

Green Meadow Interdisciplinary Team

Regular Meeting

January 25, 2017

A meeting of the Green Meadow Interdisciplinary Team was held on Wednesday, January 25, 2017, at the Wild Rice Watershed District (WRWD) Office. Project Team Members in attendance included: Robert Baden, Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Steve Bommersbach, Norman County Commissioner; Mark Chisholm, Landowner; Mike Christensen, WRWD Manager; Jim Courneya, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA); Duane Erickson, WRWD Manager; Courtney Habedank, Norman County Soil and Water Conservation District; Craig Jarnot, US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE); Curt Johannsen, WRWD Manager; Danielle Kvasager, MPCA; Nathan Olson, DNR Fisheries; David Vilmo, Landowner. Others in attendance included: Jerry Bents, Houston Engineering; Chuck Fritz, International Water Institute (IWI); Tara Jensen, WRWD Bookkeeper; Dave Jones, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Jay Leitch, IWI; Kevin Ruud, WRWD Administrator; Cory Skaurud, Landowner; Henry VanOffelen, DNR. Project Team members who were absent included: Brett Arne, Board of Water and Soil Resources; Josh Bork, Natural Resources Conservation Services; Ryan Frohling, Fish and Wildlife Services; Diane Ista, Landowner.

At 10:00 am, Fritz began the meeting by asking those in attendance to introduce themselves. Following introductions, an overview of the meeting agenda was discussed. Fritz recapped meetings held with the Green Meadow Project Team and brought those in attendance up to date as to why the NRCS PL566 process is currently being pursued. A summary of PL566 establishment, requirements, and goals developed by the planning document was discussed next. An overview of the seven planning steps of the process was discussed and Fritz displayed a timeline showing where the current Interdisciplinary Team is sitting in the overall process.

Fritz next discussed how the meetings of the Green Meadow Project Team have phased into the Interdisciplinary Team and presented the requirements for the newly developed group. He noted that two public hearings/meetings are required as a part of the process, one of which was held in the spring of 2016. It was noted that the Public Scoping Meeting was held on Thursday, May 5, 2016. Three individuals submitted written comments to the District following the hearing. Later in the process a Public Hearing will be held, followed by a public comment period. The PL566 process began in March 2016 and is anticipated to be completed in August 2019.

It was noted that the WRWD has the final say in the process. The Interdisciplinary Team will serve a purpose to provide recommendations of possible alternatives back to the Board of Managers. The Interdisciplinary Team will provide documents to the NRCS at certain phases of the process. The participants of the Interdisciplinary Team include state and federal agency representatives, landowners, public, regulatory state and federal agencies, and private stakeholders.

Fritz reviewed the work completed by consultants following the Public Scoping Meeting in May and a summary of the public feedback received was discussed. Engineer Bents reviewed several hydraulic

models that displayed inundation based on various events. Models were developed showing inundation levels of different events based on existing conditions, conditions including no dam, potential breach events at various locations of the dam, and based on additional upstream drainage due to changes in land practices or culvert resizing. Engineer Bents next summarized the location of the Green Meadow Dam, when it was established, and channel improvements that followed the construction of the dam. He noted repairs that have been made to the dam following its construction largely due to poor soil conditions in the area which were used to construct the dam.

Fritz next discussed water quality in the subwatershed, noting that findings of studies can be found at <http://ptmapp.rrddin.org>. He presented an overview of sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen transported through the watershed annually based on land practices within the district. He noted that the information provided is comparable with similar sized watersheds with similar land practices.

Leitch summarized agricultural, infrastructure, and structural damages based on 2, 5, 10, 25, 50 and 100 year flooding events. He did note that his calculations assumed 100% loss for each result. Future reporting will be based on more specific loss rates. He also discussed the calculations and discount rate used to determine the Present Value of Benefits/Damages (PVB/D) which is based on federal standards. Losses were discussed based on different periods of the growing season, and Leitch noted the percentage of flood events based on different stages of the growing period. Fritz added that benefits can be increased by implementing natural resource or habitat enhancement in the range of alternatives. Discussion was held regarding reaching a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) of 1.0 or greater to increase chances for federal funding assistance. Jones noted that a project that has a BCA of .8 or .9 today could potentially be reconsidered down the road as the PVB/D changes based on discount rates. Fritz asked for landowner comment regarding the situation in the Green Meadow Subwatershed. Chisholm noted that he strongly feels that something needs to be done to reduce flooding in the area, but at this time he is unsure what the correct solution is.

Fritz distributed a Draft Scope of Environmental assessment and Draft Purpose and Need document and asked Interdisciplinary Team members to review the documents and return any comments to WRWD Administrator Ruud on or before February 10, 2017. Engineer Bents provided an overview of needs determined from a Flood Risk setting. VanOffelen summarized Natural Resource Needs.

Fritz summarized the next steps of the process going forward. Once comments are returned on the documents distributed, the necessary paperwork will be compiled to complete Review Point #2 and it will be submitted to the NRCS for consideration. Jones noted that the NRCS will work with the USACOE to ensure that the information provided meets requirements for Concurrence Points prior to moving forward. Upon Review Point #2 being accepted, the Interdisciplinary Team can begin looking at a range of alternatives to address issues within the subwatershed.

The meeting was concluded noting that distributed documents will be available on the WRWD website as early as possible. The team was reminded to return comments to Administrator Ruud by the

previously noted deadline. The team members will be notified of upcoming meeting dates and times as they become available.