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BWSR Board Committee Votes Down Additional APO Option

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St. Paul, MN

Today, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Buffers, Soils, and Drainage Committee met in St. Paul to review public comments on a draft amendment to the Administrative Penalty Order Plan (APO) for Buffer Implementation. Based on comments received via the public notice, the Board Committee voted unanimously to reject the proposal.

The public comment process was initiated to solicit input and explore an option for an alternative choice for local compliance determinations. The Board committee recommendation made today withdraws the published option from further consideration. No further action will be taken by BWSR on the draft proposal.

“It is to the credit of farmers and local governments that Minnesota is now at 98 percent compliance for buffers on public waters and on track for compliance with public ditches this November,” BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke said. “The board committee decision today shows responsiveness to the public input we sought and received, and we are grateful that Minnesotans shared their opinions. Our agency is committed to continuing our assistance to farmers and local governments.”

Earlier this week, BWSR Executive Director Jaschke sent a letter apologizing to Minnesota landowners and farmers for releasing a draft proposal that was not in the spirit of the law and was created without engagement with key stakeholders. [[Read the full letter here](#)].

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BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens. BWSR’s mission is to improve and protect Minnesota’s water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.