



MILLE LACS COUNTY

EST. 1857

LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

It is the mission of the Mille Lacs County Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee to promote responsible stewardship of water resources through accountable use of land, forest and other natural assets by providing education, incentives, and collaboration with individuals, groups and government entities.

Frequently Used Acronyms:

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| (BMP) Best Management Practices | (RC&D) Resource Conservation & Development |
| (BWSR) Board of Water & Soil Resources | (SCS) State Cost Share |
| (CD/JD) County Ditch/Jurisdictional Ditch | (SRWMB) Snake River Watershed Mgmt Board |
| (CLWMP) County Local Water Mgmt Plan | (SSTS) Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems |
| (CWF) Clean Water Fund grant (BWSR) | (SWAG) Surface Water Assessment Grant |
| (DWSMA) Drinking Water Safety Mgmt Area | (SWCD) Soil & Water Conservation District |
| (MLBO DNRE) Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe - Department of Natural Resources & Environment | (TMDL) Total Maximum Daily Load |
| (MLWMG) Mille Lacs Watershed Mgmt Group | (WCA) Wetland Conservation Act |
| (NPDES) Nat. Pollution Discharge Elimination System | (WRAPS) Watershed Restoration And Protection Project Strategy |
| (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service | (1WIP) One Watershed - One Plan |

Minutes - Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Attendance Members are eligible to vote when attending the third meeting within the past 24 months.

VOTING MEMBERS	NON-VOTING MEMBERS
Mandatory Membership Present	
County Land Services Director - Michele McPherson, Chair SWCD Water Plan Coordinator - Susan Shaw Vice Chair County Commissioner - Dave Oslin SWCD Supervisor – Kathy Stoeckel	County Environmental Resource Tech (LSO) – Dillon Hayes Benton (SWCD) Water Plan Coordinator - Amanda Guertin
Optional Membership Present (Any Mille Lacs County landowner, resident, local government unit rep, or a local interest group rep provided they are a Mille Lacs County landowner or resident) <i>Members are eligible to vote when attending the third meeting within the past 24 months.</i>	
City of Princeton Community Development Director – Jolene Foss	Art Schoening - resident

Call to Order

The meeting of the Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (WMAC) was called to order by Water Plan Coordinator Susan Shaw, at 10:05 AM at the Mille Lacs County Historic Courthouse. Introductions followed.

Election of Officers – Chair/Vice Chair

The current bylaws state membership in the Advisory Committee shall be open to any Mille Lacs County landowner or resident, or any organization interested in working to uphold the mission and accomplish the purposes and goals listed in Article II.

Officers will be elected at an annual meeting. All terms will be one year. A Chairperson, and Vice Chairperson will be elected. Officers shall be elected from the membership but must be a Mille Lacs County landowner or resident, representative from a local government unit, or representative of a local interest group provided they are a Mille Lacs County landowner or resident.

Ms. Shaw called for nominations for the office of Chair. Jolene Foss nominated Michele McPherson as Chair. Shaw asked three times for other nominations with none made. **Ms. Foss made a motion to nominate McPherson for the office of Chair. Motion seconded by Kathy Stoeckel. The motion carried.**

Ms. Shaw turned the meeting over to Chair McPherson.

Chair McPherson called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair. Dave Oslin nominated Susan Shaw as Vice Chair. McPherson asked three times for other nominations with none made. **Dave Oslin made a motion to nominate Shaw for the office of Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Jolene Foss. The motion carried.**

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Dave Oslin, second by Kathy Stoeckel to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Dave Oslin, second by Kathy Stoeckel to approve the October 11, 2016 minutes as written. The motion carried.

Mille Lacs County Water Plan Update

Sub-committee outcomes/notes provided for review

Updated timeline reviewed

Ms. Shaw noted that the SWCDs in the Rum River watershed will meet in February to begin the Other Waters discussion required under the Buffer Law. Review and input from the committee will be sought at the April meeting.

Updated survey comments reviewed

Draft priority concerns scoping document provided for review

A first draft of the scoping document was provided to the committee. This is a preliminary document to the water plan document that will be developed later. Comments are requested.

Water Plan Advisory Committee priority concernsdirection

The committee provided feedback regarding individual priorities.

- Foss noted protection of clean waters.
- Stoeckel noted restoration of currently impaired streams.
- McPherson suggested that staff could look closely at what is developable in the northern tier of Mille Lacs County. By eliminating land currently protected under State Shoreland rules, Wild and Scenic or other protections, staff may be able to predict where development will be concentrated.
- Oslin noted maintaining existing drainage is important for land use.
- Foss asked if the impact of increased hydrology in the future can be depicted in Mille Lacs County

Chair McPherson summarized the committee priorities identified as follows:

1. Protect the clean water we have
2. Restore impaired waters
3. Localized assessment of the impacts of development
4. Adverse impacts of “improper” surface flows

Rum River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) update

Rum River TMDL report: Submitted to EPA for initial review. Current draft is posted on the PCA website. <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/watersheds/rum-river>. There will be one final opportunity to comment/edit when EPA responds (possibly January/February).

Rum River WRAPS report: Semi-final draft report undergoing edits by PCA. To be submitted to EPA and for public comment following edits. (Public comments on draft reports are typically accepted for 30 days.)

Rum River Watershed: Future Land-Use Change Scenarios and Projection of Impacts to Water Quality: Draft report prepared by RESPEC. Not yet posted by PCA. "Take Home Points" provided for review

One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) – Ms. McPherson and Ms. Shaw participated in a watershed meeting to discuss local interest and capacity to do watershed wide planning. The consensus decision was the Rum River Watershed would not apply to begin the process until 2018 at the earliest. The next step is to meet with County Administrators watershed wide.

County, District, State, Federal and Civic Partner updates

County project/activities updatesprovided as written reports
Buffer Law update – McPherson reported that staff are meeting with Commissioners to provide answers regarding how local enforcement would be accomplished. The final decision will be made in March.

Soil & Water Conservation District project/activities updatesprovided as written reports
Notice has been received regarding the Benton County Water Plan update and the City of Isle Wellhead Protection planning.

The DNR provided information to the committee regarding cost share assistance to landowners interested in small acreage forest improvements.

2017 Regular Meeting Schedule: second Tuesdays, Quarterly at 10AM

- Tuesday, April 11
- Tuesday, July 11
- Tuesday October 10

Next Regular Meeting

The next Water Management Plan Advisory Committee Meeting will be Tuesday, April 11, 2017 at 10AM at the Historic Courthouse.

Topics for discussion will include:

- Buffer Law Other Waters discussion
- Draft Priority Concerns Scoping Document #2 for review

Meeting Evaluation –

Participants at the meeting noted the discussion was good and will be helpful for the decisions that need to be made.

Adjourn

Motion by Dave Oslin and second by Kathy Stoeckel to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 11:35AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shaw, Water Plan Coordinator, Mille Lacs SWCD

Exhibit A

Partner Update – Written Report

January 10, 2017 Meeting

County Activities, Water Advisory Committee

County Ditch Systems

Ditch levies payable in 2017 were recently adopted by the Mille Lacs County Board. Notices for the pre-payment of ditch liens were distributed to landowners on CD14A and CD2A, while the remaining assessments will be included on property tax statements in 2017.

Following the direction given by the Drainage Authority, a meeting was held with the benefitted landowners on County Ditch 14. The purpose of this meeting was to determine the need for future repair and maintenance on the system. After much discussion, the landowner consensus was that there may be an issue with the section of tile under Highway 169. After the meeting, county staff reached out to MNDOT to investigate the televising of this section of tile by MNDOT staff.

Inspections have resumed on the county ditch system. Inspections on County Ditch 4 and County Ditch 7 were completed in December. Inspection reports will be prepared for both systems to present the findings to the Drainage Authority. County Ditch systems slated for inspection in 2017 include County Ditch 5, located in Bogus Brook Township, and County Ditch 6, located in Milaca Township.

Soil & Water Conservation District project/activities updates

Work Plan Goal: Keep clean streams clean. (Bradbury, Tibbets) Clean up the polluted streams. (Estes Brook/West Branch, Bogus Brook, Vondell Brook, Washburn, CD/JD Ditches)

MN Buffer Law

Ag Outreach technician, Casey Field, has been working on creating post cards to notify landowners about the buffer law. The post card will notify landowners that they might be effected by the buffer law and that they should contact Mr. Field for more information. Post cards will be mailed early December. Mr. Field has also started scoping waters for consideration as “other waters” under the buffer law.

Clean Water Fund FY13 - Agricultural Outreach Technician

Encourage Ag BMPs

Mr. Field and Ms. Shaw met with Natural Resources Conservation Service staff to identify priorities, goals and coordinate outreach.

Interseeder

The Tye Interseeder has been put in storage for the winter.

Interseeder #2

Mr. Field had received interest from a few landowners in renting out the Truax Interseeder to frost seed native grasses for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Due to warm wet weather only one landowner was able to frost seed. Mr. Field expects the other two landowners will call to rent the seeder in the spring. The Truax has been put in storage for the winter.

Feedlot Manure Management

Mr. Field has been working with a Mille Lacs County producer to get him set up on the Nutrition Balance Analyzer online tool and start manure sampling. The manure sampling along with the online tool will help monitor the quality of grazeable forage throughout the year. It will also help the producer better understand the animal nutritional needs as they change throughout the year. The compounded information received from each manure sampling will allow the landowner to select the most cost efficient feed alternative, amount to be fed, and cost per day to meet the producers performance goals. Mr. Field will continue working with the producer to help keep him on track with the manure sampling.

WRAPS

Ms. Shaw began review of two large documents, the draft Rum River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy Report and the Future Land-Use Change Scenarios and Projection of Impacts to Water Quality. PCA staff request comments by December 15 in order to complete the final draft which will be publicly posted on the PCA website for EPA and public comment.

General BMP implementation/citizen assistance

Technical Service Area 3 (TSA) engineering staff visited four project sites with Lynn Gallice to offer a more accurate assessment of solutions to resource concerns. The TSA had sent written responses to requests for assistance but staff felt that the responses from TSA necessitated on-site investigation to be sure that all appropriate options were investigated.

Project 1: A small shoreline restoration on the Groundhouse River would benefit from a re-meandering of the stretch of river immediately downstream from the project area. This would be a high –cost project and funding sources would have to be investigated. The shoreline stabilization portion of the project could be done without putting the meander back in the river and could be done a number of ways. TSA is working on suggestions for the landowners that will range from a simple do it yourself restoration with no cost share, to a long lasting toe wood bench and planting that would last at least 10 years.

Project 2: Staff had requested that TSA design a driveway culvert replacement that is not stable and washes sediment and gravel into a ditch and stream that flow to Tibbets Brook. TSA visited the site to determine the best design for the circumstances. The landowners plan to install this design using an Ag BMP loan.

Project 3: TSA also visited the site of a past project on the Rum River that is experiencing erosion on an area adjacent to the original project. The land owner is looking for instruction on planting this area himself. Staff felt that TSA should look at the site to determine if this potential project would be a simple planting or if a larger, engineered project is necessary to stabilize this portion of the bank. TSA felt that the project may need additional toe protection to stabilize the area of concern.

Project 4: TSA 3 and Lynn Gallice surveyed the project area for a potential shoreline restoration project on the Rum River. The project is still in development but the weather provided an opportunity to get a survey done in anticipation of a winter project design. The landowner wants to act as his own contractor and staff are preparing a detailed materials budget and planting plan to make it clear to the landowner what their commitment will be.

Lynn Gallice received a request from the City of Princeton to participate in an assessment of four large shoreline restoration projects that the city has installed over the past few years to earn phosphorus credits for their wastewater treatment plant. The projects had experienced high water from the flash flooding this summer. PCA inspected the projects and felt that repairs are needed on all four projects. Gallice participated in the assessment and offered input on ways to repair the projects.

Mr. Field has been in contact with a landowner seeking to do a small project. The landowner had indicated that he would like to make walking path around his 20 acre field. He wants the walking path to be a grass strip with a mowed trail to walk on. The landowner has indicated that he is interested in a tree planting and he would like it to be pheasant/habitat friendly. Mr. Field has spoken with Nathan Sanoski about a possibly CRP contract. Mr. Field and Mr. Sanoski have a site visit scheduled with the landowner in Early December.

On his own time, Mr. Weimann completed a proposal for a Community Partners Legacy grant application for the Mille Lacs County Fairgrounds. This grant program would fund 90% of the cost of habitat improvement.

Although water quality may benefit from this effort, no direct connection to the current District work plan or goals has been identified so staff time has not been devoted to the issue. Ms. Shaw presented the plan to the Fairgrounds Board; they decided to move forward with the wetland restoration and pollinator plantings with additional prairie and woodland areas possible in the future. Unfortunately, the DNR did not ultimately open the program for winter applications, so finalizing the plan and submitting a grant application have been delayed until next fall.

Snake River Watershed

Administrator Shaw attended the Snake River Watershed November monthly meeting with Casey Field. Ms. Shaw will be transitioning her role attending meetings to Casey as the Ag Outreach Coordinator beginning 2017. Mr. Field's Animal Trail Walkway Project in the Knife River sub-watershed is still on hold. The landowner is still waiting for the water level in the stream to come down and for the ground to freeze before construction on the project can begin. Mr. Field is scheduled to assist TSA engineers to survey the project area in early December.

Work Plan Goal: Persuade/Effect changes in behavior that will produce actions to protect or improve water quality for the common good.

Water Management Planning/Civic Engagement/Civic Organizing

Ms. Shaw has been coordinating with Water Plan Advisory Committee Chair Michele McPherson to host a public listening session December 8 at the Historic Courthouse. The purpose of the meeting is to gather public input regarding water resource concerns and priority activities for the County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan update. The meeting was noticed with paid advertisements in the local free papers (Shopper and Advertiser). A direct invite was sent by email to participants who attended the impaired streams community meetings this summer. Notice was posted on the website and Facebook as well.

Ms. Shaw and Ms. McPherson also participated in a One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) meeting with BWSR staff and SWCD Managers and County Water Planners from Anoka and Isanti Counties. The purpose of the meeting was to answer questions about 1W1P and explore interest and capacity for a future 1W1P application to the State to begin the process.

Public Outreach/Media

Lynn Gallice wrote a feature article on the Mille Lacs Outstanding Conservationist, Page Township. The article was published in the Town & Country Shopper and on the SWCD website. The Mille Lacs Messenger commented favorably on the article and indicated that they would publish it.

Work Plan Goal: Provide Information and Outreach about the Importance and Value of Wetlands. Perform SWCD WCA duties.

Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)

Enforcement/Restoration Orders

Ms. Shaw worked closely with County staff to answer landowner questions regarding restoration order requirements. An onsite meeting was provided for the landowner and his contractor.

Work Plan Goal: Keep clean groundwater clean. Identify polluted groundwater.

Unused well sealing

Staff assisted a landowner to obtain two bids to seal a large hand dug well located less than 200 feet from the Pease municipal well. The landowners are requesting cost share to seal the well.

County Ag Inspector - Non-chemical Weed Management

Administrator Shaw met briefly with Public Works Engineer Bruce Cochran to scope 2017 plans for right of way noxious weed management.

Work Plan Goal: Keep Mille Lacs Lake Clean.

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (MLLWMG)

Lynn Gallice has been working with MLLWMG coordinator Janet Smude and Red House Media to design post cards, rack cards and lawn signs for the Compass program. Three different post cards will be mailed to Mille Lacs watershed landowners at two week intervals in spring of 2017. The designs were presented to the Watershed Group who requested minor changes. The group is discussing possible topics for two workshops to be hosted in 2017.

CWF2017 Watershed Coordinator Grant

BWSR Staff has recommended to the board to fully fund our Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Coordinator position in the amount of \$268,747. We ranked #8 statewide (out of 37). The BWSR Board will meet on December 14th to vote on approving that amount.

Work Plan Goal: Keep new invasive terrestrial weeds out of Co. Control established invasive terrestrial weeds. Fulfill County Ag Inspector duties. Achieve sustainable management requiring less SWCD leadership by organizing ROW

Co Ag Inspector (CAI) Duties

Annual weed report forms have been sent out to land managers in townships, cities and public lands. These reports are used to collect data that is in turn reported in the County Ag Inspector Annual Report on the MN Dept. of Ag. web site. This on-line reporting replaces the optional paper form that counties have used in the past. The purpose of this up-dated web reporting survey is to collect basic data from County Agricultural Inspectors regarding their annual involvement with the Noxious Weed Law and other activities to manage noxious weeds and other invasive plants in their jurisdictions. Collected data will be analyzed among participants and used to determine the priorities and needs of counties and their municipal partners, as well as what resources are needed to successfully prevent, control and eradicate problem plants throughout the state. Mille Lacs SWCD staff will also be using the completed reports as a basis to gather additional local information through telephone interviews with township, city and public land managers. These conversations will provide information about what particular problems or barriers local land managers may have when controlling noxious weeds.

Ms. Shaw and Ms. Gallice met with the new MN Department of Agriculture Regional Seed Regulatory Unit representative to plan 2017 needs and activities. Ms. Shaw will propose sampling of agricultural seed at local dealers be done by the Ag Outreach Technician beginning 2017. This will provide another opportunity for Mr. Field to interact with the ag community.

Goal: Misc. Conservation

SWCD Administration/Oversight

Administrator Shaw met with Isanti SWCD Manager Tiffany Determan to explore a shared Conservation Corps Apprentice that would assist with stream water sampling and possible private well locating in preparation for a future County Geologic Atlas.

With better data since the Board approved the preliminary budget in July, Mr. Weimann worked up a variety of new budget scenarios for review. This process included verifying known upcoming expenditures, calculating actual staff time this year, projecting 2017 staff time (preliminary work plan), and other details to develop an accurate budget.

Mr. Weimann attended an excellent seminar on employment tax obligations (federal, state, unemployment, etc.). The content confirmed that some of the changes made thus far have been appropriate (ie. withholding Social Security from Supervisor per diem). It also gave good information on best practices moving forward.

AgBMP Loan program

An AgBMP loan project to update a noncompliant septic system in Mudget Township is complete.

RIM Easement management

Staff assisted a realtor requesting information about a RIM easement in Milo Township.

MACDE

The MACDE is conducting a wage and benefit survey among all MN SWCDs that wish to participate. This survey is done every few years and coordinated by Pam Tomevi, District Administrator from the Koochiching SWCD in order to provide SWCDs accurate information that can be used in negotiations with Counties when requesting funding support.

Conservation Tree Program

The tree list of tree species that will be offered for sale has been finalized and the trees have been ordered. This year we are purchasing trees from Woclyn's Tree Farm in Cambridge and from Schumacher's Nursery in Heron Lake, Minnesota. Staff are currently working on the design of the 2017 tree order forms and new information for the website. Land owners should be able to order trees starting January 1, 2017.