

Watershed Planning Advisory Council (WPAC) Meeting

November 9, 2011
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
MWA Offices

Attendees: **Council Members:** John Dunn, Emily Piper, Tom Hadden, Linda Kinman, Rick Robinson, Mindy (for Iowa Corn Growers), Roger Wolf, Todd Coffelt, Tim Hall, Rosalyn Lehman, Charles Isenhart. **Visitors:** Allen Bonini, Craig Struve, Legislative Services Agency, Corps of Engineers [Need to verify with list at MWA].

Craig Struve: Agribusiness Association of Iowa (AAI):

Craig's topic was "A visionary look at agribusiness and CCA's – Collaboration with Water Quality Projects." AAI is an organization made up of equipment suppliers, ag-related retailers, and ag-chem suppliers, etc. One year ago AAI formed a Water Quality Working Groups – handout provides details. AAI has looked at mass balances in soil and determined that farmers are applying less nutrients to the soils than the plants are using. AAI suggested using its Certified Crop Analysts (CCAs) as a resource to reach farmers with the WQ message. There are 1400 CCAs evenly distributed throughout the state. Craig also discussed ideas to connect farmers with their watersheds, including signage showing watershed boundaries and bumper stickers that indicate which watershed the farmer works in.

Todd Coffeldt: Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC):

Todd reported that the WRCC met last week, and plans to meet again in December. The date that WRCC had in mind was Dec. 14 and they want to use MWA offices. WRCC also wanted to have a joint meeting with some WPAC members, perhaps in January (Jan. 13th is a Friday, and that was the tentative date selected by WRCC). WRCC is trying to wrap up previous efforts that have been undertaken by WRCC in the past. Secretary Northy charged WRCC members with how to prioritize watersheds in the state.

Linda Kinman: Des Moines Water Works:

Linda gave a presentation that included a discussion of the DMWW system and its current conditions. She noted that the infiltration gallery has historically had no nitrates in it, but now is showing some nitrates. The DMAA denitrification system has not been used since 2007 – and ponds are now being used to remove nitrates. Linda noted that the Raccoon River Watershed plan is completed now, and will be published soon. She also mentioned that there is an in-stream nitrate monitor at Van Meter that was paid for using pooled funds from a number of organizations. Roger Wolf noted that the collaboration between the Ag Clean Water Alliance and the DMWW has been a beneficial one.

Group Discussion – How to merge self-interest of producers with water quality improvement:

After having lunch, the WPAC engaged in a discussion about how all the member organizations might consider the self-interests of ag producers with regard to water quality improvement. There was a note that IDALS tries to foster a culture of conservation, and that reward and recognition play an important role. There were comments regarding the natural linkage of water quality and ag producers, and a desire for improved targeting of cost share dollars in areas where water quality improvement could be impacted. The discussion evolved into one directed at prioritization of improvements. It was noted that what Ag producers see as the important issues and who should lead depends on the individuals involved, but that the message and the messenger can be important. It was suggested that a small percentage of producers are contributing to many of the non-point problems – which lead back to a discussion of how watersheds are prioritized. The DNR and IDALS have watershed prioritizations, along with NRCS (for MRBI) – and those priorities should be shared and discussed. Tim Hall (DNR) and Todd Coffelt (IDALS) will prepare a presentation for the next WPAC meeting on the different prioritizations of watersheds or waterbodies in their organizations.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.
