

Planning Workgroup for Root River One Watershed One Plan
Tuesday, January 9, 2018
9:00 am
Conservation Building, 912 Houston Street NW, Preston

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Caleb Fischer, Adam Beilke, Bob Scanlan, Daryl Buck, Sheila Harmes, Adam King, Tim Ruzek, Justin Hanson, Donna Rasmussen

Review revised draft work plan and budget

- The Root River One Watershed One Plan will be awarded \$851,301 for the next biennium. That amount is around \$200,000 more than was originally planned for. BWSR is in the process of finalizing how the work plan is to be done in eLink. A March 12, 2018 deadline is planned. Grant agreements should be available in April. BWSR recommends lumping activities in the work plan for easier reporting and flexibility with funds.
- NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) awarded \$2.53 million dollars to the 5 non-metro pilot watersheds. We are looking at receiving \$500,000 at minimum in EQIP funds for the Root River Watershed. With large dollar amounts coming to the planning area, we will need more staff time (technical assistance and engineering) allotted to accommodate higher federal workload on top of our current workload. Consensus was to take remaining watershed funds to match RCPP dollars for projects.
- Vulnerable wellhead protection areas were discussed; consensus was to lump these into one drinking water action:
 - cover crops in Utica DWSMA and the surrounding area;
 - promote Kernza (perennial wheatgrass), cover crops and urban storm water practices in Chatfield DWSMA;
 - Lewiston actions no longer needed; no longer a vulnerable water supply after new well is drilled.
- PTMApp analysis is needed for water quality outcomes and to identify water storage needs in the headwaters of Riceford Creek and also calculate pollution reductions and cost effectiveness. Bridgette Timm has indicated a willingness to contract for GIS services to learn more about the PTMApp desktop version for use in the Root now and in other watersheds in the future. We also need to identify where existing practices are (MPCA funds may be used for this) and conduct site visits to assess the condition of existing structures. Get more citizens from Mabel involved in the plan, due to their flooding vulnerability. PTMAPP is also needed in lower Riceford and other subwatersheds of the South Fork. Upland practices would help to protect streambank work already underway in Riceford watershed. Consensus was to lump these activities into a South Fork watershed action since the South Fork has significant sedimentation issues from both field sources and streambanks.
- Currently budgeting 8.22% for Coordination/Administration/Fiscal from total budget. Technical assistance and project development costs are attached to the project costs as part of implementation. Performance-based measures include engagement of landowners.

Next meetings

a. Policy Committee meeting—January 22, 2018 at 9 am in Room 108 of the Fillmore County Office Building, Preston. Provide maps to the members showing the watersheds where projects are proposed in the work plan. We finalized an agenda for the meeting, which includes election of officers as required in the by laws.

Agenda items: We will contact Trout Unlimited about a presentation at the next Policy Committee meeting regarding the report on the economic impacts of trout angling in the Driftless Region. The next meeting will be set by the Policy Committee. The JPA states they meet quarterly or as needed.

b. Possibility of holding an Advisory Committee meeting in late February or early March. MASWCD, BWSR and NRCS have provided guidelines for Local Work Group meetings for prioritizing use of USDA funds that align with local priorities in water/watershed plans. Because of the RCPP funding, NRCS will be contacted about how to incorporate the LWG process into the Advisory Committee meeting. We should also get another member to represent the cities. Brian Burkholder from Chatfield may be a good candidate. Donna will contact him. Advisory Committee meets quarterly or as needed also.

Adjourned at 12:15 pm.