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| Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership – DRAFT MINUTES | | | |
| Policy Committee Meeting #12 | | **Vision**  The St. Croix River, groundwater, lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and upland habitat in the Lower St. Croix watershed sustain healthy ecosystems, recreation, public health, tourism, agriculture, the economy, and quality of life in our communities.  **Mission**  Guide protection and restoration of priority natural resources in the Lower St. Croix watershed over the next ten years through implementation of the Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. | |
| July 24th, 2023  4:00-6:00 PM | |
| **Wyoming Area Library**  26855 Forest Blvd, Wyoming, MN 55092  Recording: <https://youtu.be/g07mF-rvYk0> | |
|  | **Facilitator:** Angie Hong | | **Note taker:** Barbara Heitkamp/Angie Hong |
| Attending: | Anoka SWCD: Sharon LeMay  Carnelian Marine St Croix WD: Kristin Tuenge  Chisago County: Dan Dahlberg and Mike Mergens  Comfort Lake Forest Lake WD: Jackie Anderson  Isanti County: Kristi LaRowe  Isanti SWCD: Tom Anderson  Middle St. Croix WMO: Brian Zeller (virtual)  Pine County: Steve Hallan  South Washington WD: Kevin ChapdeLaine (virtual)  Washington County: Gary Kriesel  Washington SWCD: Diane Blake (virtual)  Staff: In-person: Angie Hong (EMWREP), Barbara Heitkamp (Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership), Craig Mell (Chisago SWCD), Barb Peichel (BWSR), Laura Jester (Keystone Waters).  Virtual: Jennifer Hahn (Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership), Tiffany Determan (Isanti SWCD), Susanna Wilson-Witkowski (Chisago County), Emily Heinz (CLFLWD), Dietrich (Washington County), Matt Moore and John Loomis (SWWD), Jay Michels (EOR), Tom Langer (CMSCWD). | | |
| Absent: | Brown's Creek WD: Klay Eckles  Chisago SWCD: Jim Birkholz  Pine SWCD: Doug Odegard  Valley Branch WD: Ed Marchan | | |

**MINUTES:**

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm by Secretary Kristin Tuenge. Chair Fran Miron and Vice Chair Jim Birkholtz were both absent. Gary Kriesel arrived at 5pm.

**Approve agenda**: Motion to approve agenda by Steve Hallan. Second by Mike Mergesn. All in favor. Agenda approved.

**Approve meeting minutes from the April 24th, 2023 meeting**

* Jackie Andersen: Correct the misspelling of “Loon” in the shared education section.
* Motion to approve the 4-24 meeting minutes by Jackie Anderson, Tom Anderson seconds. All in favor. The meeting minutes were approved.

**2022 Activities Report**

Barbara shared the 2022 Activities report, which was created this summer by Laura Jester, with input from members of the LSC steering committee. Last year’s annual report was presented in table format, which was cumbersome and confusing. This year, Laura has created an Activities Report that is more clearly laid out and easy to read.

Next year, the planning team hopes to collect information from partners earlier in the year. The Washington Conservation District will also be creating a project map to show the locations of activities completed, similar to what Angie Hong did with Google Maps last year but with additional search and database features.

Overall, the LSC Watershed Partnership has achieved 57% of its 10-year phosphorus reduction goal, only 2 years into the plan implementation. 2021 total reduction = 1493 lbs/year. 2022 total reduction = 1660.5 lbs/year. This includes projects completed with WBIF funds, as well as those led by individual partners.

* Jackie Anderson asked if this information will be available to all of the partners and online. Barbara said it will.
* Kristin Tuenge asked which projects stand out as ones that have really helped us to get to our high levels of P reductions. Barbara said that the ravine stabilization in South Washington Watershed District was a very big one and the nonstructural practices being implemented thanks to outreach engagement from Jenn Hahn have been key as well.
* Jenn Hahn talked about the social component of nonstructural practices. When a big farmer starts doing cover crops, the neighbors see and start doing these practices as well. Producers are excited and the only limitation is the cap on acreage.
* Tuenge – did anything get put in place that will help reduce the impacts of climate change? Barbara said that water storage is a big component in the MIDS project work that will be discussed later in the meeting
* Jackie Anderson said it would be nice to also have slides that show the P reduction by activity category. It’s important to show where we are getting our biggest reductions of P. We should keep track of sediment and nitrogen as well since those are issues that impact downriver as well as here in Minnesota.
* Hahn said they are tracking N leaching to groundwater for the soil health grants but not for the WBIF grant projects. Those just track P and sediment.
* Steve Hallan asked if we are also tracking the practices that farmers are doing with NRCS funding. In Pine County, there are many farmers doing work with that Federal funding, and in many cases, it’s been outreach from our partnership that has led farmers to do NRCS projects.
* Jackie Anderson – the ultimate goal should be to aggregate data of all things happening in our area with all to the funding sources.
* Craig Mell noted that NRCS does not release its data publically but county SWCDs are often able to access the data to include in our map.
* Heitkamp noted that Kristi LaRowe’s family was Farm Family of the Year two years ago and this year Jason May, who we’ve been working with, was selected as Farm Family for Chisago County.
* Hallan noted that Pine County is also participating in 1w1p efforts for Snake and Kettle Rivers. Those go into the same St. Croix River even though they aren’t part of the LSC 1w1p.
* Barb Peichel noted that the 2022 Activities Report was very well done and that she shared with other folks at BWSR as an example for other 1w1ps to consider.
* Laura Jester said she thinks it will be even easier to compile next year, potentially with other metrics to measure.

**Updates on Lower St Croix Watershed Plan Implementation**

* Reference [Angie’s ppt for slides](https://www.lsc1w1p.org/s/7-24-Lower-St-Croix-1w1p.pdf)
* Budget and timeline updates for FY21 and FY 23 grants:
  + Craig – On track to close out FY21 grant. 72% of FY23 is already encumbered.
  + No comments/questions from PC members
* Ag Outreach & Non Structural Ag Program
  + Jennifer: Still having so much interest to enroll acres in non-structural program – cost-share is the limitation!
  + Continuing to build partnerships across the basin with several stakeholders
    - Kristi LaRowe: what stakeholders does that include?
      * Jennifer: state and local government, some non-profits, corn/soybean farmers, UMN-Extension – very much welcome different perspectives
  + Continuing to host and promote events where our basin farmers are
    - Jackie: Do want to keep in mind that we do need to prioritize our basin farmers and not expend resources or time contacting those not in the Lower St. Croix basin
    - Jennifer: Yes, absolutely
    - Kristin Tuenge: Are we connecting with farmers on rented land versus owned land? I have a friend who regularly goes to a conference with that focus – will forward Jennifer that information
* Shared Education Program
  + No comments/questions from PC members
* Projects in-progress
  + No comments/questions from PC members

**Program snapshot: Minimal Impact Development Standards**

* Reference Jay Michels ppt
* Barbara: One goal in our LSC CWMP is to increase water storage capacity across the basin. With climate change and the continued development pressure in the basin, we need to be smarter how we manage stormwater and flows to our waterways.
* Jay Michels (EOR) provided a history of stormwater management and how increased runoff degrades water quality. Stormwater ordinances and specifically Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) can help communities put stormwater management into their development plans versus it being an afterthought.
* We are looking to help 20 communities adopt MIDS in the 10-yr LSC CWMP.
* Reactions from PC members:
  + Jackie Anderson: This is exactly the story of the CLFLWD and how the WD and local communities came together to work to reduce water quantities
  + Kristin Tuenge: Really impactful ppt

**Topics and format for October 23rd Policy Committee meeting**

* Program snapshots for October meeting will be the CLFLWD wetland restoration project and SWWD Trout Brook project
  + Do we want to try to do a field trip for either and then meet nearby?
    - Overall consensus: presentations work fine versus trying to arrange site visits. Suggestion to plan a tour next year in early summer when vegetation will be established. Can visit multiple LSC projects.

Steve Hallan moves to adjourn meeting. Mike Mergens seconds. Meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm.