

Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee
Minutes
Tuesday, July 28, 2009- 1:30 PM
Benton County Commissioner Board Room - Foley, MN 56329

The Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Craig Gondeck at 1:33 p.m. at the Benton County Commissioner Board Room on Tuesday, July 28, 2009.

Voting members Present: Ken Nodo - At-large, Craig Gondeck – At-Large, Guy Spence – At-Large, Jim Moshier – Municipalities Rep, Warren Peschl – Benton County Commissioner, Brian Kaschmitter – Elk River Watershed Association

Voting Members Excused: Chuck Rau – Benton SWCD Supervisor, Duane Cekalla – Little Rock Lake Association Representative

Voting Members Absent: John Bemboom – Township Officers Association Representative

Others present: Annie Felix – Benton SWCD and Water Plan Coordinator, Dan Martens – U of M Extension, Gerry Maciej – Benton SWCD, John Henz – City of Sauk Rapids, Chelle Benson – Benton County DOD, Phil Votruba – MPCA, Mark McNamara – Benton County Dept. Development, Pat Gehling – NRCS

(Three Priority Issues in Comprehensive Water Plan: 1) Groundwater quantity and quality, 2) Development, 3) Feedlots and Nutrient Management.)

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Review / Approve Minutes. Motion by Ken Nodo to approve the May 26, 2009 minutes. Second by Warren Peschl. Motion Carried.

3. Agenda. Motion by Craig Gondeck to amend agenda by adding info from Dan Martens on Extension Dairy Tours. Second by Ken Nodo. Motion Carried. Motion by Guy Spence to approve amended agenda. Second by Warren Peschl. Motion Carried.

4. Reports

a. Committee of the Whole Meeting – Feedlot Delegation.

Meeting went well. Annie shared good information and commissioners asked good questions. Commissioner Peschl indicated that the County Board leans toward continuing to have MPCA to do the feedlot administration because of the County's budget challenges. This seems not a good time for the commissioners enter into the County feedlot delegation program.

b. County Geologic Atlas Update.

Chelle Benson got a progress report from Dale Setterholm, MN Geological Survey (MGS).

County well index and database plate – done

Surficial geologic plate – done

Quaternary subsurface cross-sections – done

Bedrock geologic map – draft version

Bedrock topography – done

In the next few months MGS will use the cross-sections to map out aquifers in the glacial materials.

Editing and production will continue on the maps already completed. Dale expects that everything will be done by the end of the calendar year 2009.

Annie – When Dale says it will be done, does he mean Part I and II? Chelle - Not aware.

c. Little Rock Creek and Lake TMDL projects update.

Annie reported that the Little Rock Creek TMDL project Phase II end date is September 30. We expect to have a report on significant factors and any potential remedies. Annie is working on the Stressor Identification Report related to this for the Tech Committee to review. There will be an opportunity for public comment at a public meeting in September.

Consultant Bill Walker continues to work on the Little Rock Lake modeling task. This should be done by the end of July and there will likely be a public meeting in the fall to reveal his findings. The Little Rock Lake TMDL project end date is May 2010.

Craig commented that the lake seems to be better at this time this summer, probably because of more favorable weather conditions.

d. Little Rock Lake Shoreline Buffer Workshop July 29.

This is a follow-up to two previous workshops. This one will focus on maintenance. It will be held at the Benton Beach Park from 6 to 8 p.m.

e. Mississippi River Renaissance Project.

The canoe tour for elected officials on the Mississippi River will be held on July 29. Meeting at Stearns County Park.

“Take a Day Off” Event - August 8.

It is a family event. Events include: canoe tours on Mississippi River, electrofishing demonstrations by DNR, and much more!

f. SWCD Tour of Practices – August 20

This will be a bus tour with lunch over noon. WRAC members have received invitations and are encouraged to attend.

g. Summer Extension Dairy Tours

Dan Martens shared flyers. Tours include some discussion manure storage and management practices as fitting for individual farms.

i. 2007 Census of Agriculture Livestock Data

Dan Martens shared information related to numbers of farms with various species of livestock, numbers of livestock on inventory with some breakdown by numbers of farms and numbers of livestock. It is sometimes important to understand what is being counted and how that might relate to what it means.

5. Development Action Item Follow-up: Natural Resources Inventory.

Annie discussed a list of agency compiled rare/critical/vulnerable water resources.

Group added items:

Natural Resources Inventory along Mississippi.

Is the County Biological Survey listed? Probably, but maybe not in those terms.

Private wells on a county wide basis.

Warren – What happens to abandoned wells? They should be a permitted unused well or sealed properly. Cost share is available through the SWCD to seal wells.

Next step in the Water Plan is to survey local government and the public. This was estimated to cost about \$4,000. The last step would be to develop sensitive areas management plan, estimated to cost \$30,000. Question Is it a logical process to identify unique resources and concerns, then to see what

LGU and public see as important then to consider management plans for those that merit some special attention?

Annie - St. Cloud has an environmentally sensitive ordinance. I'd suggest that we invite a St Cloud representative to our next meeting to get a better understanding of the process St Cloud went through to develop their plan.

A lot of the data on the list is already in a digital format. The Benton County GIS department might be able work with us to compile the data into a map project to identify priority areas. Completing the surveys and making a map of the priority areas will give us a stronger grant application if we were to apply for funds to complete the sensitive areas management plan.

Is the intent of the proposed survey to find out what LGUs and public think are unique resources and concerns, or to give them a list and get input on what's important? Annie – I defer to the Development Subcommittee. The intent is to give them a list and rank the importance of the items.

Group recommended that Annie ask a St. Cloud rep (and other entities that have completed related plans) to attend our next meeting.

6. Groundwater Action Item Follow-up: Existing Groundwater Database Information

Annie shared a document titled “Minnesota Ground-Water Information Resources” published by Tim Thurnblad of the MPCA. The publication was web based and has hyperlinks within the text that link to various web data bases. Annie shared a few of the items to show to the group:

- Page 11 County Well Index. Search by unique well number, address, township and section number. Well records required with drilling and digging since early 70's. Whenever a license well driller works on a well, they need to make a record. Individual well log will show what the well was tested to pump. Are sealed wells recorded as sealed and kept on record? Yes. Some wells in cities are monitoring wells that might only be 20 feet deep to monitor contaminants from old gas stations. Agencies don't always share information with each other, sometimes because of security issues. The granite is thousands of feet thick under the Foley area. If you hit a crack in the granite you probably have all the water you want, but the chances of hitting one are slim.
- Page 13 Drinking Water Protection Fact Sheets.
- Page 14 Groundwater Level Program. DNR Website. There is a DNR observation well program. You can look at the data for individual wells. There are about 10 wells in Benton County. Some records go back to 1950's 1960's.
- Page 15 Water use permits.
- Page 28 What's in my neighborhood? You can identify where you are and find out what kinds of things might monitored or concerns near you. It doesn't show everything.
- Page 41 Search Your Community.
- Page 45 Agricultural Chemical Contamination Sites.
- Page 81 Useful Contacts.

Would it be helpful to make sure there is a link to this at the DOD and SWCD websites if those are places where people in the county start looking for things? Annie will coordinate the addition of this link to the Benton County and SWCD websites. If any additional database needs arise that are not met by existing resources, we make additions to this database.

7. Next Steps

Ask St. Cloud group to come and tell about efforts with identifying environmentally sensitive areas.

8. Added Discussion

a. Septic Systems around Little Rock Lake.

Gerry Maciej reported with new clean water funds, there will be program available for doing some septic system work, inspecting systems, identifying sub-par systems, fund for assisting with septic system updates for people with limited resources. This may be handled through DOD or SWCD or jointly.

Systems put in 5 years ago could be out of compliance with new technology. But the system is likely still working effectively. Money will not likely be spent on systems that are still working effectively.

b. Foley Wells.

If the city of Foley puts a new well on line, will additional well-head protection designation need to be done? That needs to be determined by MDH and is likely. SWCD can give priority to cost share programs for practices on the land in a well-head protection area.

c. City Individual Septic Systems.

City of Sauk Rapids has septic systems that are checked on a regular basis and if systems are determined to not function effectively anymore, they are required to tie into city system. Rice and Foley have rules addressing this.

d. Craig Gondeck shared appreciation to efforts of DOD and SWCD staff related to the Wetland Conservation Act road application in Watab Township.

9. Next meeting:

September and October will be busy for Annie because she will be completing the Little Rock Creek TMDL project and making a presentation at the Water Resources Conference in October.

The next meeting will take place on November 24, 2009 1:30 at the Benton County Commissioner’s room.

10. Adjournment. Motion by Warren Peschl to adjourn. Second by Ken Nodo. Motion Carried.
Adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dan Martens, Secretary

<p>Approved by:</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WRAC Board Chairperson</p>
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