

Meeting Minutes

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting



ISG

Project Name: Mississippi River St. Cloud One Watershed One Plan

ISG Project Number: 28039

Date: Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Time: 1pm - 4pm

Location: Sherburne History Center, Remote Option Available Upon Request

Invitees: Gerry Maciej (Benton County), Emily Forbord (Benton SWCD), Greg Schultz (Meeker County), Joe Norman (Meeker SWCD), Susan Shaw (Mille Lacs SWCD), Dan Cibulka (Sherburne SWCD), Francine Larson (Sherburne SWCD), Lynn Waytashek (Sherburne County), Zach Guttormson (Sherburne County), Dennis Fuchs (Stearns SWCD), Kyle Weimann (Stearns SWCD), Stephanie Hatzenbihler (Stearns SWCD), Cole Loewen (Stearns County), Becky Schlorf (Stearns County), Kyle Blazek (Stearns County), Barry Rhineberger (Wright County), Luke Johnson (Wright SWCD), Alicia O'Hare (Wright SWCD), Darren Mayers (BWSR), Brad Wozney (BWSR), Casey Field (MDA), Chad Anderson (MDH), Reid Northwick (DNR), Phil Votruba (MPCA), Chris Hogge (USDA-NRCS), Steve Karel (USFWS), Cody Carlstrom (USFWS), Kayli Overland (TNC)

Partners and Staff Present:

Benton SWCD (Fiscal agent) - *Gerry Maciej (also representing **Benton County**), Emily Forbord, Sherburne SWCD* (Plan Coordinator) - *Dan Cibulka, Francine Larson**, **Stearns SWCD** - *Dennis Fuchs, Stephanie Hatzenbihler* (note taker), **Sherburne County** - *Zach Guttormson*, **Stearns County** - *Kyle Blazek, Becky Schlorf**, **Wright SWCD** - *Alicia O'Hare*, **Mille Lacs SWCD** - *Susan Shaw*, Willow Dean**

Other Attendees: *Sarah Boser (ISG), Jacob Rischmiller (ISG), Brad Wozney (BWSR), Darren Mayers (BWSR), Amy Cosair (TNC), Phil Votruba* (MPCA), Casey Field* (MDA), Chad Anderson* (MDH), Reid Northwick* (DNR), Chris Hogge* (NRCS), Kelly Herfendal* (ISG)*

*virtually

Cibulka called the meeting to order at 1:05PM.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Introduction & Project Status (~10 minutes)

- Icebreaker: What is your favorite fair food?
- Timeline Check-in: [MRSC Committee Tracking](#)
 - July TAC Goals
 - Targeting & Management Zones
 - Strategies
 - Implementation Table Format

Measurable Goals (~65 minutes)

- Review Goals from Sub-Committees
 - Altered Hydrology Goals
 - subcommittee - Dan, Brad, and Reid
 - convert peak flows percent goal to an acre-feet metric
 - may want to explore goals for economy, quality of life
 - Fist to Five - mostly 5s & 4s and a 2 from Gerry
 - Back to subcommittee
 - refine goals
 - consider economy, quality of life

- Internal Load Processes
 - subcommittee - Alicia, Dan
 - explanation of the term budget
 - recommend to add more detail on phosphorus
 - Fist to Five - 5s & 4s and a 3
 - Groundwater Quantity
 - subcommittee - Alicia, Stephanie
 - the goal is inspired from other watersheds that have completed GRAPS. Will update goal after GRAPS is completed and TAC reviews
 - Fist to Five - 5s, 4s, and a 3
 - Habitat & Natural Resources
 - subcommittee - Dan, TNC
 - TNC will be joining at 2pm and can provide more information
 - targeting - prioritize adjacent to existing habitat
 - question about where does riparian habitat corridors action count to, group stated that it may count towards both goals
 - Fist to Five - 5s & 4s
 - Soil Health
 - subcommittee - Emily, Stephanie
 - Challenge is that goals feels like action
 - Add Behavior change component
 - Add goal on soil health practice adoption
 - metric - remote sensing tillage and erosion; may want to check level of detail
 - Alicia and Dennis are interested in joining the subcommittee
 - Gerry reminded group on issue statement still in discussion
 - question on wind breaks
 - Back to subcommittee
 - refining measurable goals
 - refining issue statement
 - Fist to Five on soil health remaining as a separate issue.
 - Gerry, Emily, Becky feel that the actions are covered under issues and prefer to prioritize making the plan more simple when possible
 - Alicia - evidence shows that in order to meet water quality goals we need to prioritize soil health practices
 - Willow - while I really like soil health as a separate measure, there isn't a very good way to measure it remotely, you do need something hands-on to get a good metric of it. And a lot of those tests can be expensive - soil microbial activity is a great one but it can be spendy.
 - Becky - Do we have to address everything in this plan? What about adding it at the 5-year point if we don't feel it's getting covered?
- Fist to Five on 80% draft goals
 - Overview on process for quantifying measurable component of goals
 - calculated based on previous implementation utilizing MPCA's Tableau website
 - after calculated then partners will have an opportunity to review and refine

Implementation Strategies + Targeting (~60 minutes)

- Identify Targeting & Strategy Gaps
 - Brad provided an overview of targeting
 - Issue Categories
 - Habitat and natural resources
 - Targeting gaps
 - Kristen with TNC presented on multiple benefits module that TNC uses

- Kristen offered to clip out the MRSC watershed data and provide all the links to that, depending on how much detail the collaborative wants to get into.
- Add areas adjacent to existing protected areas (may be a layer in TNC analysis)
- Strategy gaps
 - Conservation easements; short and long term easements
 - forest management plans
 - NRCS critical area planting - code 432
- Surface Water - Pollutant Runoff
 - Targeting gaps
 - subwatershed assessment
 - e. coli source assessments may point to target areas
 - Strategy gaps
 - grade stabilizations
 - pasture management
 - cattle exclusion
 - soil health practices?
- Surface Water - Altered Hydrology
 - Targeting gaps
 - storage TNC map
 - DNR valuation of hydrologic change
 - DNR Watershed Health Assessment Framework
 - discussion on restorable wetland inventory data layer
 - Floodplain areas
 - Strategy gaps
 - soil health practices
 - multi-purpose drainage management plans
 - remove outreach and education (will be covered under implementation programs)
 - temporary storage practices
- Surface Water - internal load processes
 - Targeting gaps
 - connectivity to watercourses (lake outflow and downstream benefits)
 - remove trend data (duplicative with nearly/barely)
 - completed feasibility studies
 - Strategy gaps
 - Goal 1 - Aquatic invasive species
 - Goal 2
 - Alum or similar treatment
 - Policies on recreation
- Groundwater - Quantity
 - Targeting gaps
 - GRAPS content
 - Water quantity dependent natural resources: trout streams, calcareous fens
 - WRAPS Stressor ID Reports
 - Strategy gaps
 - see GRAPS
 - Soil Health practices
 - perennial vegetation
 - High Density Development, Urban Design
 - irrigation management
- Groundwater - Quality

- Targeting gaps
 - MDA township testing program - excessive nitrates
 - county geologic atlases
 - GRAPS
 - Hydrologic sensitivity MDH
 - Watershed Health Assessment Framework
 - Irrigated agriculture and urban land
- Strategy gaps
 - perennial crops and vegetation
 - soil health practices
 - irrigation management
- Soil Health
 - Targeting gaps
 - motivated landowners?
 - Implementation strategies
 - pasture management practices
 - field days/workshops
 - conservation crop rotation
 - integrated pest management
 - precision agriculture
 - agri-forest practices

Management Zones & Implementation Table Format

- Discuss Management Zone Use
 - ISG may adjustments as recommended from previous TAC meeting, using the Mississippi River as dividing feature
 - Discussion on boundary change area and which management area it should be a part of
 - Elk River Management Zone
 - Dan expressed concern about using management zones for determine order of work timing
 - Consensus to use management zone for organizing implementation table, but not used for timing of implementation activities
- Discuss Implementation Table Format
 - Gerry liked the Sauk IWIP format, prefers sort first by management area, and also liked an example one in BWSR. Also would like to see order of actions is some actions are dependent on other actions being completed first
 - Emily prefers sorted management area first, not by issue statement
 - Zach would like to think about it more
 - Kyle B prefers the Sauk format, management area first
 - Alicia prefers sorting by management areas
 - Stephanie prefers sorting by management areas, but recommends look at how the Long Prairie implementation table is organized
 - Dan prefer sorted by issue, but also really likes the format of the Long Prairie plan
 - Preference
 - 1st by Management Zone
 - then decide next by Issue or Action (Sauk or Long Prairie)

Next Steps

- Recap any subcommittees that need to be formed and confirm their responsibilities
 - Altered Hydrology Goals subcommittee (Dan, Brad, Reid, Gerry) meet to
 - refine goals
 - consider goals economy, quality of life
 - Soil Health Goals subcommittee (Emily, Stephanie, Alicia, Dennis, Dan) meet to

MEETING AGENDA

- refine measurable goals
 - refine issue statement
- All TAC members
 - Review Sauk and Long Prairie Plan Implementation Tables to decide how to sort after first sorting by management area
- Task timeline
 - Send to ISG by July 26
 - August 2 Steering Committee
- Upcoming Technical Advisory Committee meeting: Tuesday, August 15 1-4pm

Adjourn

Cibulka adjourned the meeting at 4:10 PM.

Measurable Goals - Sub-committee Content

- Surface Water Issue Statement #2: Altered Hydrology - Altered hydrology changes the timing and volume of water delivered downstream impacting the environment, economy, and quality of life.
- Measurable Goals:
 - Peak Flow Goals:
 - No increase in 100-year, 10-day event peak flow (protection goal)
 - Reduce 100-year, 10-day event peak flows by 10% or 20% (restoration goal – can we convert to a acre-foot goal for tracking purposes? May have to.)
 - Base Flow Goals:
 - Maintain a mean daily flow of X cfs during (months) to support aquatic habitat for streams/subwatersheds in Table X.
 - Reduce / maintain the 10th percentile flows in X months for streams/subwatersheds in Table X.



Mississippi River St. Cloud Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

Measurable Goals - Sub-committee Content



- Habitat and Natural Resources Issue Statement #1: Restoration, Protection + Preservation - Aquatic and terrestrial habitats are diminished due to fragmentation, degradation, and loss, which risks the stability of native species and ecosystems.
- Measurable Goals:
 - Increase protected landscape acres by X% in priority areas.
 - “Protected” can be further defined by the group but I would suggest permanent protection or longer-term program protection.
 - Restore landscape habitat acreage by X% in priority areas.
 - Standard contracts for tree planting, prairie planting, native plantings, etc. would apply.
 - Improve aquatic habitat within priority waterways as demonstrated by a X% increase in IBI scores in X waterbodies.
 - Focus would be on streams/lakes with IBI issues, would rely on Stressor ID reports/WRAPS/DNR/USFWS to determine applicable areas and BMP types.
 - Restore or permanently protect X units of shoreline habitat along priority waterbodies.
 - Can use priority lakes/streams for this goal along with TNC maps.