

Water Resources Coordinating Council

Thursday September 26th, 2013 @ Iowa State Capitol

Meeting Minutes

WRCC Members/Designees Present:

Bill Northey, Julie Vande Hoef, Bill Ehm, Jim Gillespie, Stu Schmitz, John Lawrence, David Osterberg, Maureen Clayton, Lori Beary, Larry Weber, Kevin Richards, Marty Adkins, Karen Flournoy, Diane Karnish

Public Attendance:

Public sign-in sheet was not returned

Meeting convened @ 9:03 AM

- Welcome and Introductions made by Secretary Northey
 - Public comments will be received at end of meeting
 - Call for additional agenda items made, none noted.
- Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update
 - IDALS Updates
 - Recent Fall 2013 HTF meeting was summarized
 - 12 states, 5 federal agencies and tribes comprise HTF
 - States focused on completing nutrient strategies by end of 2013, beginning of 2014
 - Joint meeting with CenUSA Bioenergy meeting
 - Tied to water quality by use of perennials
 - Spring HTF meeting in 2014 planned for Arkansas
 - HTF released reassessment document recognizing progress and challenges
 - No new number or date for achieving zone size reduction, but recognition that 2015 goal will not be met
 - Summary of progress on statewide practice funding given
 - Tremendous response seen to availability of funds
 - Priority watershed demo projects will be coming this fall
 - DNR Update
 - 4 permits issued to date, 6 on public notice
 - No permits have been appealed
 - Strong support from EPA
 - ISU update
 - Lang Grant University (LGU) group met concurrently with HTF meeting
 - Working on how to engage with states on WQ efforts specific to nutrients and hypoxia
 - Developing MOU between LGUs and HTF to formalize partnership

- NRCS Soil Health/Water Quality Initiatives Update
 - Compliance workload requirements limit other assistance
 - Partnerships critical for support
 - EQIP cover crops showing dramatic increases from 4060 acres in 2009 to 88,929 acres in 2013
 - National and State CIG grants are available
 - Q – Are there established standard soil health indices?
 - A – WRCC partners have expertise, but no specific defined list exists
 - WRCC provides opportunity to focus leadership on this topic
- SRF Sponsored Projects Update
 - IFA and DNR joint program
 - Combining point and nonpoint source projects together
 - Has funded \$148M in nonpoint source projects since 2003
 - Not a grant program, rather a method of adjusting the amount borrowed and interest rate on loans
 - October 14 EPC meeting to approve intended use plan
 - 23 applications received requesting \$13M
- Other Topics - None
- Future Meeting Dates/Locations
 - November 20, 2013 @ 9am – Iowa state Capitol Room 103
- Public Comments
 - Gary Edwards
 - Requested WRCC representative at WPAC meetings. Want more opportunities to report to WRCC.
 - Dave Deguess
 - Continue support for MRBI as major catalyst.
 - Sales/marketing needed beyond just information/outreach/education efforts
 - Emphasis on motivating action
 - Sales training for MRBI coordinators needed. Could approach private sector for support.
 - REACH program from MS State a great model
 - Put producers out front to sell practices. Farmers are used to being sold on things.
 - Duane Sand
 - Science assessment lacks info to assess streambank load issue, need a strategy for addressing this.
 - Partnering with DNR on floodplain mapping.
 - CIG activities on floodplain outreach/education program. Work with IFC on tool training.
 - INHF providing match for grad student

- Looking to identify most vulnerable areas for scour erosion and areas in most need of permanent vegetation.
- Organizing several meetings with local groups and partners
- Hope to have efforts up and running w/n 3-6 months of maps completion
- Ralph Rosenberg
 - Have an ethical obligation to move forward.
 - Baselines/Guidelines/Deadlines lacking in nutrient strategy.
 - Documentation needed to show progress. NRI has metrics.
 - IEC annual conference on October 11th. Expect EPA administrator Gina McCarthy to attend.
 - Agree or disagree, but move forward.
- Karen Flournoy
 - Urban stormwater is a source of nutrients and a good opportunity to address with SRF.
 - EPA science advisory board last week put out a paper on waters of the US. Out on comment until November 6th. Public meeting will be held in Washington DC.
 - Draft rulemaking has been sent to OMB for interagency review followed by posting for public comment in the federal register eventually.

Meeting adjourned at 11:33 AM