

MILLE LACS COUNTY

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 |
| (MLWVG) 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 | (1W1P) One Watershed - One Plan |

Minutes - Tuesday, October 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 Commissioner – Genny Reynolds SWCD Water Plan Coordinator - Susan Shaw Vice Chair SWCD Supervisor – Kathy Stoeckel	NRCS District Conservationist–Sean Johnson DNR – Tony Miller Area SWCD Forester – Mitch Lundeen
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 County Environmental Manager – Dillon Hayes	SWCD Watershed Coordinator – Harmony Maslowski SWCD Adm. Asst. – Maggie Kuchenbaker

Call to Order

The meeting of the Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (WMAC) was called to order by Vice Chair Shaw at 10:06 AM at the Mille Lacs County Historic Courthouse.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Jolene Foss, second by Dillon Hayes to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Jolene Foss, second by Dillon Hayes to approve the July 11, 2017 minutes as written. The motion carried.

Kathy Stoeckel arrived at 10:15 a.m.

Mille Lacs County Water Plan Activities

Priority Concerns Scoping Document (PCSD)

Susan Shaw reported that at the July meeting it was approved, but it has not been sent out as of today. The PCSD may be provided to the County Board prior to submitting to BWSR.

The Committee was asked to identify actions that should be taken to address the five PCSD priority concerns.

Priority Concerns:

- 1) *Cumulative negative impacts of improper land management and continued development with the Rum River watershed.*

Actions discussed by those present:

- forestland protection on upper region of Mille Lacs County;
- evaluate the most fragile resource areas and evaluate for zoning compatibility in land use;
- business and landowners do not know how to research the area or ask the correct questions before planning development;
- increase resource awareness for realtors;
- land management is contracted out, some contractors use good BMPs, create a recognition program for general contractors that use good BMP for resource protection.

- 2) *Impaired or degraded waters in the Upper Rum River and West Branch of the Rum River intermediate watersheds.*

Actions discussed by those present:

- reach out to neighboring counties within the watershed to coordinate actions;
- partner with neighboring counties to address the cause of impairments that straddle jurisdictions;
- targeted effort to support and encourage a conservation ditch redesign process;
- work with individual landowners and bring groups of landowners together to discuss conservation design within ditch systems;
- improve and restore stream habitat to altered systems.

- 3) *Adverse impacts to water quality, infiltration, and flow, caused by land use conversion or development.*

Actions discussed by those present:

- Identify the most fragile resources for protection, then prioritize development in the areas most suitable to development;
- Encourage private forestland management and protection – use easements as a tool (RIM), SFIA & class 2c tax plans;
- Encourage onsite storm water management planning for residential, ag and business vs verses drainage to move the water offsite and downstream;
- Create local incentives to encourage onsite stormwater management.

- 4) *Adverse impacts of detrimental surface and sub-surface water management practices on existing and future development.*

Actions discussed by those present:

- assess and address drainage needs and peak water retention needs for land areas or streams (not just moving it through the town, because then it is someone else's problem);
- engage road authorities around water flow management;
- community scale storm water planning.

- 5) *Lack of information and understanding regarding the quality and quantity of groundwater, and the resultant impacts on land management decisions.*

Actions discussed by those present:

- educate and inform public (handouts when people are applying for permits);
- County Geological Atlas to understand groundwater supply availability and limits to meet economic development and resource needs;
- ground water quality sampling to provide citizen information on the availability of clean drinking water in the county;
- identify/evaluate future land use water needs for business and agricultural land.

Water Plan Update

Isanti SWCD board passed a resolution to support. Mille Lacs SWCD board meets on October 11, 2017 and will have the 1WIP presented to them. Aitkin as not yet given their feedback. Anoka SWCD is interested in partnering.

Next Steps: January/February BWSR opens next round of funding for writing the plan and to hire a consultant. If the partner counties decide to apply for a grant the bulk of the work would happen in 2019.

County, District, State, Federal and Civic Partner updates

Buffer Update:

Dillon Hayes reported November 1st is the deadline for landowners not in compliance with the buffer law to apply for an extension/waiver. Susan Shaw reported that Casey Field has reached out to over 200 landowners and all but approximately 22 are in compliance and/or have filled out the compliance waiver to allow and extension to implement the buffer by July 2018.

Soil & Water Conservation District projects/activities are updated and attached as *Exhibit A*.

Kathy Stoeckel asked about the results of E.coli sampling being done on the West Branch, Estes and Bogus Brook. Susan Shaw reported that additional sampling will be occurring in October and when completed there will be a summary submitted. She will be encouraging continued sampling to best understand where and under what conditions E.coli is entering stream systems throughout the year and season.

Kathy Stoeckel asked about the Ditch 14 Grant. Susan Shaw reported that further communication with residents is needed to assess peak water flow management. No additional progress, no solution on what to do and no community wide discussion has occurred.

Forestry and private forest management – easement options and opportunities.

Susan Shaw reported that she, Dillon Hayes, and Harmony Maslowski attended a meeting with BWSR. The Rum River Watershed is the 2nd highest priority source of drinking water in the State, due to it being one of the main water sources for the metro area and the high potential for development to impact water quality. One of the tools to protect the watershed is protecting and sustaining the forests in the northern section of Mille Lacs County. The State Reinvest in MN (RIM) private working forest land management easements when created keep the land on the local county tax role vs. the ownership being transferred to the State leading to PILT payments. This may be an opportunity of interest to both landowners and the County. Funding opportunities may very soon be available if the County and SWCD are interested in pursuing this private landowner easement option.

Tony Miller added to the discussion that the DNR still has some forestry cost share funding available for landowners.

Susan Shaw shared *Exhibit B* on behalf of Michele McPherson.

Next Regular Meeting

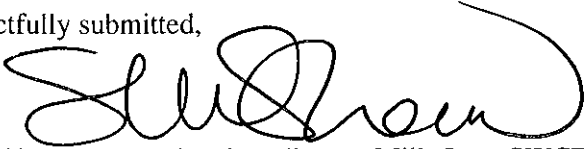
The next Water Management Plan Advisory Committee Meeting will be Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 10AM at the Historic Courthouse.

Meeting Evaluation – *An opportunity to provide feedback on how the meetings are going. Questions can include: “what is working well?” and “what could be done to improve the meetings?”*

Participants commented on how the information discussed at the meeting impacts the role each has and the jurisdiction or agency they represent.

Motion by Kathy Stoeckel and second by Jolene Foss to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 11:46 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Shaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Susan Shaw, Water Plan Coordinator, Mille Lacs SWCD

Exhibit A

Soil & Water Conservation District project/activities updates

General Citizen Assistance

Lynn Gallice assisted Kanabec SWCD with four shoreland project site assessments.

Lynn Gallice has assisted two landowners with AgBMP Loan applications. A landowner is working with BWSR to build a wetland bank and inquired about using AgBMP Loan money to pay for the nearly finished project. Staff checked with MDA and BWSR and discovered that this is an approved use of AGBMP Loan money. The landowner has decided to pursue a private loan through their own bank at a similar interest rate. Another landowner has applied for an Ag BMP Loan to upgrade an existing septic system. This system dates to 1969 and has been compromised by a malfunctioning water softener.

Tree Sale

Ms. Kuchenbaker and Ms. Gallice met to discuss the upcoming tree sale season. Together they are gathering pricing from the nurseries, checking on availability, and working on a marketing strategy.

RIM Easements

Change of ownership and parcel split information for RIM Easement # 48-04-87-01 has been sent to BWSR. A cover letter and Corrective Actions Transmittal were sent by certified letter to the new parcel owners to address violations that have occurred on RIM land on these parcel splits. One land owner has responded to the certified letter.

Susan Shaw, BWSR Easement Specialists, Greenbush Township Zoning and the landowner met on the site of RIM (# 48-04087-01) parcel (PID # 06-007-0301) where land has been cleared for a driveway and house. BWSR is considering this situation to be unprecedented and has asked the landowner to provide a proposal of non-RIM land that might be traded for RIM land to allow a building project to move forward. Any change proposed would need to be acceptable to the SWCD Board and the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

BWSR will provide T posts and signs to post RIM easement boundaries on all RIM easements in Mille Lacs County. Public Works will assist to place signs on parcel # 06-007-0302 as soon as possible because this parcel is currently for sale. Significant staff time will need to be dedicated this fall to posting the dozen RIM easements in Mille Lacs County.

Lynn Gallice is working with BWSR to provide documentation for ownership changes of RIM easements in Borgholm and Princeton Township.

County Management Water Plan

Staff time constraints have delayed Administrator Shaw in submitting the Priority Concerns Scoping Document to BWSR and publicly noticing water management authorities.

Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Enforcement

Staff time constraints have delayed Administrator Shaw in drafting a Restoration Order for a wetland violation in Greenbush Township. Ms. Shaw provided a site visit to assist a landowner implementing a Restoration Order on Mille Lacs Lake.

WCA Outreach

Staff time constraints have delayed Administrator Shaw in identifying a contractor to develop a wetland information marketing plan. This is a Local Capacity grant fund project.

Project Development

Ms. Maslowski has been working on a Compass Promotion Strategy with a timeline and milestone calendar. The goal of this strategy is to build a community contact network and promote/generate interest in Compass. This strategy includes goals for the web/media, interactive contests, Compass meetings, targeted marketing, engaging local resorts/businesses, and the research of costs and funding.

Ms. Maslowski has built a display for COMPASS and the MLLWVG that will be used for outreach at upcoming events.

Ms. Maslowski attended the Area III meeting for introductions and an educational presentation on the social sciences in relation to conservation.

Mille Lacs Compass

The MLLWMG will be hosting a fall tour of shoreland projects in the Mille Lacs watershed On October 6th, 2017. Six project sites will be visited with an opportunity do a hands-on planting activity at one site. The Compass Shoreland Stewardship Program will be discussed during the Tour.

MLLWMG

Ms. Maslowski is working on the Compass content on the SWCD website and the MLLWMG website. This content will be used in creating a Compass Facebook page. It will be used to post and share information about upcoming Compass calendar and promoting Compass. Ms. Maslowski is attending training on September 26 to be more familiar with updating SWCD website and transferable skill to maintaining the other web activities.

Ag. Project Development

Mr. Field is continuing to work on the stream crossing project. The survey of this project was pushed back into October. Mr. Field has also been working with a landowner on a cover crop project. The landowner is looking at doing a late rye seeding and planting into the standing rye in the spring.

MAWQCP

Mr. Field is continuing to work with a landowner on becoming certified. The landowner has a no-till corn/soybean cropping system. Mr. Field is currently working with the landowner on reducing the amount of fertilizer used.

NRCS Assistance

Mr. Field is continuing to meet with NRCS's Mr. Johnson every Monday morning to fill out a weekly USDA crop survey.

Buffer Implementation

Inventory

Mr. Field has created a list of 55 parcels that either don't meet the buffer requirement or that compliance could not be confirmed through aerial imagery. Mr. Field has already spoken with landowners on 33 of those parcels. The final 22 parcels are owned by 13 different landowners.

Outreach

Mr. Field sent out a final notification letter to the remaining 13 landowners that will not be compliant with the law on November 1.

Technical Assistance to Landowners

Landowners owning 22 parcels have asked for compliance waivers. Mr. Field has filled out and sent all 22 waivers out to be signed and returned. As of October 1, 9 of the 22 have been signed and returned.

Map Review

Mr. Field went back through all of the parcels not marked compliant and corrected the buffer map.

County Status Update

Mille Lacs County has 55 parcels along public waters that either do not meet the buffer requirement or compliance could not be confirmed from aerial imagery.

- Compliance waivers for 22 parcels have been requested.
 - 22 waivers have been created and sent out for landowners to sign.
 - 9 waivers have been signed and returned.
- Of the remaining 33 parcels, Mr. Field has already spoken with landowners owning 11 of them.
 - Mr. Field is currently contacting these landowners again to determine if they planted their buffer or if they would like a compliance waiver.
- The final 22 parcels are owned by 13 landowners.
 - Mr. Field sent out a "final buffer law notification" letter to these landowners. The letter directs them to contact Mr. Field if they believe they meet the buffer requirement or if they would like a compliance waiver to extend their compliance date to July 1, 2018.

Noxious Weeds

Lynn Gallice has reviewed 4 utility permits for noxious weeds in ROWs where utility work will take place.

Rum River Monitoring

Ms. Shaw continues to coordinate the water quality sampling being done by the Isanti SWCD with Local Capacity grant funding. The final sampling for ecoli will occur in October and a final report will follow.

Rum River County Ditch 14

Staff time constraints have delayed action on this grant funded project.

Nitrate Clinics

Staff will conducted a nitrate testing clinic at the Mille Lacs Operation Community Connect (OCC) event on October 19th. The OCC event has various organizations, volunteer groups and area professionals on hand to share information about important resources available in the community.

Well Sealing

A well sealing project in Milo Township includes two wells on one property. One well is a hand dug well 3' wide and 65" deep. The landowner states that this well has tested high in nitrates in the past. The second well is a drilled well, also 65" deep. This well had been buried instead of being properly sealed. The landowner has requested cost-share assistance to seal these wells.

Snake River Project Development

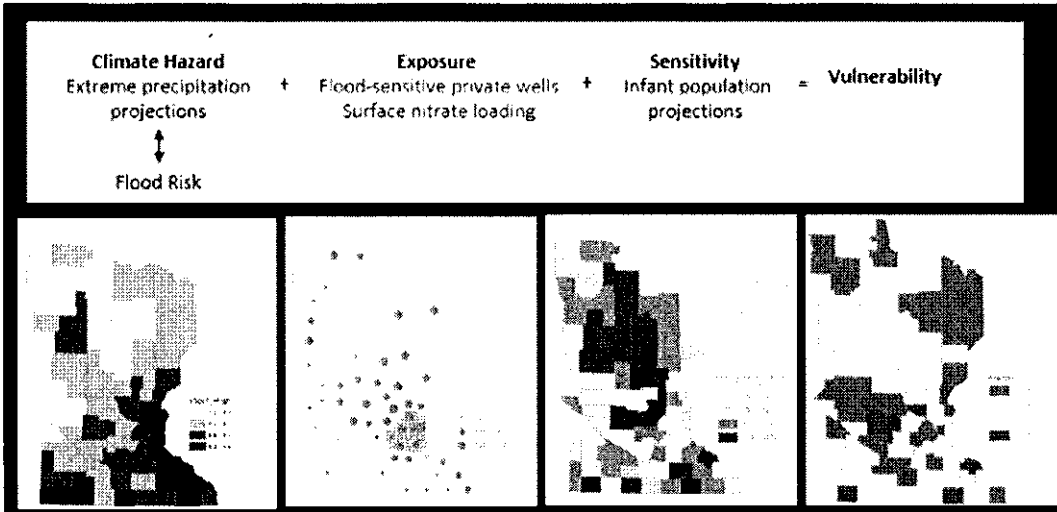
Mr. Field attended the monthly Snake River meeting.

Ms. Field attended a meeting with SWCD District Managers in the SRW to determine how to expend the final Outreach grant funds. A direct mailing will be sent to provide information on cost share funds developed.

Exhibit B

MDH PRIVATE WELL VULNERABILITY TO FLOODING

When private wells are flooded, their water supply can be impacted by contaminants present in the floodwater. MDH has developed a map that shows which counties have a higher vulnerability to flooding impacts to private wells. The figure below shows what factors they integrated to establish the vulnerability determinations.



- [UMN: A Community Capacity Assessment for Stormwater Management in Three Twin Cities Metro Area Watersheds](#); some follow-up work compared these 3 metro areas with the Duluth-North Shore area response to extreme weather and urban runoff, the value differences are interesting:

MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES OF A COMMUNITY OR NEIGHBORHOOD

