

Mississippi – Brainerd one Watershed, One Plan Technical Advisory Meeting November 1, 2022

Crow Wing County Land and Resource Building, Brainerd, MN

**Members Present:**

John Brezinka, Baxter NRCS

Tad Erickson, Region 5 Facilitator

Dilan Christiansen, Crow Wing County

Jake Frie, Crow Wing County

Janet Smude, Aitkin SWCD

Kaysie Maleski, Aitkin SWCD

Todd Holman, Nature Conservancy, Camp Ripley Central Landscape

Mitch Brinks, Area 8 Technical Service Area

Bonnie Goshey, MPCA

Chris Pence, BWSR

Jeff Hrubes, BWSR

Bethany Chaplin, Crow Wing SWCD

Melissa Barrick, Crow Wing SWCD (online)

Deja Anton, Todd SWCD (online)

Bruce Johnson, Todd County, Burnhamville TWP

Moriya Rufer, Plan Writer- Houston Engineering

Chad Anderson, MN Dept. of Health

Perry Bunting, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe DNR

Chad Weiss, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe DNR

Lance Chisholm, Morrison SWCD (online)

Tim Terrill, Mississippi Headwaters Board

**Notes:**

1. Introductions
2. Resource Prioritization Review

- Used DNR and MPCA descriptors to identify and break down priorities into lakes; Rivers & Streams & Groundwater. This method gave us the scientific data to back up our priorities but local input was also considered
- There are over 500 lakes in the watershed. 51 classify as Vigilance or lakes sufficiently protected. 74 lakes fall under the protection status, those lakes which are stable with some mild disturbance. Another 51 lakes fall under the Enhance category meaning they are not yet impaired but have declining water quality trends or are considered nearly impaired by the MPCA. 19 lakes fall under the Restore category meaning they are impaired for nutrients (Some shallow lakes fall into this category but for the most part, these lakes are medium to deep lakes.). 169 lakes that are not considered nutrient impaired fall under the Shallow Lake consideration category as either identified wild rice lakes or having habitat priorities. 19 lakes qualify as Mine Pits- some were assessed similarly to the other lakes by MPCA.
- Todd SWCD requested that Mound be added to the Enhance category as it met all the parameters but was a little under the 300 acre size parameter. It will be added. Todd SWCD also asked MOCA whether or not Trace Lake should be added? MPCA responded it is impaired and does have a TMDL for wastewater. Trace Lake will be considered as a potential priority under the impaired category. Could it be a priority for Alum Treatment? Deja is also wondering about Bass Lake in Todd County.
- MPCA also questioned whether or not Flemming Lake should be added.
- Jeff Hrubes, BWSR, said we may find a need to prioritize the priority lakes
- The group moved onto stream priorities. They were either classified as Enhance – showing biology or dissolved oxygen impairments or Restore- impaired for E. coli, TSS, or Turbidity.
- Melissa Barrick mentioned that the City of Crosby discharges to Serpent Creek in Crow Wing County which leads to adverse effects to the Armor Pit (mine Pit)
- Considerable discussion occurred around the Mississippi River itself. MPCA suggested we focus on the tributaries, Terrill mentioned that the river itself was appreciated universally as a major world river by other nations and Hrubes suggested headlining the Mississippi in the plan so that cities can leverage funds for stormwater controls.
- Schwanke Creek and the Little Swan are streams in Todd County impaired for E. coli.
- Two reaches of the Nokasippi should be called out by Moriya for having outstanding water quality- a focus on “extra protection” should be called for there.
- MPCA requested a call out for Whitely creek.
- Morrison SWCD mentioned Little Elk River
- Hrubes suggested prioritizing creeks and tributaries that feed impaired lakes. Moriya said she could analyze priority lakes fed by priority streams to see if the impairments go “hand in hand”. They could be prioritized as a group or minor watershed. Pence also said she could compare the priority regions of the LSP plan with impaired streams as well.
- The priority streams map was looked at and Bonnie pointed out that the key used very similar shades of green to establish two levels of priority. She requested that one of the greens be changed to purple to not be confusing.
- TEN MINUTE BREAK
- The discussion moved to groundwater categories which focused on the land use or condition above the groundwater. Groundwater concerns in the Protection category was aimed at land use/ conditions in which the groundwater was currently protected. The

Restore category was aimed at land use/conditions above the ground which placed groundwater at risk to contamination, such as agriculture, as one example.

- Chad Anderson described what the acronym DWSMA referred to in response to a question. High priority DWSMAs could be found around Camp Ripley, Baxter, Brainerd, Crosby, Deerwood, and Swanville.
- Todd County was considered a Priority B area simply because of its high Ag use.
- It was noted that groundwater concerns centralized around nutrients (mainly nitrogen) but education surrounding the impacts of arsenic, nitrates, and manganese should be emphasized as well.
- Currently the groundwater priorities are listed as the protection of forests, DWSMAs, and nitrogen infiltration. It was interesting to note that Todd County was not considered a high focus area for nitrogen risk. The response was that due to the unique moraine soil types, it was not considered in general to have vulnerability to nitrogen infiltration.

3. Discussion moved on to the three draft examples of a Plan Vision Statement.

- Moriya requested that people email her with their suggestions or revisions.
- There was a concern about the mission being all inclusive for members of the general public. Bonnie suggested that "Up North" sounded a little "clunky". Pence felt that the commissioners will likely want to see some general statement concerning the well-being of the economy in the vision statement.

4. Next Steps and Timelines

- Moriya will create an update newsletter to be shared with Boards, townships, lake associations, and the general public on what stage we are at in plan development
- It was decided that our next meeting would be a joint meeting with the Policy and Technical Advisory Committees and would be held on November 22 at the Crow Wing Land and Resource Building in Brainerd. We will be finishing up Resource Prioritization and beginning work on specific Goals under the priorities.
- The following TAC meeting in December is scheduled for December 20 at the Crow Wing Land and Resource Building in Brainerd.

*Thank you for your attendance.*