

Water Resources Coordinating Council
Thursday, September 21, 2017
Meeting Notes

Welcome & Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 PM. A sign-in sheet showing members and guests in attendance is included with the notes.

WRCC Member Agency Updates

National Weather Service (Zogg)- Outlooks for Fall are published. Lots of rain in southeast Iowa overnight but little stream response to the rain due to drought. Equal chances for above and below normal temps and precip in the outlooks. NWS will present in December on their Runoff Risk Decision Support tool.

USGS (Nania)- Streamflow conditions- low flows in southeast Iowa due to drought- especially in Skunk basin. Counter that with record flows in northeast Iowa. Water Quality sensors are all operational. All of the sensors are showing < 10 mg/L right now.

USGS has installed some continuous groundwater level sensors as well. Working to get 9 total in the state. Some sensors in IL are also looking at water quality but there are complications that need to be sorted out before that comes to Iowa.

Finalizing a report with IDOT on Turkey River flooding in 2016. Also working with ISU on publication on flood flows. Working on a report to use turbidity as a surrogate. Hope to have it by the end of 2017.

ISU Extension (Benning)- Busy doing outreach in the field. Highlighted nitrogen and water in late June at research farms. More events and field days are scheduled for the fall. New Conservation station with edge-of-field practices will be launched on October 24 in conjunction with Watershed Academy.

Iowa Nutrient Research Center funded 11 new projects, all of which are listed in the INRC website. Also working with HUD Iowa Watershed Approach coordinators on education and outreach.

Dr. John Lawrence gave a presentation on ISU and the NRS Science Team's efforts to establish N and P load baselines to coincide with the Hypoxia Task Force baselines. **A copy of the presentation can be found on the WRCC website.** The baseline report indicates some reduction in P but an increase in N between the baseline period and the 2016-10 model development for the NRS.

EPA Region 7 (Tate)- Cathy Stepp has been named as the Deputy Regional Administrator. She was previously at the Wisconsin DNR and is acting Administrator until a permanent administrator is appointed. Karen Fluornoy will retire in December. The National Nutrient Tracker is nearing completion but will be released later this year. EPA staff is appreciative of Iowa's contributions to the tracker and the state's data collection and reporting efforts.

Iowa DNR (Schneiders)- Iowa DNR is contributing to the EPA-led Nutrient Tracker and has gained some knowledge of new ways to gather data from local point sources more efficiently.

Updated numbers on point source nutrient reduction permitting were discussed. More than 100 permits have now been issued looking at completion of feasibility studies and potential installation of nutrient removal technology. More than 23,500 water quality samples are gathered annually, representing more than \$350,000 per year in monitoring expense to affected point sources. Additionally, results of nutrient removal are starting to be collected from permittees and were distributed. In Iowa we have gone from 8 nitrate sensors to 74 in the last five years.

Hypoxia Task Force Coordinating Committee will meet next week in Mississippi to discuss reporting and data collection for both point and nonpoint sources in member states. DNR is also working with DNR on a source water protection initiative in Winterset and in Spirit Lake.

IDPH (Schmitz)- Updated Council on HAB data. Will give more detailed information in December, but elevated microcystin levels in waters are way down for this year. There were 36 reports in 2016 and only 5 so far in 2017. Only one report this year of suspected exposure, down from previous years. Plan is to continue monitoring to see if change is climate-related or attributable to reduced nutrient loading.

UNI (Clayton)- The Tallgrass Prairie Center is doing a series of field days for prairie strips on farms this week.

NRCS (Adkins)- Approaching end of federal fiscal year. EQIP obligations of \$27.3 million is second-highest ever, bolstered by RCPP participation.

RCPP agreement for projects in Allamakee and Davis counties are ready to go. IDALS has also requested additional funds for the first RCPP project as it has expended all of its initial funding. Working to secure funds for PL-566 for planning and project updates in Ringgold County.

NRCS is participating in a Landscape Design initiative in Iowa, looking at watershed based conservation being incorporated into biomass production, especially in marginally profitable/unprofitable row crop acres. It was suggested to get an update on this at a future meeting.

The UMRBA is working on an updated Floodplain Management Plan for the basin. We may get a future update on that initiative.

IEDA (Geerts)- CDBG applications continue to come in quarterly, including three storm water projects incorporating urban conservation components. Also working with IDALS and Iowa DNR to facilitate some additional practices to be added to the Iowa Stormwater Management Manual.

IDALS (Gillespie)- A list of active watershed projects by funding source was distributed.

Signups for management practices in the Water Quality Initiative are complete. There are more than 2,500 participants, including over 1,000 first-time users. Total acres included exceed 281,000, and \$5 million in state funds will leverage more than \$8 million in landowner investment.

The next call for applications for the urban demonstration component of WQI is forthcoming, with an application release date targeted for October 6.

Staff participated in a meeting in August with Senator Grassley dealing with issues related to 2011 Missouri River flood recovery. An update was given at that meeting on a class action lawsuit including several Iowa plaintiffs.

Staff has also participated in a drought meeting in northwest Iowa to discuss groundwater levels with local operators and livestock producers. Iowa DNR, USGS, and National Weather Service representatives were also involved in that meeting.

Miller Creek Water Quality Initiative Project

Shane Wulf, Black Hawk SWCD, gave a presentation on the Miller Creek Water Quality Initiative project being implemented in southern Black Hawk and northern Benton counties. [A copy of the presentation can be found on the WRCC website.](#)

Nutrient Reduction Strategy Annual Report

Laurie Nowatzke, NRS Measures Coordinator with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, gave a presentation on the 2017 Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy Annual Report. The report was distributed earlier in the week in draft form and comments will be accepted by ISU through October 4. An updated draft will then be distributed and posted on the NRS website following incorporation of comments and any additional data received. [A copy of the presentation given can also be accessed on the WRCC website.](#)

HUD Iowa Watershed Approach Update

Allen Bonini with the Iowa DNR updated the Council on progress in the Iowa Watershed Approach program. IIHR is in the process of completing hydrologic assessments in the project areas and will get those completed in early 2018. Most projects have hired watershed coordinators and are beginning the process of completing watershed plans. Training of coordinators is underway and it is expected that landowner engagement will begin in 2018.

Public Comments

There were no requests from members of the public to provide comments.

Adjourn

Secretary Northey discussed transition at IDALS with his potential appointment as the Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation at USDA. A new Secretary of Agriculture will be appointed by the Governor, and part of the duties of the new Secretary will be to chair the WRCC. The exact timeline for transition is uncertain but is likely before the end of 2017. Northey also thanked the WRCC for their participation and the important work they are doing for the state of Iowa.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 PM. The next meeting will be held at 1:30 PM on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at the Polk County Extension Office.

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	WRCC Representative	Position	Organization
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 Bill Northey	Secretary (WRCC Chair)	Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Kim Reynolds <i>Kayla Lyon</i>	Governor <i>Designee</i>	Governor's Office Governor's Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 Chuck Gipp <i>Bruce Trautman Allen Bonini</i> Bill Fenn <i>Adam Schneiders</i>	Director <i>Designee</i> <i>Designee</i>	Iowa Department of Natural Resources Iowa Department of Natural Resources Iowa Department of Natural Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 Jim Gillespie <i>Jake Hansen</i>	Director <i>Designee</i>	IDALS - Division of Soil Conservation IDALS - Division of Soil Conservation
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Gerd Clabaugh <i>Kenneth Sharp</i> <i>Stu Schmitz</i>	Director <i>Designee</i> <i>Designee</i>	IA Department of Public Health IA Department of Public Health IA Department of Public Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Mark Schouten <i>John Benson</i>	Administrator <i>Designee</i>	Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7 <i>James Berning</i> Wendy Wintersteen <i>John Lawrence</i>	Dean <i>Designee</i>	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, ISU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, ISU
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Susan Curry <i>David Osterberg</i>	Dean <i>Designee</i>	College of Public Health, University of Iowa College of Public Health, University of Iowa
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9 John Fritsch <i>Maureen Clayton</i>	Dean <i>Designee</i>	College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, UNI College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, UNI
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Mark Lowe <i>Tamara Nicholson</i>	Director <i>Designee</i>	Iowa Department of Transportation Iowa Department of Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11 Debi Durham <i>Jeff Geerts</i>	Director <i>Designee</i>	Iowa Economic Development Authority Iowa Economic Development Authority
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 Dave Jamison <i>Lori Beary</i>	Executive Director <i>Designee</i>	Iowa Finance Authority Iowa Finance Authority
<input type="checkbox"/>	13 Alec Scranton <i>Larry Weber</i>	Dean <i>Designee</i>	College of Engineering, University of Iowa College of Engineering, University of Iowa
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14 <i>John Warner</i> Kelly Warner	Acting Director	USGS, Iowa-Illinois Water Science Center
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15 Kurt Simon <i>Marty Adkins</i>	State Conservationist <i>Designee</i>	USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	16 Bob Wegand (Acting)	State Executive Director	USDA, Farm Service Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	17 Vacant <i>Kate Sand</i>	State Director <i>Designee</i>	USDA, Rural Development USDA, Rural Development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18 Vacant <i>Mike Tate</i> <i>Damon Frizzell</i>	Regional Administrator <i>Designee</i>	EPA-Region 7 EPA-Region 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	19 Colonel Craig Baumgartner <i>Diane Karnish</i> <i>Angela Freyermuth</i>	Rock Island District Commander <i>Designee</i> <i>Designee</i>	US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Zogg	<i>Designee</i>	<i>National Weather Service</i>

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WRCC Public Attendance Sign-In Sheet

(Public comments will be accepted at specified time on agenda)

	Name	Affiliation	Have Comments (Y/N)
1	Rick Robinson	Iowa Farm Bureau	
2	Roger Bruner	DNR	N
3	Aleidi Waerber	USFWS	N
4	Jerry Nappel	IDALS	N
5	Shawn Richmond	AAI	
6	Shane Wolf	Black Hawk SWCD	N
7	Jeff Zoss	NOAA/MWS	N
8	Dick Stempel	IA Farm Bureau	N
9	Jon TR	FDNR	N
10	Zita Orde	IACWA	N
11	Cara Berg	SHREED	N
12	Jon Nania	USGS	N
13	Andrew Wheeler	Iowa Farm Bureau	N
14	Dwight	LOA	N
15	John Lawrence	ISU	N
16	Jace Mikels	IA Senate Dem Staff	N
17	Megan Muthler	IA Senate Republican Staff	N
18	Allen Bivini	ONR	N
19	Susan Heesthede	IA Environmental Council	N
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