

Water Resources Coordinating Council

Friday November 14, 2014

9:00-11:30 AM

Urbandale Public Library - 3520 86th St. Urbandale, IA

WRCC Website: <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/WRCC.asp>

MINUTES

9:15 - Welcome & Introductions

The meeting started at 9:15 AM. Approximately 35 total in attendance between WRCC and the public.

9:20 – WRCC Member Updates (All)

[Iowa DOT](#) (Marler) - Member of Bridge Team discussed pilot studies they are doing on bridge vulnerability relating to flooding and hydraulics. Pilots are on Cedar and South Skunk Rivers.

Iowa DOT provided comments on WOTUS. Also discussed web application that allows the public to view cameras mounted on snowplows.

All salt and sand is under roofs and protected from runoff. Also, wastewater is recycled at shops and used as brine.

[Iowa DNR](#) (Ehm) - SIMRA is meeting on Monday, November 17. Schnieders- Gave NRS update and distributed a summary handout of point source permits status.

[USGS](#) (Richards) - New publication available on model of Missouri River in 2011 floods with and without reservoirs. Also a publication available on real-time nitrate sensors in place on Mississippi River. Sensors are showing underestimation of loads in modeling. Nitrate concentrations are higher now than normal.

[ISU](#) (Lawrence) - ICM Conference is December 2-3 for CCAs. Breakout on role of agribusiness in implementation of NRS.

INRC funded a 2nd year of projects. First reports are coming in on those projects in addition to first year projects.

Measures Subcommittee- FSA Land Use data is now summarized, along with WIRB and IDALS data. NRCS data is now received and should be summarized by end of calendar year.

[NRCS](#) (Adkins)- Data access issues are being addressed that will allow IDALS and other partners to look at summary data of federally-funded conservation practices.

Staffing changes are being implemented. Getting technicians back in the field and contract staff working on administrative issues.

Conservation planning signup is underway- intended to be a workload planning initiative. Chief Weller is in DM this week and has emphasized this. Adkins highlighted Heartland Coop initiatives and efforts to get certified planners among their staff.

Iowa NRCS is one of 10 states piloting a conservation planning interface (Resource Stewardship Point). Goal is to make planning process more interactive and useful to conservation customer. Would be web-based and help get producers started on plan development. The pilot in Iowa is being done on a 5-county level.

RCPP announcements delayed until early December.

[EPA Region 7](#) (Flournoy) - Hypoxia TF met October 20-23 in Alton, IL. All 12 states now have some form of an NRS. Extensive discussion held on monitoring and measurement. Goal is to refine parameters and establish consistency.

[USACE](#) (Deschenes)- Discussion on use of 519 program to further NRS and potentially to do IA-Cedar study. **Response from Northey- WRCC cannot make this type of commitment as a coordinating body, but individual agencies with interest can inform the Corps of their interest. IDALS is not opposed to the project, but does not have the required resources to commit.**

Working on an updated hydraulic analysis of the Mississippi River basin. Work in Des Moines river basin is underway and USACE would like to accelerate. They envision a multi-state effort to implement this.

Des Moines watershed is being reviewed as potential Sustainable Rivers watershed.

Update on Hydro Power Plant construction at Red Rock Dam.

Flood Risk management continues in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids.

There is a mat sinking operation wrapping up in the Memphis area that is impacting navigation on the Mississippi River as a whole. USACE is aware of the delays and working to minimize navigation impacts. Operation should finish over next few days.

IDALS (Northey)- Hypoxia Task Force -Press release on NRCS & USGS new partnership to measure conservation impacts on water quality was distributed and discussed.

Spring 2015 meeting tentatively slated during week of May 18-22 at Ohio State University in Columbus

Water Quality Initiative (Lechtenberg)- WQI Demo projects 3rd RFA update- Pre-applications are due November 17.

WQI Urban RFA is out- Applications are due December 19.

First year of initial projects is wrapping up and Annual Reviews are being scheduled. Cover Crop Workshop is scheduled for February 17-18 at Sheraton in West Des Moines.

Gillespie discussed cost-share report and review of last year, which was a record year for the program, even with delays due to weather conditions.

Hansen gave brief information on number and coverage of watershed projects.

10:30 – US Fish & Wildlife Service - Gulf of Mexico Watershed Restoration

Robert Clevensine gave a presentation on USFWS Gulf Restoration efforts. A copy of his presentation is included with the meeting summary. *(JH Note- see about including USFWS in Funding Summit in February)*

11:00 – Corps Regional Permit Update for Ponds, Dams, Waterways, and Grade Stabilization Structures

Dan Hayes gave an update on the RP33 permit renewal process. Refresher on interpretive rule and its implications also. Joint meeting of EPA/USACE/NRCS at HQ was held yesterday, but no news to report from that. Working to ensure Corps is aware of upcoming spring workload which is forecast to be similar to last year.

11:25 - WPAC Update

Kinman provided the WPAC Update. The WPAC will meet later today and is working on their annual report to the Legislature. The IA League of Cities will present on nutrient trading and there will be a Field to Market presentation. September meeting highlighted WMAs and WQI demonstration projects. Both groups need funding to remain viable and to implement plans.

11:30 - Other Topics

No other topics- information was covered through regular course of meeting.

11:30 - Public Comments (Please contain comment length to 3 minutes per person)

Susan Heathcote, IEC- Water Monitoring in projects- restated importance of getting this in the projects. Also discussed OIG report submitted to EPA highlighting monitoring concerns as an issue in NRS implementation. Potential loss of continuous nitrate monitors due to lack of match. Would like to see those stay running and to look at ways to add more.

Senator Bolcom- WMA Comment and need to keep staffing in place. Can they dedicate staffing to it?

11:45 - Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM. The next meeting will be held in January, date and location TBD.

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WRCC Website: <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/WRCC.asp>

AGENDA

9:00 - Welcome & Introductions

9:10 – WRCC Member Updates (All)

10:00 –Gulf of Mexico Watershed Restoration (US Fish & Wildlife Service)

10:30 – Corps Regional Permit Development for Ponds, Dams, Waterways, and Grade Stabilization Structures

10:40 - WPAC Update

10:50 - Other Topics

11:10 - Public Comments (Please contain comment length to 3 minutes per person)

11:30 - Adjourn

Future Meeting Dates/Locations:

January 2015 – TBD

March 2015 – TBD

May 2015 – TBD

July 2015 – TBD

September 2015 – TBD

November 2015 - TBD

11-14-14

Water Resources Coordinating Council

| WRCC Representative | Position | Organization |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 Bill Northey | Secretary (WRCC Chair) | Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Terry Branstad <i>Julie Vande Hoef</i> | Governor <i>Designee</i> | Governor's Office Governor's Office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Chuck Glipp <i>Bruce Trautman</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Bill Ehm</i> | Director <i>Designee</i> <i>Designee</i> | Iowa Department of Natural Resources Iowa Department of Natural Resources Iowa Department of Natural Resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 Jim Gillespie <i>Jake Hansen</i> | Director <i>Designee</i> | IDALS - Division of Soil Conservation IDALS - Division of Soil Conservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Marlannette Miller-Meeks <i>Kenneth Sharp</i> <i>Stu Schmitz</i> | Director <i>Designee</i> <i>Designee</i> | IA Department of Public Health IA Department of Public Health IA Department of Public Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Mark Schouten <i>John Benson</i> | Administrator <i>Designee</i> | Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Wendy Wintersteen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>John Lawrence</i> | Dean <i>Designee</i> | College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, ISU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, ISU |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Susan Curry <i>David Osterberg</i> | Dean <i>Designee</i> | College of Public Health, University of Iowa College of Public Health, University of Iowa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Joel Haack <i>Maureen Clayton</i> | Dean <i>Designee</i> | College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, UNI College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, UNI |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10 Paul Trombino III <i>Scott Marler</i> | Director <i>Designee</i> | Iowa Department of Transportation Iowa Department of Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 Debi Durham <i>Tim Whipple</i> | Director <i>Designee</i> | Iowa Economic Development Authority Iowa Economic Development Authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 Dave Jamison <i>Lori Beary</i> | Executive Director <i>Designee</i> | Iowa Finance Authority Iowa Finance Authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 Alec Scranton <i>Larry Weber</i> | Dean <i>Designee</i> | College of Engineering, University of Iowa College of Engineering, University of Iowa |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14 Kevin Richards | Director | USGS, Iowa Water Science Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Jay Mar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Marty Adkins</i> | State Conservationist <i>Designee</i> | USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 John Whitaker | State Executive Director | USDA, Farm Services Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 Bill Menner <i>Kate Sand</i> | State Director <i>Designee</i> | USDA, Rural Development USDA, Rural Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 Karl Brooks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Karen Flournoy</i> <i>Damon Frizzell</i> | Regional Administrator <i>Designee</i> <i>Designee</i> | EPA-Region 7 EPA-Region 7 EPA-Region 7 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19 Colonel Mark Deschenes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Diane Karnish</i> | Rock Island District Commander <i>Designee</i> | US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District |

11-14-14

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WRCC Public Attendance Sign-In Sheet
 (Public comments will be accepted at specified time on agenda)

| | Name | Affiliation | Have Comments (Y/N) |
|----|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Steven Richmond | IDALS | N |
| 2 | Susan Heathcote | Iowa Envir. Council | Y |
| 3 | Linda Kinman | IAWA - DMWW | No |
| 4 | Brian Balke | HAIR | No |
| 5 | Rick Robinson | Iowa Farm Bureau | NO |
| 6 | Jace Mikels | Senate Democratic Staff | No |
| 7 | Tyler Beth | Iowa Pork | NO |
| 8 | Matt Lechtenborg | IDALS | NO |
| 9 | Jenny Neppel | IDALS | No |
| 10 | Roger Bruner | Iowa DNR | No |
| 11 | Adam Schwiders | IDNR | No |
| 12 | Wendy Hieb | IDNR | No |
| 13 | Eric Wiklund | IDNR | NO |
| 14 | Mike Naig | IDALS | N |
| 15 | Bob Clevenstine | USFWS Refugees | N |
| 16 | Lyt Hobart | GROWMARK | N |
| 17 | Nate Pearce | GROWMARK | N |
| 18 | Steve Fekk | EMPC | N |
| 19 | JOHN MONSELAND | Sen. Harkin | ✓ |
| 20 | JOB BOLKCOM | Iowa Senate | NO |
| 21 | BRETT LORENZEN | EWG | No |
| 22 | Deskozy | LOA | NO |
| 23 | BILL FREELAND | HOUSE D CAUCUS STAFF | No |
| 24 | Roger Wolf | Iowa Soybean Assn | NO |
| 25 | Tim Hall | Iowa DNR | no |
| 26 | DAVID HANCE | RACCOON RIVER WATERSHED | YES |
| 27 | | | |
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Point Source Nutrient Reduction Strategy Report

WRCC – November 2014

The IDNR will track progress for implementing the point source nutrient reduction strategy using several measures:

- 1) Number of permits issued that require nutrient reduction feasibility studies

Status: The following permits have been issued or put on public notice:

Permits Issued/Closed

| | Facility | Permit Issued | Status |
|----|--|---------------|--|
| 1 | Dairiconcepts, L.P. – Allerton, IA | 9/1/2013 | |
| 2 | City of Grinnell | 9/1/2013 | |
| 3 | Rembrandt Enterprises – Thompson, IA | 9/1/2013 | |
| 4 | City of West Liberty | 9/1/2013 | |
| 5 | City of Dubuque | 10/1/2013 | |
| 6 | City of Harlan | 10/1/2013 | |
| 7 | Tyson Foods – Perry, IA | 11/1/2013 | |
| 8 | City of Atlantic | 12/1/2013 | |
| 9 | City of Eldridge | 12/1/2013 | Amended permit to include construction of nutrient removal |
| 10 | Manindra Milling Corporation – Hamburg, IA | 12/1/2013 | |
| 11 | Oakland Foods LLC – Oakland, IA | 12/1/2013 | |
| 12 | City of Grundy Center | 2/1/2014 | |
| 13 | City of Mt. Pleasant | 2/1/2014 | Permit in process of being amended to include construction of nutrient removal |

| | Facility | Permit Issued | Status |
|----|--|---------------|--|
| 14 | City of New Hampton | 4/1/2014 | |
| 15 | City of Boone | 5/1/2014 | |
| 16 | City of Cedar Falls | 5/1/2014 | |
| 17 | City of Iowa City | 5/1/2014 | Currently conducting total nitrogen removal |
| 18 | City of Red Oak | 5/1/2014 | |
| 19 | City of West Burlington | 5/1/2014 | |
| 20 | City of Winterset | 5/1/2014 | |
| 21 | Walter Scott, Jr. Energy Center | 5/14/2014 | |
| 22 | Swiss Valley Farms – Luana, IA | 6/1/2014 | |
| 23 | Climax Molybdenum Company – Fort Madison, IA | 7/1/2014 | |
| 24 | City of Waukee | 8/1/2014 | Scheduled to connect to Des Moines WRA by January 1, 2019 |
| 25 | City of Davenport | 8/1/2014 | |
| 26 | City of Charles City | 9/1/2014 | |
| 27 | City of Cherokee | 9/1/2014 | |
| 28 | City of Eldora | 9/1/2014 | |
| 29 | John Deere Dubuque Works | 9/1/2014 | |
| 30 | City of Ankeny | CLOSED | Facility connected to Des Moines WRA. NPDES permit closed on January 6, 2014 |
| 31 | City of Adel | 10/1/2014 | |
| 32 | City of Greenfield | 10/1/2014 | |
| 33 | City of Newton | 10/1/2014 | |
| 34 | Iowa Fertilizer Company | 11/1/2014 | |
| 35 | City of Eagle Grove | 11/1/2014 | |

Permits on Public Notice

| | Facility | Status |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | City of Fort Dodge | noticed 3/10/14 |
| 2 | City of Council Bluffs | noticed 9/19/2014 |
| 3 | City of Forest City | noticed 10/20/2014 |
| 4 | City of Muscatine | noticed 8/27/14 |
| 5 | Iowa Premium Beef | noticed 10/22/2014 |
| 6 | City of Maquoketa | noticed 10/29/2014 |
| 7 | City of Oelwein | noticed 9/8/14 |
| 8 | City of Anamosa | noticed 7/17/14 |
| 9 | Tyson Fresh Meats – Storm Lake | noticed 10/15/2014 |
| 10 | City of Vinton | noticed 11/3/2014 |
| 11 | City of Waverly | noticed 10/20/2014 |
| 12 | City of Iowa Falls | noticed on 11/17/2014 |

| | Updates | Date | Status |
|---|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| 1 | Sioux-Preme Packing Co. | Sept 2014 | Signed consent decree with AG. Must apply for a land application permit within 60 days. Once the land application permit is finalized there will be no more surface water discharges and the facility will be removed from the Nutrient Strategy list. |
| 2 | Twin Counties Dairy | Sept 2014 | This facility has closed for now. This facility may be removed from the Strategy if ownership informs DNR in writing that they no longer require a permit for industrial wastewater. |

If there are any questions on this report or suggestions for improvements, please contact Adam Schnieders at 515.281.7409 or adam.schnieders@dnr.iowa.gov.

6. Accountability and Verification Measures

The IDNR will convene a technical work group beginning in 2013 to define the process for providing a regular nutrient load estimate (i.e., nutrient budget) based on the ambient water quality data network. This will include specifying the most appropriate mathematical model, the acceptability of the data, and a process for making future adjustments based on the latest information and advancements in science and technology.

Status: The technical work group has completed the nitrogen load method selection process. Work is continuing on developing the report for nitrogen load methodology to be applied on a regular basis. Work is nearing completion on the 2013 nitrogen load for the State.

The technical workgroup is currently scheduling the first meeting to review information on implementing a state-wide load estimation method for phosphorus. The meetings will follow the approach used to identify an appropriate method for nitrogen. The fact that total phosphorus is detected at a much lower rate than nitrogen in the ambient monitoring record will present challenges that were not encountered in the previous effort with nitrogen.

This release can be found in the USGS Newsroom at: <http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4034>.



News Release

October 21, 2014

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Interior, Agriculture Departments Partner to Measure Conservation Impacts on Water Quality



ALTON, Ill., Oct. 21, 2014—The United States Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a new partnership agreement today that will provide a clearer picture of the benefits of farmers' conservation practices on the quality of our Nation's water. Working together, USDA's NRCS and DOI's USGS will quantify the benefits of voluntary agricultural practices at a watershed scale. This information will strengthen the effectiveness of state and federal nutrient reduction strategies while protecting the privacy of individual farmers. The agreement was announced at the Mississippi River Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force Meeting.

“On a voluntary basis, the agricultural community has put extensive effort into the management of nutrients and reducing runoff into waterways. This collaboration will help evaluate the impact of farmers' conservation efforts on improving water quality,” said Ann Mills, USDA's deputy under secretary for Natural Resources and Environment.

Mills said when hundreds of farms take action in one watershed, it can make a difference—it can help prevent an algae bloom downstream or lessen the need for water treatment plants to treat for nitrates.

The U.S. Geological Survey (<http://www.usgs.gov/>) will now use Natural Resources Conservation Service data on conservation work to factor into its surface water quality models, which track how rivers receive and transport nutrients from natural and human sources to downstream reservoirs and estuaries. This information will help provide a more accurate picture of the conservation systems in the watershed that contribute to water quality improvement and will provide crucial information for voluntary nutrient management strategies and watershed planning.

“This agreement will allow NRCS and USGS to combine resource management capabilities with science, and will give us the information we need to prioritize the most effective conservation strategies so that we can improve the quality of streams throughout the Mississippi River Basin,” said Lori Caramanian, DOI deputy assistant secretary for Water and Science.

Working together, NRCS and USGS (<http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/>) will develop conservation intensity data sets that reflect the value of conservation actions, but do not reveal private information about individual farms, ranches or forests. Protecting the trust relationship between NRCS and farmers and their

private information protected by law is vital to the continued success of voluntary conservation on private lands.

“We know our farmers are doing great work to protect our natural resources. Our goal with this partnership is to be able to better recognize these achievements and provide conservation and water quality management communities with science-based information for improving water quality,” Mills said. “Farmers invest heavily in conservation systems to improve water quality, and we want to aid their decisions with the best science and information available.”

The conservation intensity products developed through the agreement will provide a uniform representation of conservation activities for use in water quality assessments at local, regional and national scales. Technical assistance providers will therefore have the assurance that they are using consistent and accurate information on conservation activities and a common platform for discussing conservation benefits.

Nutrient runoff from many different sources, including urban areas and industry, impacts our nation’s waterways. By providing science-based information, NRCS and USGS can help farmers decrease nutrient runoff and improve water quality for their communities and downstream.

Visit the following links to learn more about: [real-time nitrate monitoring \(http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/current?type=qw&PARAMeter_cds=STATION_NM,DATETIME,00630,99124,00631,99133,99137\)](http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/current?type=qw&PARAMeter_cds=STATION_NM,DATETIME,00630,99124,00631,99133,99137), [annual and seasonal nutrient loads to the Gulf of Mexico \(http://toxics.usgs.gov/hypoxia/mississippi/oct_jun/index.html\)](http://toxics.usgs.gov/hypoxia/mississippi/oct_jun/index.html), [nutrient trends \(http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/pubs/nitrate_trends/\)](http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/pubs/nitrate_trends/), and the [Mississippi River basin nutrient model mapper \(http://wim.usgs.gov/SparrowMARB/SparrowMARBmapper.html\)](http://wim.usgs.gov/SparrowMARB/SparrowMARBmapper.html).

Learn more about [NRCS’s Conservation Effects Assessment Project Cropland National Assessment \(http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/ceap/?cid=nrcs143_014144\)](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/ceap/?cid=nrcs143_014144) and the [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative \(http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/initiatives/?cid=stelprdb1048200\)](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/initiatives/?cid=stelprdb1048200).

To learn about technical and financial assistance available through conservation programs, visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted \(http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted\)](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted) or local USDA service center.

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Gulf of Mexico Watershed Restoration

FWS Region 3 Support
for the

Vision for a Healthy Gulf of Mexico Watershed



Background

- April 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
- May 2010 EO 13543 established the Oil Spill Commission
- June 2010 President appoints Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus
- September 2010 Mabus Report
- October 2010 Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force established
- January 2011 Oil Spill Commission Report
- December 2011 GCER Task Force Report
- July 2012 RESTORE Act passed
- January 2013 A Path Forward to Restoring the Gulf Coast, A Comprehensive Plan
- January 2013 FWS writing team assembled
- July 2013 Vision released

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

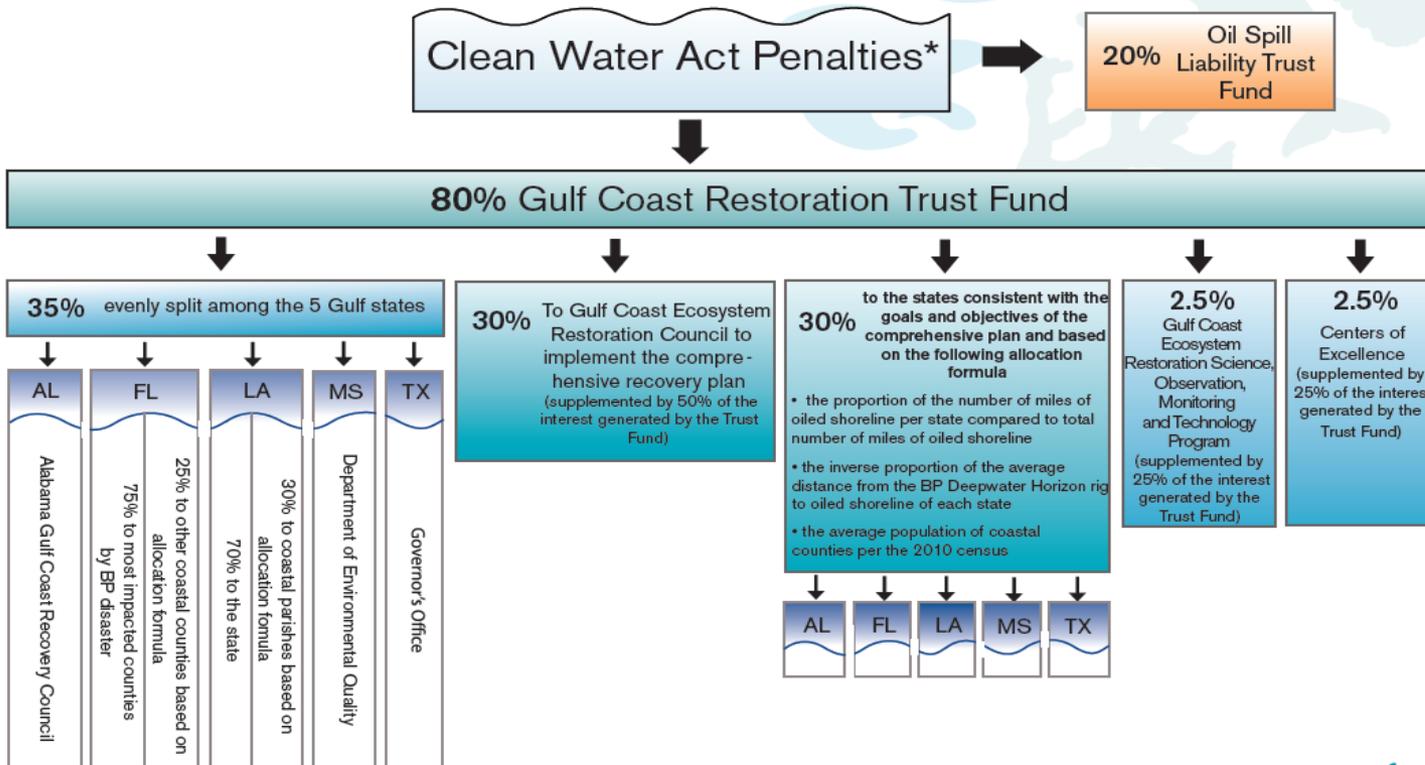


Vision for a Healthy Gulf of Mexico Watershed





Distribution of Clean Water Act penalties to Gulf recovery per the RESTORE Act



* Clean Water Act penalties are a per barrel penalty of \$1100 for release of pollution into the environment. If 'gross negligence' is determined in release of the pollution, the penalty per barrel increases to \$4300. In the case of the BP Deepwater Horizon incident the following are estimates:

\$1100 X (4.9 million barrels of oil released into the environment) = approx \$5.39 billion
 \$4300 X (4.9million barrels of oil released into the environment) = approx \$21.07 billion [gross negligence]

All amounts are subject to negotiation via a settlement between the government and responsible parties.





Vision Background

- As the Council planning for the distribution of Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Settlement funds got underway in 2012, FWS Director requested a document to capture Service restoration priorities.
- Distribution of restoration funding is focused on the 5 State Gulf Coast Region, but....
- Participants recognized the Mississippi River Watershed role in the health of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem
 - Theme carried through from Secretary of the Navy's report
 - Secretary of the Interior and FWS Director requested inclusion of priority actions from Regions upstream in the MRB



Vision Background

Organized around 8 broad strategies:

1. Use sound science
2. Restore resources impacted by the DWH oil spill
3. Create a network of public & private conservation lands
4. Restore wetland and aquatic ecosystems
5. Restore and conserve prairies and forests
6. Protect and restore of coastal strand, barrier island and estuarine island habitats
7. Conserve working lands
8. Manage lands and waters for sustainable populations of fish, wildlife, and their habitats



Vision Intent

- Our goal was to capture:
 1. A collective Service vision for the Gulf based on our priorities for restoration and capacity for collaborative conservation.
 2. The most pressing conservation challenges on the Gulf and in the watershed.
 3. Where those challenges are located.
 4. How would those challenges be addressed.



Vision Development

- FWS Regions within the Gulf Watershed all have a role in the long-term health of the GoM ecosystem.
- The second week of February 2013, Regional ARDs and program chiefs were requested to consider and provide top broad programmatic priorities (vs a project list).
- Context of what, where, and how.



Vision Development

- Writing team synthesized input from Regional staff, and from field staff interviews around the Gulf region – R4 and R2.
- R3 team member used information on Midwest land cover changes, SWAPs, JV species profiles, USGS SPARROW NRCS MRBI, along with LCC products.
- Editing completed mid June, final approval by Director late June, internal release July 5. External release July 10, 2013.



R3 Priority Development

What - Habitat

- “Zoomed out” to R3 and Mississippi watershed
 - Grassland/prairie and associated wetlands are our most imperiled habitats.
 - Iowa has less than 1/10th of 1 percent of original grassland
 - Indiana prairie and savanna 99.9% gone, wetlands 85% gone
 - Illinois has a total of 4 mi² of 40,000 mi² native prairie left in remnant patches

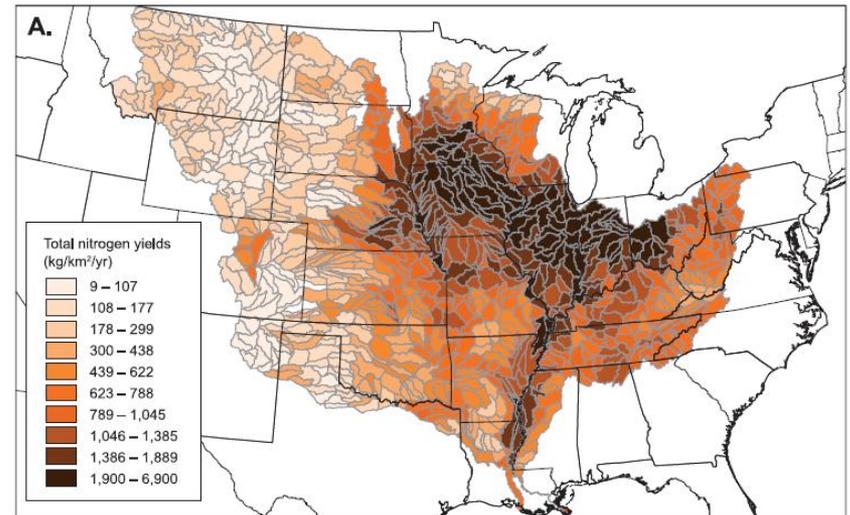
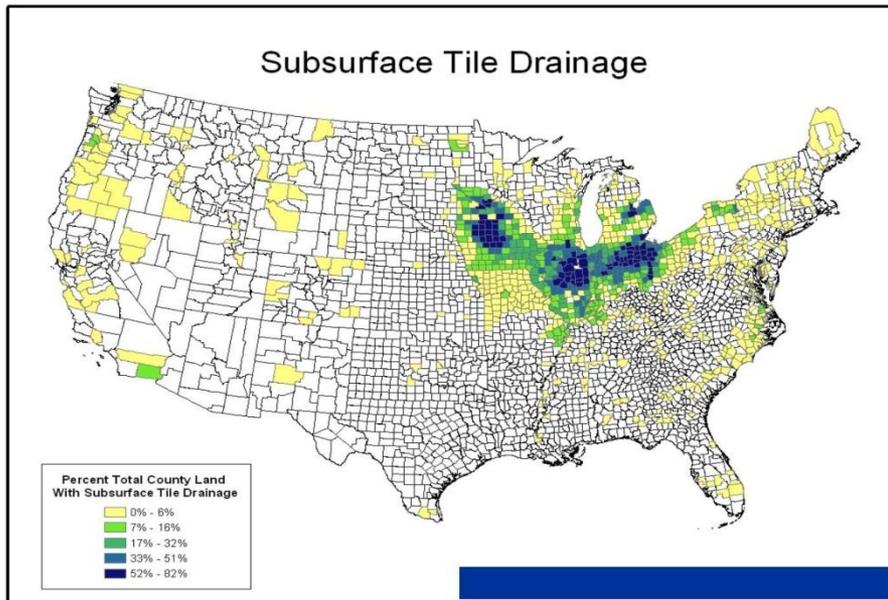
What - Trust Resources





R3 Priority Development

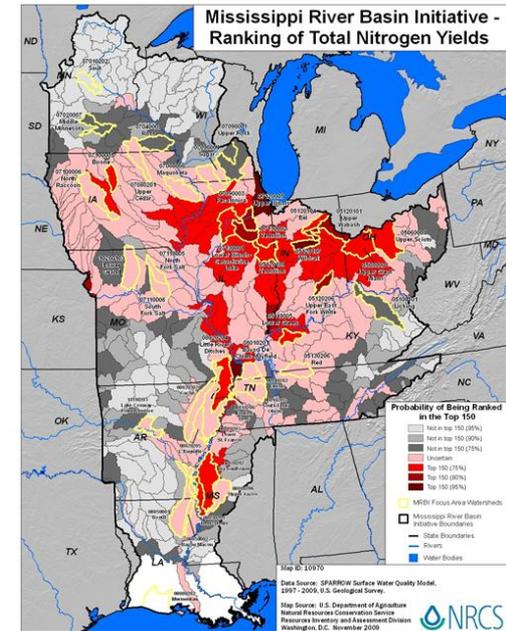
- Where? Habitat losses are “coincidentally” located in areas of greatest artificial drainage, and in high nutrient yielding watersheds.





R3 Priority Development

- How – strategic focus of conservation delivery programs, supported by conservation planning and design aligned with partners.
- Focus on high N-yield watersheds identified through NRCS, USGS SPARROW models and partner input: SWAPs, COAs, NGO goals & objectives....





Region 3 2013 Vision Priority

Work in targeted watersheds with farmers and other private landowners to restore native grasses and prairie hydrology to reverse declines in grassland species and reduce the amount of nutrients transported to the mainstem Mississippi River.



Region 3 2013 Vision Priority

Focus on acquiring interests with positive impacts within and outside refuge boundaries. Examples include the proposed Grand Kankakee Marsh Conservation Area in Indiana, and additions to Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in Iowa. These conservation lands would provide a complex of wetland, wet prairie, and prairie habitats, while reducing nutrient loss to the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers.



Region 3 2013 Vision Priority

Collaborate with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the State of Missouri, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and local interests in the St. Johns Bayou Basin and New Madrid Floodway to appropriately balance flood risk reduction and maintenance of floodplain ecosystem services.

Alternate examples include the Iowa-Cedar River Interagency Team and the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Environmental Management Program



Vision Implementation

- Next step is an implementation document, using example actions in Focal Areas built on measurable biological outcomes.
- The document to include examples from a project database populated in R2, R3 R4, format in development, Spring 2015 completion date TBD.
- So far over 200 proposals submitted, including partnership-driven actions that integrating support from and for partners through existing coordination mechanisms.



Organizing for Success

- FWS Region 4 (Southeast) developed online database to capture proposed actions supporting the 5 goals.
- Landscape Conservation Cooperative network engaged to bring partners together and align programs and conservation delivery
 - Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers organized back-to-back multi-LCC workshops in Memphis around habitat and hypoxia in August.
 - Multi-LCC Project to map the “conservation estate”, examine habitat & species relationships, water quality, landowner interest, and identify opportunities for combining resources to achieve mutual objectives



Who participated in the workshops?

Universities:

- Mississippi State University
- Ohio State University
- Louisiana University Marine Consortium
- University Wisconsin-Madison

NGOs:

- Agricultural Watershed Institute
- Mississippi River Network
- Ducks Unlimited
- Envirosapes Ecological Consulting
- Fishers & Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership
- Gulf Hypoxia Task Force
- Illinois Council on Best Management Practices
- KGregg Consulting
- 7 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives
- Lower Mississippi River Committee
- Midwest Conservation Biomass Alliance
- Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association
- National Wildlife Federation
- Natural Land Institute
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Ohio River Fish Habitat Partnership
- Practical Farmers of Iowa
- The Conservation Fund

- The Nature Conservancy
- Wildlife Management Institute

State agencies:

- Indiana DNR
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

Federal agencies:

- Army Corps of Engineers
- Dept of Energy
- Dept of Transportation
- EPA (OWOW, HTF)
- Fish & Wildlife Service
- Forest Service
- US Geological Survey (NAWQA, HTF)
- National Park Service
- NOAA
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA NIFA
- USDA NRCS (AR, IN, TN, MRBI)

50 participants in Memphis
Over 215 in the contact list

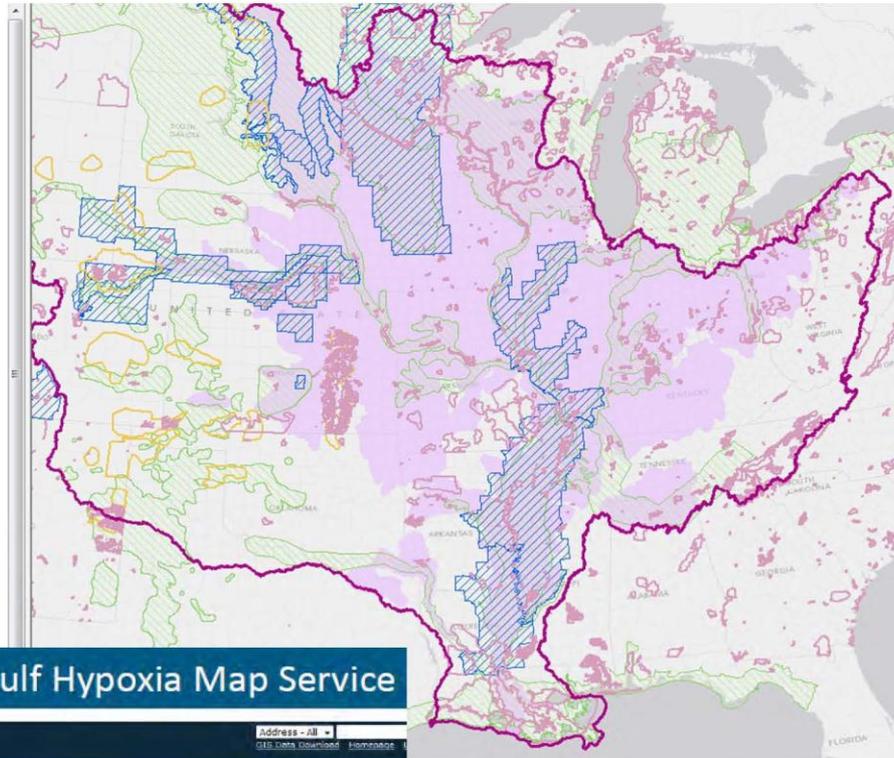


Multi-LCC Project

Where would we focus combined actions?

Interactive online spatial analysis & optimization tools
 pink = initial water quality priority zone based on SPARROW & update land use
 blue = example bird focus areas (Audubon, Ducks Unlimited, etc)

- MRB - Conservation Designations
 - Mississippi River Basin
- Regional Focus Areas
 - Audubon - Important Bird Areas
 - Grassland Priority Conservation Areas (CEC)
 - Ducks Unlimited - Land Acquisition/Easement Focus Areas
 - Ducks Unlimited - Landscape Conservation Priority Areas
- UMRGLR IV - Woodland Breeding Bird Habitat Priorities
- UMRGLR IV - Wetland Breeding Bird Habitat Priorities
- UMRGLR IV - Openland Breeding Bird Habitat Priorities
- Grassland Bird Conservation Areas
- Arkansas/Miss. Alluvial Valley CDN - Restoration Focus Areas
- Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership
- Arkansas/Miss. Alluvial Valley CDN - Restoration Priorities
- Open Pine Management DST
- Bobwhite Conservation Initiative - Biologist Ranking Index
- Conservation Estate
 - National Wildlife Refuge
 - National Conservation Easement Database (2013)
 - Protected Areas Database (USGS v1.3)
- State Focus Areas
 - Alabama - Priority Conservation Areas (Terrestrial)
 - Alabama - Priority Conservation Areas (Aquatic)
 - Illinois - Grassland Focus Areas (INAI Sites)
 - Illinois - Conservation Opportunity Areas
 - Iowa
 - Kentucky - Tier1 Conservation Areas
 - Minnesota
 - Missouri
 - Nebraska - Biologically Unique Landscapes
 - Nebraska - Migratory Bird Landscape
 - North Dakota - Conservation Focus Areas
 - Ohio - Conservation Focus Areas



Mississippi River / Gulf Hypoxia Map Service



Questions & Discussion

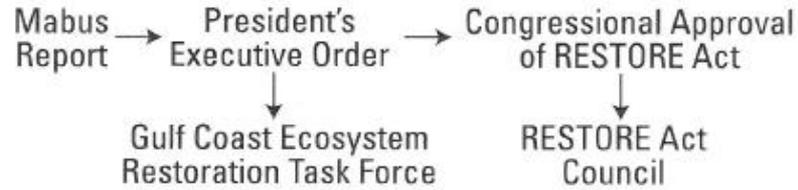
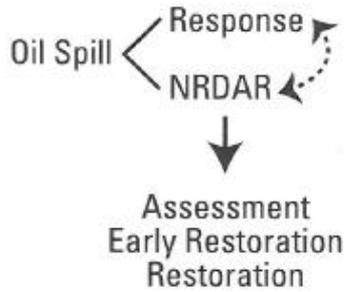


<http://www.fws.gov/gulfrestoration/pdf/VisionDocument.pdf>





To Recap.....



| | Geographic Scope | Criteria | Financial Obligation |
|---|--|---|---|
| NRDAR | Based on Mitigation of Injured Resources | Mitigation of Injured Resources | Oil Pollution Act BP/MOEX/Transocean, etc. |
| RESTORE Act | Gulf Coast Region | Restoration of a Sustainable Gulf Environment & Economy | Clean Water Act Civil Penalties - 80% |
| NFWF (National Fish & Wildlife Foundation) | 5 Gulf States | Remedy Natural Resource Damage | BP & Transocean Criminal Penalties (\$2.544 billion) |
| NAWCA (North American Wetlands Conservation Act) | No restrictions on scope | Migratory birds and other wildlife affected by the oil spill | BP Criminal Penalties (\$100 million) |
| NAS (National Academy of Sciences) | No restrictions on scope | Human health, Environmental Protection and Offshore Drilling Safety | BP & Transocean Criminal Penalties (\$500 million) |