

## **Drainage Work Group Meeting Notes September 10, 2009**

### **Attendance**

Craig Austinson, Blue Earth Co.; Wayne Anderson, MPCA; Greg Eggers, DNR; Larry Gunderson, MPCA; Henry VanOffelen, MCEA; Jeff Forester, MSRPO; John Thompson, MACO, Faribault Co.; Tom Loveall, BWSR Brd.; Gerald Amiot, MACO, Polk Co.; Jeremy Geske, MFB; Alan Perish, MFU, MVA; Larry Kuseske, MAWD, SRWD; Kurt Deter, Rinke-Noonan; Ron Harnack, RRWMB; Jerome Deal, MAWD, BDSWD; Ray Bohn, MAWD; Ron Ringquist, MVA; Mark Dittrich, MDA; Annalee Garletz, AMC; Mike Carroll, DNR; Carrie Jennings, MGS; Al Kean, BWSR

### **Handouts Prior to or During Meeting:**

1. DWG – Meeting Agenda for 9-10-09
2. DWG – Meeting Notes for 7-29-09
3. “Evaluators Manual for Assessing Benefits on State-Owned Lands in Consolidated Conservation Areas, June 15, 2009” (Made available at the 9-10-09 meeting by Mike Carroll, DNR)
4. DWG – Current List of Discussion Topics 12-23-08

### **Introductions and Agenda Overview**

All in attendance introduced themselves. Al Kean provided an overview of the agenda and extra copies.

### **Approval of 7-29-09 Meeting Notes**

Extra copies of the subject meeting notes were distributed. Al noted that Wayne Anderson had volunteered to serve on the advisory committee established for the Riparian Buffer Areas Study, but was not listed in the meeting notes. Al will make that correction to the meeting notes. Any other comments or corrections were requested. None were offered.

### **Advisory Committee update for Riparian Buffer Areas Study**

Al Kean reported that the subject advisory committee met for the first time on 9-10-09 prior to the Drainage Work Group meeting. The discussion focused on background about the study directive from the Legislature, sources of relevant information about this topic and how to proceed. Paul Senne, BWSR GIS Specialist, provided an overview of the Cultivated Riparian Zone Estimates that he and other BWSR GIS staff had prepared in response to legislator questions during the 2009 legislative session. These estimates are limited in accuracy by the 56-meter resolution of the USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service 2008 Cropland Data Layer.

### **Update on Con-Con Lands Drainage Projects Rule**

Mike Carroll, DNR Region 1 Director, provided an overview of the DNR Con-Con Lands Rule regarding drainage projects (MN Rules 6115.1520 Drainage Projects), which was first authorized in 1984 (MN Statutes, Section 84A.55) and completed in 2008. Because the rule is relatively general, the DNR developed an “Evaluators Manual for Assessing Benefits on State-Owned Lands in Consolidated Conservation Areas, June 15, 2009”. Use of the manual is being piloted in one or more counties having Con-Con lands. Chapter 84A does not provide for use of Chapter 103E (drainage law) methods for drainage system benefits determination. Mike indicated that public drainage ditches on Con-Con land often do not provide significant benefits for the land uses designated by the DNR. DNR may request abandonment of some ditches and seek wetland banking credits that would be shared with the associated county. It was suggested

that DNR look at water storage on state lands that could provide flood damage reduction and water quality benefits. Land use plans should consider multiple benefits.

### **Minnesota Glacial Geology in Ag Regions**

Carrie Jennings, Senior Scientist, Minnesota Geological Survey, provided a very informative PowerPoint presentation about the glacial geology of Minnesota that affects drainage needs for agricultural production and other infrastructure. This included information about Glacial Lake Agassiz, Glacial River Warren and how different glacial advances and retreats affected topography, soils and natural drainage systems, including effects on sediment sources in the Minnesota River Basin. This discussion related to the presentation by Shawn Schottler at the 7-29-09 DWG meeting regarding sediment source fingerprinting in the Minnesota River Basin. The many maps and photographs presented by Carrie were very informative and engaging.

### **Brief Review of DWG List of Discussion Topics**

Al Kean distributed copies of the most current 12-23-08 prioritized list of DWG discussion topics. Brief review and discussion identified a consensus desire to further discuss the redetermination of benefits topic. The purpose and feasible outcomes of this discussion may be somewhat different than outlined on the discussion topics list. Therefore, further discussion should occur.

The discussion topic regarding types and effectiveness of drainage management practices was confirmed as a relatively high priority topic for discussion. The topic regarding Section 103E.015 was also identified as relatively high priority for discussion.

Al will do additional homework regarding these topics, including coordination with applicable key DWG members, to develop pertinent background information.

### **Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the second Thursday of the month is a reasonably good day for future meetings. Because the Minnesota Farm Bureau is using its training and conference room on Thursdays for at least the remainder of the calendar year, another meeting location will be needed. Annalee Gartletz, AMC, and Al Kean will further explore use of the MCIT facility in St. Paul. The next meeting of the DWG would be on Thursday, October 8, 2009, if Al can be ready for it and key DWG members are available for the topic(s) on the agenda.