



Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Outcomes

Vision Statement: Collaborating to conserve, improve, and achieve measurable progress towards natural resource goals in our shared watershed.

Summary: The Mississippi River St. Cloud 1w1p Citizen Advisory Committee met on May 1st, 2023 for their first meeting to discuss two primary planning components: 1) Issue Statements and 2) Priority Resources. The team heard a presentation from 1w1p project staff (Stephanie Hatzenbihler of Stearns SWCD and Dan Cibulka of Sherburne SWCD) then split into two groups to discuss these two planning components further. The meeting concluded with a large group discussion around common themes.

Issue Statements clearly articulate real and actionable problems, risks and opportunities. In developing Issue Statements, planners set the framework for cascading elements such as a desired future condition, targeting criteria, and implementation strategies. Issue Statements are intended to be broad and represent the backbone of a natural resource area of concern.

Priority Resources are the waterways (lakes and streams) that are deemed to be focused upon within the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan that results from this 1w1p planning process. The project staff and Citizen Advisory Committee created a series of metrics to rank and select priority waters. By evaluating metrics based upon scientific merit and sociological value, a process of systematically selecting priority waters was used as opposed to randomly selecting waters to receive this priority status.



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ISSUE STATEMENT EXERCISE RESULTS

Surface Water - Polluted Runoff

"Surface waters are threatened or impaired by pollutants which cause harmful impacts to the environment, economy, and quality of life."

Group 1 notes:

- Phosphorus most important.
 - Education (P application legal or not legal?)
 - Changing practices, less or lower concentration P fertilizer sold
- St. Cloud biosolids program a great resource.
- NPDES permits, tie-in with sediment (closely related to P).
 - Managing sediment important
 - Promoting native landscapes for WQ benefits
- Environmental, economy, quality of life and health?
 - Also clarity of water. Clarity is an important visual element for lake/river users
 - Do we know of human health impacts in lakes (lake e.coli monitoring, BG algae)

Group 2 notes:

- Consider adding clarity to the term pollutant
- TMDLs and pollutant reduction requirements
- Leverage data that has been collected
- Ag sources of N and P
- MPCA, BWSR - goals but balance with local knowledge, control, goals

Surface Water - Altered Hydrology

"Changes to the timing and volume of water delivered downstream causes undesirable consequences."

Group 1 notes:

- Snake River designated trout stream and public ditch
 - How do we manage competing management?
- Flashy streams have major impact
- County ditch systems present challenge and opportunity for WQ
- "Undesirable consequences" - important elements include flooding, drought, erosion.

Group 2 notes:

- Building on the success of previous projects
- Floods
- Large rain events
- High water table
- Sizing infrastructure
- Clay soils
- Tiles



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Surface Water - Internal Processes

"Surface waters are threatened by sediment nutrient release, recreation and invasive species which are significant source of nutrient impairments."

Group 1 notes:

- Important source of phosphorus
- Technical concept, education is important
- Statement starts out narrow then then larger scale.
 - Inconsistent with previous Issue Statements?
 - What form of recreation?
 - What kind of AIS?
- Internal load a technical term? "Within lake"
- Does average person know about turnover?
- How do humans impact the internal load?

Group 2 notes:

- Lake associations have been tasked with AIS, who else can steward this and fund this?
- "Surface waters are threatened by sediment nutrient release, recreation and invasive species which are significant sources of nutrient impairments."

Groundwater - Quality

"Groundwater quality is impacted by naturally occurring processes and land use practices that threaten drinking water quality and surface water connections."

Group 1 notes:

- Very clear as-is
- Drinking water ins important
- Education and communication are critical elements

Group 2 notes:

- Good as-is
- Plastics

Groundwater - Quantity

"Groundwater quantity resiliency is threatened when there is not a balance between recharge and withdrawals."

Group 1 notes:

- Recharge vs withdrawal is a big unknown
- Is this statement actionable?
- Piezometer data? ObWells data?
- Need for more study

Group 2 notes:

- Stormwater infiltration requirements & practices

Habitat & Natural Resources - Restoration, Protection & Preservation

"Aquatic and terrestrial habitat is impacted and threatened due to fragmentation, degradation, and loss which places native species and ecosystems at risk."

Group 1 notes:



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- Education on natural resources, native landscape, Lawns 2 Legumes, very important
- Development is a key driver and term that people associate with, consider adding development to the statement

Group 2 notes:

- Define terms:
 - Aquatic, terrestrial, fragmentation, degradation, and ecosystem.

Landscape Resiliency - Soil Health

"Landscapes are threatened by wind erosion, increased precipitation, and changing climate trends which has harmful impacts on soil health, land productivity, and plant communities."

Group 1 notes:

- Important element for area
- Education and communication important
- How does the average person associate with soil health?
 - Does the shopper at a Farmers Market know about soil health and their food?
 - How can communities support soil health initiatives?

Group 2 notes:

- Consider removing "increased participation" because it's part of changing climate trends
- "Landscapes are threatened by wind erosion and changing climate trends which has harmful impacts on soil health, land productivity, and plant communities."



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PRIORITY RESOURCES EXERCISE RESULTS

Describe the water quality of surface waters within the MRSC Watershed.

- Sherburne County rivers see adequate flow levels through the calendar year, with concerns about nitrate levels. Low phosphorus concerns
- Water quality needs dramatic improvement
- Needs improvement
- They are in need of some help
- Polluted
- WQ surface water over all good. Clean, clear, crisp, living
- WQ is okay, not great in the MRSC watershed. Some area lakes are very clean, and others have algae and sediment issues
- Waters are shallow and tend to be highly susceptible to algae blooms
- In general, good to excellent given proximity to metro and valuable agriculture

What does good water quality mean to you?

- That one can enjoy doing things on the water
- Open, clean, clear, sparkly - living
- Abundant and healthy flora and fauna and dazzling recreation lakes
- Clear and clean
- Good WQ means the ability to recreate and use our surface water and trust GW is safe
- Water that is balanced and able to support a vast number of plants and animals
- Lake health score and phosphorus loading
- Water clarity
- Good water quality supports the native flora and fauna in a way that they flourish

What are your top 3 surface water concerns within the MRSC watershed?

- Swimmable
- Fishable
- Drinkable
- Turbidity
- AIS
- Sediment deposition
- Phosphorus - algae and invasive plants that uptake phosphorus
- Sediment - sediment runoff from urban sources and ag practices
- Invasive plants - limiting resources for treatment / removal
- E.coli - health
- High phosphorous load, poor water quality and health
- Flooding - economic concerns
- Invasives
- Recreation overuse - disregard fishing, boating development
- Managing runoff



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- Natural shoreline restoration
- Recreation
- How land near water is developed (e.g. 2nd tier lake developments)
- Clear ownership responsibilities for nutrients
- AIS issues on lakes
- Pollutant runoff into rivers, streams
- Fertilizers
- Carp
- Invasives - too much algae
- Flood control, too much water to control
- Sediment runoff
- Nitrogen loads
- Stream / lake bank erosion

What does a WQ success story look like to you?

- Clean and clear water
- Plum Creek
- WQ success - Clear and concise guide to user's improved over current status
- Having a noticeable impact on an area of the watershed
- Safe water to recreate and clean drinking water
- Delisting impaired lakes
- Test result that are improved and quantifiable
- Protect high quality lakes
- A measured difference (improvement) that can also be told as a narrative
- Reduced nutrient loads to under accepted levels, or at least trending in the right direction

Should we focus on high quality waters, degraded waters, those close to meeting water quality standards, or split resources amongst all categories?

- Split resources
- Degraded and close to meeting standards
- Focus and degraded and those close to meeting standards
- Focus - priority high quality 1st, degraded next, then others
- HQ water - 30%, Degraded water - 30%, Close to standards - 40%
- Degraded waters
- Higher resources towards degraded waters leaving smaller percentage towards close to meeting standards and meeting standards but still supporting
- High quality waters - protection



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Recreation Criteria

How do you utilize surface water resources within the MRSC watershed?

- Swim and fish in lakes
- Pontooning, fishing
- I like to watch the Mississippi River rapids near Sauk Rapids
- Fishing, walking along the river
- Fishing, canoeing
- Boating, fishing, swimming
- Fishing from shore
- Recreational boating, fishing summer and winter
- Gazing, looking at lake, kayaking, boating, fishing
- Wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, boating

Does ease of public access to a waterbody add value to that waterbody? If so, why?

- No
- Yes, canoe launches
- Yes! Why: public access implies why public funds should support the body of water
- Accesses do not add value - what does not add value is when users visit many lakes in short periods of time, spreads AIS
- Yes - enjoyment for everyone
- Yes, it allows access to the public
- No, it allows more opportunities for degradation
- Yes, adds value to the public user
- Availability to enjoy what taxes are paying for

How often do you utilize surface water resources within the MRSC watershed?

- Weekly
- 1-2 times per month
- 4-6 times per year
- Dozens of times through the summer
- Monthly during open water
- Almost everyday, I live on a lake
- Approximately 2-3 times per week.
- Resorts on lakes

Where does recreation take place, and what type?

- Recreation in streams is very small in comparison to lakes. Boating, fishing, swimming in lakes
- Lakes: boating, canoing, swimming. Rivers: fishing
- Mississippi
- Briggs Chain
- Eagle, Briggs Chain, Mississippi
- Mississippi River: boating, fishing. Chain Lakes: Boating, fishing. Bertram Regional Park: Wildlife viewing and other recreation.



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- I believe all types of waters are created on from duck ponds to big lake water skiing. We usually hang on bigger lakes.
- Fishing, swimming, boating on Pulaski and Buffalo Lake
- Lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, ponds. Boating, wade fishing, floating.

Lived Experience Criteria

Is there value in targeting areas where projects have occurred? Why or why not?

- Yes to see how well they have worked and what improvements are needed
- Value previous projects, yes, outdated bring them up to date
- Yes, if there area needs more work
- Yes to sustain improvement
- Yes, if proven effective however if there are greater needs for water quality and more cost effective areas to put resources towards those should take priority
- Yes because locals have show interest and support, this could serve as good examples rather than only focusing on the poor adoption areas and possibly just spinning your wheels
- 50 mile creek carp control and others
- Yes there is value in targeting past project IF there is demonstrated room for improvement
- If working on past projects will leverage the whole watershed plan yen yes
- If there is room for improvement elsewhere then perhaps it is not desirable to spend these resources in the same location
- Yes, improved fishery and natural setting

In your opinion is there a lack of support (local and/or political) in improving water quality? Explain.

- Yes, more funding needed by state legislature
- Yes, seems like hard to get public funding for lake improvements
- I do, but I think this is changing with more education
- Local resources in Sherburne county such as SWCD are very helpful in supporting projects and actions
- From ag perspective - other farms seems low to adopt new practices. There is more and more interest but adoption or trying is much slower than I'd like to see.
- No, there are a number of budget items set aside by the state and other LGUs
- Lack of support in the public and political arena because of costs and how long if anything is apparent.
- Lack of support could come from local lake people if it costs them money
- I feel that it may be seen like "lack of support" but usually after sharing values it is more often education issue.