

OUTCOMES:

Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan – Implementation Planning Committee Meeting

Date: April 8th, 2024

Time: 12:30-2:30 PM

Location: Virtual, Zoom

Meeting called by: Planning
Partners

Type of meeting: Work
Planning Meeting

Facilitator: Tiffany Determan

Note taker: Molly Clyne, Mille Lacs SWCD

Attendees:

Members:

Tiffany Determan, Isanti SWCD
Dan Cibulka, Sherburne SWCD
David Wick, Sherburne SWCD
Jamie Schurbon, Anoka CD
Susan Shaw, Mille Lacs SWCD
Molly Clyne, Mille Lacs SWCD
Sam Seybold, Aitkin SWCD
Perry Bunting, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Scott Soderman, Isanti County

Advisory Members:

Michelle Jordan, BWSR
Barb Peichel, BWSR

Other:

Mitch Brinks, GIS Consultant

1. Welcome and Introductions led by Tiffany Determan, Isanti SWCD

- a. Mich Brinks presented on RAQ (Riparian Adjacency Quality) scores, which were done five years ago and are set to be re-done. RAQ scores come from the LSPs which provide input for the 1W1P. Under BWSRS PTM (Prioritize, Target, Measure) method, RAQ scores fall under the Target portion. The Quality part can be anything that is locally important, such as important bird areas, places with rare species, etc. He will be sending a list of potential Quality factors to Determan so that the group can give input and asked the group to look it over before the next meeting so those factors can be decided upon.

Discussion:

Schurbon asked why it is necessary to redo the scoring. Brinks described a few factors, such as: accounting for landowner owner changes, changes in SFIA enrollment, additional easements, and Quality changes based upon what is important locally now. Determan also noted that the reason that the partnership reconnected with Brinks is because not all members have access to GIS, so having a webapp map tool for them to use is positive.

2. Planning Team Updates

a. Administration

- i. On the budget, Schurbon described how there are still substantial funds remaining for urban and residential BMPs, whereas most of the other categories are spent or have little remaining. He also reminded partners to send in invoices. At the time of this meeting, he had received invoices from Benton, Aitkin, and Morrison. Approximately thirteen percent of the grant has been spent.
- ii. The updated Comprehensive Management Plan including the adopted amendment is up on the Mille Lacs SWCD website.
- iii. The job description for the land protection technician has been created and Determan notes that she hopes to have it posted by the end of the week. She also noted that by focusing on land protection initiatives, we will make progress towards plan goals.

b. Implementation Tracking

- i. On the non-WBIF funded projects report, Cibulka asked that if anyone has feedback for next year, to let him know. As of now, he said to anticipate a similar process for next year.

c. Education and Outreach

- i. **Type A:** The Buying Lakeshore Property event has been rescheduled for May 7th. It will be a virtual event in partnership with the Lower St. Croix Watershed.
- ii. **Type B:** Clyne will be bringing information about the Local Forestry Team (LFT) to the group next meeting so members can better understand what the LFT is, what the aim of it is, etc. Clyne has also been working on some Type B outreach material and has been getting input from a few partners, but let her know if you want to be included/informed.

3. WBIF Work Plan

a. Check In:

- i. Determan described that the Board was comfortable with how the Work Plan was sitting at the March JPE Meeting, and are comfortable with staff making some changes. For the partners' boards, there is a 45-day courtesy review for the Work Plan. The boards should look at the plan and can provide feedback, but they do not have to approve it. Determan also noted that the Work Plan is vaguer than the last plan in order to give partners more flexibility in spending. Based upon a discussion that happened at the March JPE meeting about continuing to fund Outreach/Education, Determan reminded the group that the Comprehensive Plan's intention was to continue to fund these positions. When Determan asked the group if they feel comfortable with the current plan so far, people said yes or gave a thumbs up.

b. Text work plan:

- i. Determan presented some lines within the Work Plan that need to be addressed. The first was on Forestry Practices. Discussion ensued on whether the outcome should be # plans, or # acres, and the group settled on # of acres. For the exact number, Jordan suggested to be conservative in the measures because the partnership will be graded on how well they met those measurables. With that, Seybold suggested 5 acres, which was accepted by the group.
- ii. The second section to be looked at was on Agricultural Practices. Some of the measurables were, the number of BMPs listed and/or the pollutant reduction. Jordan said it's okay to leave it as and/or. Cibulka said that when it comes to reporting, we may want to pick one or another by that time, which will help clearly show if we reach our goal or not.
- iii. The third section was on Streambank or Shoreland protection. For the measurable, Mille Lacs SWCD will do the estimated phosphorus reduction calculation. Jordan noted that the description for Streambank and Shoreland and Urban Stormwater practices are currently the same, which Determan advocated for. Jordan said she will bring it up with BWSR colleagues but at the moment, the two should be kept separate and have separate descriptions. She also noted that if both separately remain on the work plan, there would not need to be an amendment later to add one later on, However, if more than \$50,000 is shifted from one activity to the other an amendment would be necessary.
- iv. The match component was discussed. There is 10% match requirements and the budget is currently over-matching by approximately three times. The group came to consensus that the budget should reflect the minimum percentage. Determan noted that she will adjust based on the current cost share policy for practices. Determan noted that she would like to see a lower match requirement for wetland restorations. This will need to be discussed during policy updates.

c. Timeline and courtesy review

- i. Determan will send the Work Plan for partners to review and bring to their board, boards do not need to make any formal motions to approve the plan. The work plan will be approved at the June 27th JPE meeting.

4. WBIF Policy Updates

a. Forestry:

- i. The proposed cost-share docket for forestry was shared. Rates were based off of LCCMR, DNR, and NRCS/EQUIP rates as applicable for each practice. Wick described how he and Kyle Fredrickson (Aitkin SWCD) wanted to allow for as much continuity as possible with current rates in the Rum. They had to make up their own for invasives cover crop, as that does not exist as part of the docket for other organizations or projects. Determan asked if cover cropping for invasives is a DNR recognized process, to which Wick was uncertain but will look further into it. Determan asked the BWSR representatives if anything approved with WBIF needs to be under a pre-approved standard, to which they said yes and that it also needs to have a predetermined water quality benefit that is reportable. Discussion ensued on protecting planted trees and whether or not it would qualify. Shaw described that it is a necessary part of existing practices, which Jordan said is fine. Peichel said according to a Redeye Watershed forestry docket that was previously put together, road trail landing was determined not to have a water quality benefit. Wick will check with Fredrickson on that. Wick also said that an additional column explaining how each practice has water quality benefits can be added.
- ii. For the Forest Stewardship Plans, Determan described that they decided to cover 80% of FSPs at the DNR rate. The agreement will also make sure that foresters writing the plans address water quality. There was not enough time left to discuss the plan expectations further, so this discussion will be revisited later.

5. Other

- a. Determan reminded the group to look out for an email from her with the updated Work Plan to bring to their boards.
- b. Determan also reminded the group that links to the virtual IPC meetings will always be a Zoom link, not a Teams link.

6. Wrap-up & Next Meeting

- a. The next scheduled IPC meeting is May 13th, but if it gets cancelled, the next is June 10th.