

Water Resources Coordinating Council

Tuesday, June 30, 2015

9:00-11:30AM

Iowa State Capitol, Room 103

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

AGENDA

9:00 - Welcome & Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM. Attendance and sign-in sheets are attached.

9:05 - WRCC Member Agency Updates (All)

IDALS (Jim Gillespie)-

- Water Quality Initiative. Total funding is still pending but \$4.4 million has been signed and \$5.2 million additional is included through pending RIIF appropriations. A statewide cost share program for implementation of management practices will begin on July 1st. This year participation will be tiered with priority going to first-time users but eligibility expanded to prior participants in the statewide initiative or other repeat implementers of eligible practices.
- In addition, the IFIP (Cost Share program) appropriations language gives SWCDs additional flexibility to expand support for management practices, allowing up to \$15,000 for those purposes, or up to 30 percent of a district's allocation of moneys, if they choose to support management practices at these levels locally.
- A fourth round of demonstration project applications has been received and is in the final stages of review. An announcement of all funded projects will be made in early July, with new projects added to the 16 active demonstration projects underway.
- IDALS has begun implementation of our RCPP project, which will add EQIP funding to existing demonstration projects over a five-year period. We are also evaluating an open RCPP application cycle to determine what resources we might leverage through an application for FY2016 funding.
- IDALS staff attended the Annual Meeting of the National Watershed Coalition in May in Fort Worth, TX. The meeting included significant discussion of the PL-566 program and some potential renewed interest in funding construction and O & M of these structures. The president's budget includes funding for the PL-566 program and the program elements are eligible for RCPP funding on a competitive basis.

DNR- Adam Schneiders

- Defer to NRS Annual Report

ISU- John Lawrence

- Lots of field days scheduled for this summer.
- Iowa Nutrient Research Center funding proposals due June 30. Call issued to regents' universities. Progress reports for current projects are online at ISU NRS website.
- INRC received three-year funding appropriation (\$1,230,000) for in-field measurement initiative tied to Iowa NRS.

FSA, EPA Region 7, University of Iowa College of Public Health, US Army Corps of Engineers, UNI

- No report

USGS

- Receiving flooding reports throughout June. Anticipate more flood-related reports throughout the summer.

Iowa DOT

- Scott Marler introduced Ken Brink as new designee and thanked Secretary Northey for his leadership to the WRCC.
- DOT is looking at impacts of WOTUS on project development and decision-making process.

Iowa Dept. of Public Health – Stu Schmitz

- Monitoring with DNR for algal blooms is underway. Some new locations coming up and traditional locations that are not coming up.

NRCS- Marty Adkins

- All RCPP projects are underway. New pre-proposals are due on July 8.
- Also taking applications through July 10 for Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI)
- NRCS and IDALS have developed a cultural resources agreement with Dept. of Cultural Affairs to streamline processes and accelerate deployment of conservation construction.
- Discussion of watershed project planning capacity is taking place. NRCS and partners are looking at ways to improve skills of planners/staff leading local/regional projects, including NGOs interested in helping to deliver projects.
- Jay Mar is retiring this week. There will be an acting State Conservationist announced this week.

NWS (Jeff Zogg- Reported via e-mail)- Given by Jake Hansen, IDALS

- The NWS office in Des Moines is planning to do a local service assessment regarding this most recent flood event in central Iowa. These are sometimes done after a significant (i.e., impactful) flood event to (1) document the event, (2) identify what went well and (3) identify opportunities for improvement. This assessment will evaluate NWS services only--it will not be an evaluation of our partners' activities. As part of this assessment we will reach out to partners such as USGS, USACE, Iowa Flood Center, emergency management and broadcast media. Once the assessment is complete (likely later this summer or early this fall) we will share it with our partners.

9:30 – Nutrient Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report (Matt Lechtenberg, IDALS)

Matt Lechtenberg, IDALS; John Lawrence, ISU; and Adam Schneiders, Iowa DNR gave the annual progress report for the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy. The report was distributed and will be posted online to the ISU Nutrient Reduction Strategy website.

Lawrence discussed methods of collecting information for the report and the types of data collected for the report.

Lechtenberg gave a brief overview of the report based on information we received from the WPAC and WRCC member agencies. Information is compiled based on efforts for human outreach/survey work, land use changes, and measured/calculated loading reductions based on compiled reports.

Schneiders reported on key indicators for point source reporting and measurement/monitoring. DNR reports lots of data received from point sources and the ambient water monitoring network. DNR process is evolving to analytics of data received.

This year 33 permits for NRS have been issued, bringing the overall total to 54. Minor facilities (smaller towns) are also participating voluntarily. Example of Northwood, who is not required but is using SRF sponsored project funding to implement nutrient reduction.

Initial data returns are showing load reductions in some of the permitted facilities. As permits are written and implemented there will be more data to analyze. The first batch of feasibility studies are due in September.

DNR is also in the lead on statewide Water Quality Monitoring process. The linear interpolation model being used is being peer reviewed due to its comprehensive approach. This will include collection and cataloging of monitoring efforts underway, which is an ongoing effort.

Questions/Comments:

Osterberg- Likes the model used by Iowa State University. The clarity of the graphics could be improved. Inputs piece is particularly good, but would be nice to see more completeness. Suggest a column including how much has come in because of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy- Additional investment over time. Comment about challenge on time. May cutoff for reporting leaves a lot incomplete with respect to final legislative appropriations. Should we re-evaluate timing of the report (until July 1?)

Adkins: Timing challenges will persist due to differences between state and federal calendars. Data will lag accordingly.

Fluornoy: Comment that EPA is seeing activity in other states on wastewater treatment optimization. Storm water/green infrastructure water quality benefits would be good to add if we can capture it. Also highlighted use of linked deposits/State Revolving Fund and how we add those things.

Schneiders: Some of that information is incorporated but it is condensed significantly in the report.

Marler: Iowa DOT will look at their programs to see what they can add.

Osterberg: Is the WQI the only source of funding for the NRS? What about INRC? On page 9, clarity is requested. Also, what is the timing of funding? Northey- some is one-year, others are three-year initiatives. Can we sort that out some more? Finally, the overall funding level is daunting but state/federal investments with partnering should result in progress. The annual progress report presents an opportunity to show what more is needed.

Gillespie thanked all of the staff who pulled together the report from all agencies and partners.

10:00 – Waters of the United States Final Rule (EPA Region 7 and US Army Corps of Engineers)

Karen Fluornoy, EPA gave an update on implementation of WOTUS. EPA has held a meeting in Iowa to discuss and continues to work with USACE to figure out implementation.

The rule went into the Federal Register on June 29, which makes the rule effective in 60 days (August 28). Highlights of the rule were discussed, including tributaries, adjacent waters, similarly situated waters (Prairie Potholes), and ditches.

Lots of questions on when a permit is needed. Region 7 has asked for clarification on connection of new rule to conservation practices. Key for EPA is guidance on implementation.

Dan Hayes, USACE, stated that they are waiting for implementation guidance. In the meantime, considerations for grandfathering applications received before August 28 will follow the current rule. Recommendation that applicants submit jurisdictional determination and application concurrently, and not separately.

Regional Permit 33 is working as intended, and reducing the number of inquiries. Hayes does not anticipate WOTUS to change that process. Some things that were jurisdictional but exempt before are now not jurisdictional (i.e. grassed waterways). There are still some clarifications needed on that front but those things will continue to be permitted under the current Regional Permit.

Northey asked about timing on guidance. Specifically, by late August there will be a lot of work planned/underway and the more lead time available the better. Implementation guidance should come with publication of a final rule.

Discussion on impacts of WOTUS on Regional Permit 33. Consensus is that implementation guidance will determine ultimately what is needed and what is not. If Regional Permit 33 can be implemented as intended then producers will be able to continue to implement conservation.

Marler stated that for Iowa DOT needs guidance in order to figure out WOTUS impacts on their business systems and timing of work being completed.

Northey discussed priority to minimize disruption of conservation work being planned, and that clarity and guidance will be key to limiting that disruption and uncertainty.

10:20- WPAC Update

Jennifer Terry, WPAC Co-Chair gave the WPAC update, which was distributed and is attached with the notes. There are three work groups that are meeting in addition to quarterly WPAC meetings. The WPAC has met to discuss procedures for consensus and the organizational framework.

WRCC will receive WPAC recommendations on an ongoing basis rather than just at the end of the year. Work groups are going to send forth information as they develop consensus and are able to send.

A set of recommendations has been forwarded to the WRCC based on the WPAC's legislative priorities. Work groups focusing on economic incentives, improving water quality and optimizing costs, and quantification protocols and procedures.

Question on process- Answer is that work groups will feed recommendations to full WPAC and members present can forward through a vote. Anything with a 75% passage can come to the WRCC.

10:30 – Water and Nutrient Research: In-Field and Offsite Initiatives (Dr. Matt Helmers and Dr. William Crumpton, Iowa State University)

Dr. Helmers and Dr. Crumpton gave an update on monitoring efforts taking place at the Gilmore City Research Farm and on select CREP sites.

Questions: Do fertilizer input calculations include manure or just commercial fertilizer? Answer- calculations include both.

Osterberg commented on the 150,000 acres and the scale of adoption needed, along with the cost. Adkins asked about where the intercepted nitrogen goes. Response is that a lot of it denitrifies as a gas (N₂, not N₂O) or is incorporated into the soil.

Question on opportunities for DOT to incorporate these into highway projects. Marler replied that DOT is looking for these types of opportunities.

Northey remarked on the specific nature of where the targeted wetland needs to be built and that some of the recent CREP projects have been completed in conjunction with rehabilitation of drainage systems. Crumpton remarked that lots of re-engineering of drainage infrastructure is resulting in wetland construction.

Question on generation of algal blooms and what happens when those flush out of systems. Crumpton replied that wetland vegetation tends to reduce risks of the blooms, although a high rain event could still cause a flush.

Discussion of next steps, including additional research and resources for expansion, were discussed. Recommendation from Adkins to set up a workgroup.

Some work has been done on in-stream processing but more is needed and more discussion can take place.

Field day will be on August 27 at 5:00 PM.

11:20 - Public Comments

There are no requests for public comments from attendees.

The next meeting will be on Friday, September 11, also in Room 103 of the Capitol.

11:20 – Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.

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

Jim Terry - ball PAC

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

	Name	Affiliation	Have Comments (Y/N)
1	Sjan Gillespie	IAALS	—
2	Mitt Helmer	ISU	N
3	Bill Crumpton	ISU	N
4	Ken Brink	DOT	
5	Steve Schmitz	EDPH	
6	Marty Adkins	NRCS	
7	John Lawrence	ISU	
8	Rick Robinson	IFBF	
9	MATT GRONWALD	IDAALS	
10	Wes Leubke	IDAALS	
11	Liz Hobart	GMK	
12	Shawn Richmond	AAI	—
13	Roger Turner	DNR	N
14	Robin Johnson	IER	N
15	Karen Flourey	EPA	
16	JEFFERY ROBICHAUD	EPA	
17	Maureen Clayton	UNI	
18	Pat White	USDA/FSA	
19	Bill Freeland	HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS STAFF	
20	Deb Kroll	LSA	
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