

Water Resources Coordinating Council

December 17, 2021

Meeting Notes

Call to Order and Virtual Meeting Logistics

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 AM. There were a total of 25 participants on the call. Virtual meeting logistics were reviewed.

WRCC Member Agency Updates

Naig started updated by acknowledging the contributions to the WRCC by EPA Region 7 designee Mike Tate, who was unable to attend the meeting and is retiring at the end of December.

DOT (Beavers): Just completed mussel relocation under newly constructed I-74 bridge over Mississippi River. Relocated more than 32,000 mussels as part of project. Old bridge will be demolished in 2022. Finished monitoring year 2 of Catfish Creek mitigation site in Dubuque County.

HSEMD (Marwedel): Silver Jackets team is looking at loss estimation in Quad Cities area and working on project in Nishnabotna River to evaluate efficiency of PL-566 structures. Also working with City of Clive in Walnut Creek. State Hazard Mitigation Plan update will begin in 2022 and is due in 2023.

USGS (Nania): Low flows persist in Iowa, although conditions have improved toward normal seasonal flows on many streams. Warmer conditions have precluded presence of ice on nearly all streams in Iowa as of today. USGS has published a statewide PFAS sampling study based on samples collected in 2019-2020. Two reports on the Cedar River have also been recently published.

NWS (Zogg): NWS has survey teams in the field assessing tornado and wind damage. Findings will be published on NWS website. Current temperatures are above normal, as are soil temperatures. Drought conditions are improving as well but conditions are expected to persist.

UNI (Clayton): Recent publications have been released on CRP and effectiveness of certain plantings on EOF versus in-field practices. Also evaluating impact of pollinator habitat on wild bee populations.

IIHR (Weber): Wrapping up 2021 projects. Working nationally on state resilience program and partnering with other states. Hosted field day with Rep. Hinson in NE Iowa to look at conservation practices and flooding impacts. Also working with E and West. Nishnabotna River project to wrap up hydrologic assessment. Acknowledged funding support from IEDA to continue assessment work in Missouri River basin. Also continuing to write proposals to continue modeling and assessment work focused on flooding.

USACE (Brown): Mentioned continued collaboration among Fed & State agencies to complete the Walker Branch Wetland project in the Rathbun Lake area - significant project to improve habitat and water quality conditions in Rathbun Lake. Should be completed by CY23.

IFA (Smith): Funding through Infrastructure bill has brought significant increase in SRF funding to Iowa. Working with DNR to determine priorities for new money. Working with DNR and IDALS to finalize SF512 water/sewer grant awards. About \$6.7 million available- most applicants will receive funding. IFA will also administer \$75 million through a Water Infrastructure Fund supported with ARPA funding.

NRCS (Hubbert): NRCS has released its 2021 Annual Performance report, which can be accessed at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/ia/about/>. Worked with more than 1,450 contracts in FY2021 across all programs, including easements, CSP, and EQIP, investing more than \$83 million and treating more than 320,000 acres of land. Also renewing participation in WFPO with three repair projects and one new project. 10 active RCPP projects underway, with all projects working with numerous state partners.

ISU Extension (Helmert): ISU Crop Advantage series is restarting, along with Crops TV. Continuing weekly ILF webinars and looking for potential speakers for weekly series. ISU has initiated Conservation on Tap and Coffee and Conservation, both aimed at more informal engagement with producers. Still working to replace NRS Measures Coordinator. INRC stakeholder roundtables planned for February to guide INRC proposal process. INRC website has been updated with links to researchers and supported research projects.

DNR (Schneiders): Working to implement PFAS Action plan with public water supply sampling, results of which will be shared to online dashboard by January. EPA is working with states to recognize efforts on point source nutrient removal. Nutrient tracking tool has been calibrated properly with the number of practices entered so that more practice calculations can be completed. Tyson Foods in Perry has showcased its phosphorus removal facility as a success in the Nutrient Reduction Strategy. New proposed WOTUS rule has been released, and DNR will be working with other state partners to comment letters.

IDALS (Kozak): AML program reauthorization was included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework bill and includes a significant annual funding increase. Division leadership has completed an internal evaluation of wetland processes aimed at increasing the number of annual wetland projects completed. There are more than 3,400 applicants in this year's statewide cover crop program across all 100 SWCDs, signing up for 413,000 acres. Sign-up for the crop insurance discount program through RMA began December 1. IDALS is also working on a grade stabilization structure initiative using SF512 funds to support larger structures where nutrient reduction can be achieved.

Secretary Naig updated the WRCC on the Fall 2021 Hypoxia Task Force meeting, held virtually on December 13-14. Highlights included announcement of funding for states to implement nutrient reduction strategies included in federal infrastructure funding, updates on reports to Congress, and plans for future task force meetings.

Missouri River Hydrologic Assessment Project

Witold Krajewski, Iowa Flood Center, gave a presentation on the status of the Missouri River hydrologic assessment project.

WPAC Annual Report

The Watershed Planning Advisory Council submitted its Annual Report to the Legislature in late November. John Whitaker, CDI, presented a summary of the report, which can be accessed on the WPAC web page.

HUD Iowa Watershed Approach

Larry Weber, Iowa Flood Center, updated the Council on the HUD Iowa Watershed Approach. Most partners are wrapping up their work and watershed projects have been extended to September 2022. This is the final year of the program, and most of the watershed funding has been expended. Another 800 landscape practices have been installed or will be installed by the end of the program.

Public Comments

There were no requests by the public to address the Council.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 AM. The next meeting has been set for the morning of Thursday, March 10, 2022. We will work out an in-person location for that meeting, potentially in the Wallace Building with a hybrid participation option.

	WRCC Representative	Position	Organization
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 Mike Naig	Secretary (WRCC Chair)	Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Kim Reynolds	Governor	Governor's Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Nate Ristow</i>	<i>Designee</i>	Governor's Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 Kayla Lyon	Director	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Adam Schneiders</i>	<i>Designee</i>	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 Susan Kozak	Director	IDALS - Division of Soil Conservation & Water Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Jake Hansen</i>	<i>Designee</i>	IDALS - Division of Soil Conservation & Water Quality
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Kelly Garcia	Acting Director	IA Department of Public Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Kenneth Sharp</i>	<i>Designee</i>	IA Department of Public Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Designee</i>	IA Department of Public Health
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 John Benson	Acting Director	Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Jim Marwedel</i>	<i>Designee</i>	Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7 Dan Robison	Dean	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, ISU
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Jamie Benning (Matt Helmers)</i>	<i>Designee</i>	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, ISU
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Edith Parker	Dean	College of Public Health, University of Iowa
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Peter Thorne</i>	<i>Designee</i>	College of Public Health, University of Iowa
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9 John Fritsch	Dean	College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, UNI
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Maureen Clayton</i>	<i>Designee</i>	College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, UNI
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10 Scott Marler	Director	Iowa Department of Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Brandy Beavers</i>	<i>Designee</i>	Iowa Department of Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11 Debi Durham	Director	Iowa Economic Development Authority
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Jeff Geerts</i>	<i>Designee</i>	Iowa Economic Development Authority
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12 Debi Durham	Executive Director	Iowa Finance Authority
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Aaron Smith</i>	<i>Designee</i>	Iowa Finance Authority
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13 Alec Scranton	Dean	College of Engineering, University of Iowa
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Larry Weber</i>	<i>Designee</i>	College of Engineering, University of Iowa
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14 Jon Nania	Acting Director	USGS, Iowa-Illinois Water Science Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Paul Rydlund</i>	<i>Designee</i>	USGS, Iowa-Illinois Water Science Center
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15 Jon Hubbert	State Conservationist	USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Scott Cagle</i>	<i>Designee</i>	USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	16 Matt Russell	State Executive Director	USDA, Farm Service Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	17 Theresa Greenfield	State Director	USDA, Rural Development
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Kate Sand</i>	<i>Designee</i>	USDA, Rural Development
<input type="checkbox"/>	18 Meg McCollister	Regional Administrator	EPA-Region 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Doug Jones</i>	<i>Designee</i>	EPA-Region 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	19 Colonel Jesse Curry	Rock Island District Commander	US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Jason Smith</i>	<i>Designee</i>	US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Philip Brown</i>	<i>Designee</i>	US Army Corps of Engineers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Jeff Zogg</i>	<i>Designee</i>	National Weather Service