of Sauk Rapids.

(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 Guy Spence, Second by Craig Gondeck to approve the February 22, 2011. Motion Carried.

3. Agenda: Motion by Craig Gondeck to approve agenda, Second by Ken Nodo. Motion Carried.

4. Reports:

a. Elk River Watershed TMDL

Gerry Maciej went over portions of the DRAFT Elk River TMDL Implementation Plan (handouts were provided but the whole document can be accessed on the Benton SWCD website www.soilandwater.org or Sherburne SWCD website www.sherburneswcd.org along with the 2010 ERWA Annual Report).

b. Mississippi St. Cloud Major Watershed Project:

Tiffany is currently shifting thru the data and analyzing the data obtained. Civic Engagement Committee is continuing to meet to develop the 10 year Civic Engagement plan using the Logic Model strategy.

c. Little Rock Lake and Little Rock Creek TMDLs

Little Rock Lake TMDL is moving forward; EPA is reviewing and providing comments. Edits will be made accordingly and then we begin to move to the 30 day public notice period.

Little Rock Creek TMDL – Barr Engineering is working out the detail on the modeling strategy. A technical Advisory Committee meeting will be scheduled in April/May.

d. USDA Programs

General CRP sign-up is open until April 15, 2011.

There was a second scoring period announced for EQIP an additional \$56,000 dollars was allocated to Benton County EQIP program.

e. WRAC Members Report

- i. **Gerry Maciej** – Gerry Maciej handed out the SWCD 2010 Annual Report (can be access on the district's website (www.soilandwater.org)). A few highlights include on page 9 2010 Financial Summary graph on the left does not include USDA programs. The graph on the right shows a historical marker for Benton SWCD the first time we reached 1 million dollars in Direct Financial Assistance (not even including the landowner contributions. One last note is that the map on page 11 shows that over 400 projects have been installed in the last 8 years.
- ii. **Guy Spence** – Guy Spence announced the very exciting and thankful news that Langola Township gave \$1200 to Little Rock Lake Association's Buffer Program and Watab Township gave \$1500 dollars to the same program.

5. Low Impact Development:

Jason Weinerman started the conversation off with how the Low Impact Goals came about. If we remember in 2007 there was significant development with some challenges. In 2008 development came to a screeching halt and the concern decreased or ceased - No longer a need to put out a fire. So the meaning of the goal itself has changed for us.

There was also discussion on broad brush versus site specific approach. Broad brush would be looking into ordinance or something like conservation overlays, both of which can be effect approaches but without the urgency we could have the professional agency/departments begin to develop such items. At this point we would like to shift to a more site specific approach. We would like to know what has worked in the past and what has not in regards to development.

A proposed definition of development was as follows *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.* The WRAC decided that this definition is more for urban development and it was decided that Katie Winkelman, Jason Weinerman and Chelle Benson will meet again to brainstorm a more relevant definition for non-urban development.

The first part of the two part survey was filled out during the meeting the question was as follows: *Using the context of the definition above – What are the problems with existing Urban Development?* The following are the responses that were provided:

Answers

- i. It has altered hydrology, increasing the volume of stream flow immediately after storms, decreasing stream volume between storms, and reducing groundwater recharge. It also increases the likelihood that undesirable element/nutrients are moving into our surface and groundwater. Increased pressure on stream banks, resulting in environmental damage.
- ii. Every area has a different potential problem ? depending how it is used now! How it will be altered. Some may not have a problem at all. Some may! We have to be flexible, to work with all.

- iii. Improving surfaces – draining rainfall into waterway instead of allowing to infiltrate - caring pollution.
- iv.
 - a.) lot size – whether in town or in the country
 - b.) close to city – or out in country costs
 - c.) maybe water-flow – Flooding
- v.
 - a.) Existing lakeshore lots are often small and located in area poorly suited for septic systems
 - b.) Stormwater management was not designed to treat or infiltrate water.
- vi. When land is developed by any individual they need to alter the water if so desired. They need to understand the ordinances for low impact development and proceed accordingly. Currently I don't feel that this is being followed with NO enforcement.
- vii. Government changes rules or what to do with development.
- viii. Too much hard surface, too many watered lawns.
- ix. Groundwater recharge – loss of wetland in recharge area. Also increase in nutrient in surface water. Adds to flooding.
- x. Few existing landowners understand how to develop/ “improve” their property in a way that is sensitive to the resources around them and that does not negatively impact the resource.
- xi. Our society hasn't always gauged the cause and effect of an action taken on development of a parcel of land. We move forward to quickly at times in the name of progress without understanding the later effect “progress” may have. It could be steps backward.
- xii.
 - a. Increased impervious surface – flooding, erosion
 - b. Toxic chemicals
 - c. Nutrient input
 - d. Loss of wild-land, greenways, wildlife corridors
 - e. Wetland drainage/water retention (less)
 - f. Surface water quality declines
 - g. Streams/Rivers/Creeks become “Flashier” - Water rushes faster through system. Changes Stream morphology lower baseflow.
- xiii. Erosion, destruction of native ecosystem – found To many impervious surfaces. Lack of beauty – Fauna and Flora. Blight on the landscape. Waste treatment - too many people in too small a space.
- xiv. Existing practices tend to maximize the development of a site trying to man grade areas to create the maximum # of lots. With water movement and flows and where it goes secondary thought.

- xv. Responsible agriculture crop land us is to help the soil to be more alive for better grass, crops, trees, nuts and berries. Urban tends to kill the life – the soil by covering it with buildings, asphalt, concrete etc. Responsible urban development would include drainage tile to get oxygen and life growing – the drainage ways utilizing sediment basins to be cleaned periodically also a percentage of wetland need to be created within the urban development, to compensate for loss of wetland. There’s more that needs to be studied.

The second part of the survey was handed out as a homework assignment. It was asking everyone to Identify **5** specific past or present **URBAN** development sites of concerns; also listing the according concern. When providing sites of concern, use as much detail as possible, this will help the appropriate agency in working to improve the site or for future prevention.

6. Water Plan Amendment:

Benton SWCD would like to amend the Local Water Plan at this point, it is required to amend the plan by December 31, 2012, but there would be benefit for complete the process now. To initiate this process the Benton County Board of Commissioner would need to sign a resolution to amend that will then be sent to the Board of Water and Soil Resources for approval to amend. That will mark the beginning of the 4-6 month journey of amending Benton County’s Local Water Management Plan..

7. Announcement:

Warren Peschl and Chelle Benson provided an update on the comprehensive plan review. Currently, the Comprehensive Plan is being reviewed by an internal review sub-committee. This sub-committee is looking for areas of concern. The next stage would be to bring the concerns located to the planning commission and Board of Commissioners and then it would be decided if a rewrite is required. There is no set timeline for this process. Gerry Maciej asked at what point would they be pulling in specialist/or interested parties in areas of concerns and Chelle and Warren stated that when they get to that point they certainly will contact those entities.

8. Next Meeting

May 24, 2011, 1:30 pm at the Benton County Commissioner’s room.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Guy Spence, Second by Ken Nodo. Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Katie Winkelman, Water Plan Facilitator

Approved by:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WRAC Board Chairperson