

## Water Resources Coordinating Council

Tuesday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2013 @ Iowa State Capitol

### Meeting Minutes

#### WRCC Members/Designees Present:

Secretary Northey, Bill Ehm, Jim Gillespie, Todd Coffelt, Stu Schmitz, John Benson, John Lawrence, Maureen Clayton, Scott Marler, Kevin Richards, Marty Adkins, Diane Karnish, Larry Weber

#### Public Attendance:

Tyler Bettin, Jan Glendening, Susanne Hickey, Victoria Carver, Shawn Richmond, Adam Schnieders, Steve Williams, Ben Gleason, Jerry Neppel, Dean Lemke, Josh Mandelbaum, Deb Kozel, John Crotty

Meeting convened @ 9:06 AM CST

- Welcome and Introductions made by Secretary Northey
  - Public comments will be received at end of meeting
  - Identified sign-in sheets for WRCC members and for public in attendance
  - Soil Health Working Group topic added to agenda
- Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update
  - Strategy documents available for review at <http://www.nutrientstrategy.iastate.edu/>
  - Several comments received so far (325 online and 92 hard copy as of Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>)
  - Comment timeline has been extended until Jan. 18th
  - 2 public informational meetings and one webinar have been hosted to date
  - Webinar is archived on Nutrient Strategy website and has received 262 views since initial webinar was held which had 87 participants
- Nonpoint Source Updates
  - 22 action items outlined under the nonpoint section
  - 12/22 of the items have actions already underway today
  - Progress in past month has been made on topic of tracking NPS actions
  - ISU science team has been consulted
  - Pursuing tracking of load reductions as metric
  - Complex issue at varying scales
  - Several small watershed projects already implement some load reduction tracking
  - Larger scale C/S programs need more work to report this
  - Need to bring Farm Bill programs together with state programs to track progress
  - Privately implemented practices most difficult to capture
  - Science assessment provides tools to assess load reductions
  - How do we track privately implemented and other NGO supported practices?
    - NASS surveys in past have attempted this. Costly to do, especially on annual basis.

- Ag Retailers, CCAs
      - Statistical surveys of records
      - Private framework
    - Remote sensing potential applications
      - Tillage, cover crops, etc...
- Science Team Meeting Recap
  - 10 MLRASs used on statewide scale
  - Field level scale of projects are more refined
  - Need compatibility test between scales
  - Avoid double counting and take into account factors for reductions from multiple practices combined
  - Working with several disciplines to address questions
  - Learning will occur through implementation levels as we continue to look at these questions
- Iowa framework for tracking and reporting load reductions will put us in nationwide lead on these efforts
- Will bring info and updates from science team meetings back to WRCC as effort progresses
- WRCC Comments
  - Need to look at what's already being done with surveys and assess where investments can be piggybacked onto existing efforts
  - Look at potential for NRI and CEAP data to be utilized
  - Focus on actions and benefits to date
  - Is a long term issue that is complex and won't be solved quickly
  - Lack of research on processes for fate and transport of nutrients
  - Could use science based adaptive management
    - Gap analysis of understanding
    - Would provide value & direction
    - Agency/academic based research
  - U of I could contribute to watershed processes with science team
  - Gulf targets have been used to date for nutrient reductions. More work needed to explore what levels are appropriate given complex system transport processes.
  - Uncertainty of processes needs to be evaluated
  - Group effort needed to discuss several topics
    - Real time nutrient network
    - Monitoring needs
    - Fate & transport models needed
    - Scale from edge of field to large watersheds
  - Proposal currently underway for nutrient research center in Iowa
  - Would provide a great place to house this needed work

- Can present more details on proposal at future WRCC meeting
  - Continued science team input critical to these questions on future needs while we move forward with best current information
- Point Source Updates
  - Many good ideas have been received on point source section
  - Modeling efforts on state nutrient budgets utilizing ambient monitoring network continue
  - Working group exists in DNR to consider nutrient budget efforts
- DSC Small Watershed Projects Overview
  - 11 projects funded in first year of program
  - 70 watersheds currently have active projects today
  - 265 watershed projects over past 25 years
  - Many purposes covered and over 40 different practices included in these projects
  - Lessons Learned
    - Technical planning and assessment critical to success
    - Dedicated local staff a necessity
    - Improved benefits recording and reporting over time as new tools have become available
    - Critical to provide this as accountability of achievements
    - Participation and technical assistance critical for success
    - Projects should be technically sound, financially feasible and include local participation and support to be successful
  - Planning Protocol Steps
    - Assessment
    - Resource Inventory
    - Implementation
- Watershed Prioritization Working Group Update
  - Work is progressing to prioritize HUC8 watersheds accounting for both point and nonpoint sources.
  - Budget ask to pilot some projects is hopeful
  - Would be targeted to the priority areas developed by WRCC
  - Plan to send RFPs within priority areas if budget ask is realized
- Soil Health Working Group
  - Important for WRCC to develop and maintain focus on soil resources as well
  - Important topic for how soils interact with hydrology
  - Economic, Ag, Water Quality, Water Quantity aspects of soil management
  - NRCS working with ISU and ARS on this topic. Look to include IDALS, DNR and others as well.
  - Good effort to be involved with to help support practice adoption.
  - DNR very supportive of this effort. Runoff is a critical concern and soil management is critical to help address.

- Water supply concerns exist as well and should be looked at in conjunction with water quality efforts.
- Other Topics
  - Awareness issue with freight movement in state.
    - Freight advisory council established (Public/Private groups)
    - Related transport issues for WRCC
    - Website is forthcoming soon
- Public Comments
  - No public comments received
- Upcoming Events
  - WPAC meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup> @ MWA office from 10-2
  - Conservation Partnership Day (Capitol) – January 22nd
  - Iowa Water Conference (Ames)– March 4th – 5th
- Future Meeting Dates
  - Thursday February 28<sup>th</sup> – Location TBD
  - Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup> – Location TBD

Meeting adjourned at 10:37am