

Planning Work Group for Root River One Watershed, One Plan
May 26, 2020 @ 9:00am
Conservation Building, 912 Houston St. NW, Preston, MN 55965
Meeting Notes

Meeting Start @ 09:03 AM

In Attendance: Adam Beilke, BWSR; Shaina Keseley, BWSR; Mary Peterson, BWSR; Emily Zanon, MPCA; Laura Christensen, Fillmore SWCD; Nikki Shaw, Fillmore SWCD; Justin Hanson, Mower SWCD; Paul Hunter, Mower SWCD; Tim Ruzek, Mower SWCD; Skip Langer, Olmsted SWCD; Dave Walter, Root River SWCD; Dan Wermager, Root River SWCD; Sheila Harmes, Winona County; Daryl Buck, Winona SWCD; Kevin Stark, St. Mary's GeoSpatial Services

- **PTMApp Update – Kevin Stark, University of St. Mary's:**

- St. Mary's GeoSpatial staff have been working on hydroconditioning (getting rid of depressions or dams in the landscape that aren't really water flow blocks) the Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the Root River Watershed in the South Branch 10-digit HUC.
 - High efforts needed along roadways (i.e. identifying where water flows under roads, as LiDAR, the 'camera' that creates the DEM, cannot see culverts, etc.), must place 'breachways', or, cut the 'dam', so that PTMApp can properly model the flow of water across the landscape.
 - Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework (ACPF) Toolbox in GIS/ArcMap.
 - Talking about the use of this tool and also using it with/through PTMApp after the hydroconditioning process is complete.
- The South Branch Root River 10-digit HUC is complete, looking for guidance on which 10-digit HUC within the Root river Watershed should St. Mary's GeoSpatial staff prioritize next?
 - Planning Workgroup discussed:
 - Would there be any benefits to working on a WCPI Watershed next?
 - Adam – working on a WCPI watershed next would make the most sense going forward. Is there an opportunity for St. Mary's to produce something that the PWG could use for filesharing? Can St. Mary's produce example maps?
 - Kevin – yes, that is possible to make some static example maps to represent a grass waterway or WASCOW and share with the group/others. St. Mary's can also look into creating a web map and share the information that way so that it is also interactive.
- St. Mary's has a Technical Memo written up on the process, which includes work completed, processes used, and future work recommendations.

- **Watershed Conservation Planning Initiative Update – Dan Wermager, Root River SWCD:**

- June 15th end of reporting for second half of project. Project was extended, and will run through the end of 2021.
- 75 total plans have been completed, with 15 of those having been completed since the last PWG meeting in February, all 15 being in Houston County.
- Have completed walkovers in Houston, Winona and Olmsted Counties (Olmsted County as a landowner in Winona County also had land in Olmsted, still within the Root River Watershed.)
- Have made 399 out of 513 contacts, putting the list at 78% complete. Plans to resume outreach this week as planting is complete with most producers, start with Houston County, once harvest is

over will go to Torkelson Creek area for outreach. Planning on getting completely through the contact list by the end of this year.

- Discussion within the group on Dan working on the Riceford Creek watershed.
- **Cycle 2 WRAPS Update – Emily Zanon, MPCA:**
 - Began intensive monitoring for Cycle 2 in 2018, ended in 2019, now beginning the watershed assessment. Looking at data from 2018-2019 to determine if there are new impairments, or if current impairment listings can be delisted or updated.
 - Revision content has remained nearly the same as in Cycle 1.
 - Overall Goal: add value to the State of Minnesota's watershed approach and to accelerate implementation.
 - Cycle 1 had 54 stream reaches that were listed as impaired.
 - Currently at a point where data collecting is very important, to help to really use the assessment. Are there areas that we missed in the first draft that we need to look at more? Are we missing information for targeting and planning? What can the MPCA contribute to accelerating implementation?
 - Discussion by PWG.
- **Funding updates**
 - **Watershed-Based Funding grant update - Daryl Buck, Winona SWCD**
 - Have a lot of cost-share dollars left, opportunities to put a lot of projects on the ground in the next year and a half before the current grant runs out.
 - Looking for ways to lightly shift some of the funding around within the budget to make better use of funds where they are needed.
 - Discussion from PWG about line items within their district allocation that could be shifted.
 - Current construction opportunities vs. last year's poor construction season was discussed in reference of spending grant dollars.
- **Discuss option of including incentive payments and pre-construction practices to Root River 1W1P Implementation grant workplan, kernza**
 - Discussion by the PWG, clarifications given by BWSR.
 - Prairie Strips: incentives, project potential; will discuss more at next PWG meeting.
- **Next meetings**
 - Advisory Committee Meeting
 - Policy Committee Meeting – June 22, 2020
 - Discussed how to hold meeting.
 - WebEx through BWSR offered by Adam.
 - Question asked: can local staff with board members who don't have virtual meeting access at home, house board member(s) in the SWCD office for the meeting [to make attendance easier and more open]?
 - Planning Work Group Meeting – June 15th, 2020 @ 9:00 AM
- **Other – Block Grant Resolution**
 - Discussion from PWG.
- **Meeting Ended @ 11:42 AM**