



# Long Prairie River One Watershed One Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Report October 1, 2021

## Attendees

In-Person: Danielle Anderson (Douglas SWCD), Jerry Haggemiller (Douglas SWCD), Ken Hovet (Hartford Township), Shannon Wettstein (Morrison SWCD), Adam Ossefoort (Todd County), Deja Anton (Todd SWCD), Ben Underhill (East Otter Tail SWCD), Chris Pence (BWSR), Tom Anderson (Douglas County), Nancy Uhlenkamp (Todd County), Ryan Odden (Wadena County), Russ Kleinschmidt (NRCS), Moriya Rufer (Houston Engineering)

Online: Bonnie Finnerty (MPCA), Dan Disrud (MDH), Mark Anderson (DNR), Tad Erickson (Region 5)

## Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to hear from ditch authorities about drainage projects and maintenance and then review and discuss draft goals.

## Timeline

This graphic is a simplified version of the overall timeline. We are currently working on goals.



## Drainage Discussion

The local ditch authorities were invited to this meeting to talk to the group about the following items:

- Bring ideas to share with the group on future project ideas such as flooding, sediment or stabilization issues and where those are necessary
- How do they partner with SWCDs on ditch cleanout and other 103E related projects?
- Do the county boards have any desire to go above and beyond 103E to retrofit BMPs to help prevent sedimentation issues and lengthen the time between cleanouts?
- Do the county ditch authorities have a tentative schedule on which systems/areas they want to address in the next 5-10 years?
- SWCDs report on buffer compliance for each county and if there are any variances

### Douglas County

There are 6 ditch systems that drain to lakes in the Long Prairie River Watershed. They outlet into wetlands before the lakes. The county doesn't do clean-outs or instigate improvements, they only do repairs upon request. They just maintain what is there.

There is a project currently being implemented on a ditch that drains to Lake Ida.

Buffer compliance is ~100%.

### Todd County

There are 24 ditches in the Long Prairie River Watershed. Seven of them connect to the Long Prairie River. They do not do improvements, only maintenance. When they do maintenance they follow BMPs such as keeping vegetation roots in place. They have partnered with the SWCD on a clean-out in the past but they don't do clean-outs without petitions from landowners. Most of the ditches in this watershed are running through peat bog and not prime agricultural land, therefore not good candidates for two stage ditches, side water inlets, etc.

The buffer compliance is good; at least 98%.

### Morrison County

There is only one public ditch in the watershed but it is a Todd County judicial ditch. There is no maintenance done on it. They recommend SWCD and County work together in the future on any projects needed. Buffer compliance is ~100%.

➤ *A possible plan action could be to continue ditch maintenance.*

## Goals Discussion

The second half of the meeting was spent reviewing and discussing the goal concepts for the plan as a large group. The draft goals that were discussed are included below and the discussion items have been incorporated.

### Goal: Bacteria Reduction



#### **Implement bacteria reduction projects to address bacteria sources along impaired waters.**

Desired Future Condition (Long-term goal): Fix all anthropogenic sources in priority areas. (meet acute and chronic E.coli standards – show with next round of IWM)

10-Year Plan Goal (Short-term goal): Implement X projects at bacteria sources

Issues Addressed:

- Animal agriculture runoff (E.coli impairments)

How: Feedlot BMPs, cattle fencing and watering, SSTS upgrades, manure management, manure pit closures; Data gap: inventory feedlots in first 500 feet of impaired reaches (done in Todd) in Douglas; further in pasture/cattle accesses, sites for manure application

Metrics: # cattle accesses, # feedlot fixes, # acute and chronic exceedances

Priority Resources: prioritize recreational waters

- Moran Creek
- Eagle Creek
- Unnamed Cr (Douglas Co)
- Look at DWSMAs
- Or sites identified in Cycle 2 monitoring

Data/Models:

- Map feedlot locations, pasture land, monitoring sites showing exceedances (color circle based on exceedance) and Moran and Eagle Creek
  - Show for all areas but highlight priority areas to work first
  - Note: E.coli data is from 10 years ago
- MPCA BMP data (NRCS+BWSR):
  - 11 agricultural bacteria reduction projects/year from 2004-2020
  - 6 septic system projects/year from 2004-2020

## Goal: Agricultural Land Management



### **Implement agricultural best management practices to benefit surface and groundwater quality and quantity.**

Desired Future Condition (Long-term goal): Implement Ag BMPs on all ag land (prevent surface water impairments (nondegradation), no nitrate in drinking water exceedences)

10-Year Plan Goal (Short-term goal): Implement X acres of Ag BMPs (% of total HUC12)

#### Issues Addressed:

- Field erosion and runoff
- Altered hydrology?
- Drinking water quality
- Groundwater quantity
- Soil health
- Changing precipitation and temperature patterns

How: Cover crops, crop rotation, grazing crop lands, reduced tillage, CRP, Irrigation water management, nutrient management, structural ag practices

Metrics: acres of practices implemented, # of acres treated, % of increased soil cover

#### Priority Resources/Areas:

- Long Prairie River
- Shallow Aquifer
- Hartford and Ward Townships and DWSMAs – 1<sup>st</sup> Tier
- Round and Long Prairie Townships – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier
- Not Parkers Prairie because most problems and sources there are in the Redeye Watershed
- Well sealing everywhere
- Identify risk spots for hazardous spills (action)

#### Data/Models:

- Prioritize with: Nitrogen infiltration risk + sediment yield + groundwater appropriation permits at HUC12
- Calculate current BMP acreage per HUC12, determine remaining ag acres
- Feed acres treated into HSPF SAM to get sediment, phos, and nitrogen reductions
- MPCA BMP data Watershed-Wide (NRCS+e-link):
  - 22 wells sealed/year from 2004-2020
  - 12 nutrient management projects/year
  - 10 tillage/cover crop projects/year
  - 2 irrigation water management projects/year
  - 5 structural ag practices/year
  - 16 pasture management projects/year

➤ *Question to consider in the future - tiling*

## Goal: Forest Management



### **Increase forest management and protection for habitat, groundwater, and surface water quality benefits.**

Desired Future Condition (Long-term goal): No net loss and all forests managed, increase connectivity of forests

10-Year Plan Goal (Short-term goal): Implement X acres of forest management and X acres of protection per minor watershed (or HUC12)

Issues Addressed:

- Fragmentation and conversion of uplands
- Drinking water quality
- Changing precipitation and temperature patterns
- Intensification of development
- Protections to biologically significant resources
- Wetland protection

How: Forest Management Plans, 2c, SFIA, Conservation Easements, Aquisitions

Metrics: acres of practices implemented

Priority Resources:

- Tier 1 Protection Lakes
- Tier 2 Protection Lakes
- LSP priority minor watersheds + Groundwater recharge

Targeting: RAQ

Models/Data: LSP acre numbers and goals

Questions:

- Do we need to do a forest conversion analysis or is that not necessary?
- Risk of conversion – could take into account city expansion plans/annexation
- Do you want to target forest restoration/planting differently than forest management?

Fast facts on land conversion in the Long Prairie River Watershed:

- 655 acres were converted 2001-2019
- This represents ~0.1% of total forested watershed area
- MPCA BMP info:
  - 1 Forest Plan/year from 2004-2020
  - 1 Permanent protection project/year

- *Question: How to Reforest areas that have been broken out from ag? Trees in between farm fields, smaller corridors.*

## Issue Prioritization Plan Section

The Issue Prioritization plan section was discussed and will be emailed out to the Technical Advisory Committee to review and provide comments back to Moriya before the next meeting. This section should summarize the steps taken to get to priority issue statements.

## Next Steps

### Steering Committee meeting, October 14:

The Steering Committee will review draft goals, approve any analyses needed for determining goal numbers, and discuss funding levels and local budgets.

### Technical Advisory Committee meeting, November 1:

The Technical Advisory Committee will review and discuss draft goals.

### Policy Committee meeting, November 18:

The Policy Committee will meet to review draft goals.