

Drainage Work Group Meeting Notes

January 9, 2014

12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Minnesota Farm Bureau Building, Eagan, MN

Attendance

John Thompson, Faribault Co., MACATFO; Tom Loveall, BWSR Brd.; Craig Austinson, Blue Earth Co.; Mark Morreim, MNLICA; Winston Beiser, Freeborn Co.; Jill Bathke, MCEA; Larry Kuseske, MAWD; Thom Peterson, MFU; LeAnn Buck, MASWCD; Greg Knopff, Senate Analyst; Larry Gunderson, MPCA; Les Everett, UMN WRC; Chris Otterness, HEI; Annalee Garletz, AMC; Michelle Ulrich, CCWD; Kyle Hartnett, MAT; Mark Ten Eyck, MCEA; Ray Bohn, MAWD; Rob Sip, MDA; Ron Harnack, RRWMB; Jerome Deal, MAWD; Dan Wilkens, MAWD; John Kolb, Rinke-Noonan; John Jaschke, BWSR; Laura Nehl-Trueman, MnDOT; Bruce Kleven, Ag Groups; Wayne Anderson, MPCA; Doug Thomas, BWSR; Tim Gillette, BWSR; Al Kean, BWSR

Handouts prior to or during meeting:

1. DWG – Meeting Logistics and Agenda for 1-9-14
2. DWG – Meeting Notes for 12-12-13
3. Draft Section 103E.015 Discussion Paper and update language dated 1-3-14
4. 1 Watershed – 1 Plan Fact Sheet, November 2013
5. 1 Watershed – 1 Plan guiding Principles, December 2013
6. Public Drainage Ditch Buffer Strip Reporting Summary CY2012
7. DWG Section 103E.015 Discussion Paper, 1-3-14
8. Public Drainage Ditch Buffer Strip Reporting Summary CY2010-2012

Introductions and agenda overview

All in attendance introduced themselves. Al Kean provided extra copies and an overview of the agenda.

Approval of 12-12-13 Meeting Notes

Extra copies of the meeting notes were distributed. Corrections or additions were requested. None were indicated.

Sharing about recent and upcoming forums involving drainage topics and related topics

- 31st Annual Red River Basin Land and Water Summit Conference, Jan. 13-16, 2014, Fargo, ND, includes a Drainage Workshop on Jan. 13 p.m. and Jan. 14 a.m.
- Lead Viewer training is being piloted by Ridgewater College, Willmar, MN, Jan. 14-17, 2014
- Proposed Water Storage Forum, Jan. 22, 2014, Mankato, MN canceled, potentially postponed until late winter or spring.

One Watershed – One Plan Overview

- Doug Thomas, Sr. Policy and Program Advisor, BWSR, has been leading the implementation of 1W-1P. Doug provided a Powerpoint overview of the history, legislation authorizing BWSR to pursue, and status of development of a pilot program.
- The Local Government Roundtable (AMC, MAWD, MASWCD) recommendation was to help reduce the overlap of local water plans (about 200) by focusing on the 81 major watersheds,

which is also the basis for the 10-yr. cycle used for water quality monitoring; streamline planning; and provide a basis for future funding of watershed-based implementation plans.

- 1W-1P development has defined guiding principles, plan types, and suggested watershed boundaries. Current plan is for 6-8 pilots in the near future and permanent program by the end of CY 2015.
- Much discussion about the purpose and development of 1W-1P.
- Doug posed a question and challenge to the DWG regarding its role in helping to implement some key objectives and opportunities of 1W-1P regarding project implementation for multiple water management purposes involving drainage infrastructure.

Public Drainage Ditch Buffer Strip Reporting

- Al Kean and Tim Gillette, BWSR, indicated that this is the time of year that BWSR requests buffer strip reporting from county and watershed district drainage authorities, which has been done on a calendar year basis since 2008 after the reporting requirement in 103E.067 was added to drainage law.
- Tim provided bar chart summaries of buffer strip reporting for calendar years 2010 – 2012.
- Question about the number of ditch establishments reported in 2010, which seems high. Also a question about the extent to which this reporting can help define the increase in the % of Chapter 103E ditches buffered since the Public Drainage Ditch Buffer Strip Study in 2006.

Section 103E.015 Considerations before drainage work is done

- Al Kean provided extra copies of the updated DWG 103E.015 discussion paper dated 1-3-14 and reviewed the pertinent information added about Chapter 103E, the MN Public Drainage Manual, Smith Partners LCCMR report, and other sources.
- Pro and con perspectives about the terminology “multipurpose water management”. Predominately OK with it.
- Suggestion to include requirement in Subd. 1 (b) to coordinate with applicable SWCD, County or WD local water planning authorities to investigate external sources of funding for primarily “public” purposes of water management. Substantial discussion.
- Concern expressed about the proposed revisions increasing risk of legal challenges to drainage projects that could complicate project design and implementation.
- Due to continued concerns, it was agreed that Al K. would call the DWG 103E.015 Subgroup together again before the next full DWG meeting to further discuss/debate potential consensus language.

The next DWG meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 13, 2014, 12:30 – 3:30 p.m. at the MN Farm Bureau building, Eagan, MN.