

**SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA WATER RESOURCES BOARD  
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**January 3, 2007**

**In attendance**

Dodge County:	Dean Schrandt	MDA:	Mark Zabel
	Mark Gamm		Bruce Montgomery
Fillmore County:	Donna Rasmussen		Adam Birr
Goodhue County:	Beau Kennedy	MDH:	Jim Lundy
Houston County:			Sheila Grow
Mower County:	Bill Buckley		Chris DeMattos
Olmsted County:	Terry Lee	MPCA:	Tim Thurnblad
Rice County:	Faith Opatrny	WSU:	Ross Hoffmann
Steele County:		SEMWRB:	Bea Hoffmann
Wabasha County:	Byron Evers		
BWSR:	Mary Kells		
Winona County:	Pat Bailey		

**SUMMARY**

**Follow-up to the November 13 Board Program**, “Highlights of the Second Sewage Summit” was discussed. It was decided that a mailing to all commissioners would not be a good use of resources and that it should be left to each county to follow-up, although a summary of the highlights would be helpful. A better strategy would be to ask someone from the MPCA to discuss the 7080 rule changes at an upcoming meeting.

**January 8 Board Meeting Program Update** – at the request of Commissioner Ohly, a Joint Powers Board program has been planned on county shoreland ordinances and riparian buffers. Discussion followed as to the percentage of riparian areas that are in buffers and the percentage of CRP lands in buffers. Beau Kennedy stated that only 7 – 15% of Goodhue County did not have buffers and that 99% of the CRP coming out was non-riparian. It was felt that farmers need to know about the buffer requirements and that FSA should be promoting these buffers also. The amount of land going into buffers is a function of corn prices. Post-Bulletin will be contacted to do an article on this.

**March 12 Board Meeting Program** - as proposed in the 2007 workplan, a program will be planned on erosion control. Suggestions for the program included:

- Start with “What is the value of soil in its place?” – Doug Connier – Extension
- Where is soil being lost? Ag, urban
- Relate to TMDL turbidity plan
- Survey counties (what is in their soil loss ordinances, how do they differ)
- Rice, Dakota (Jay Riggs), Stearns counties who did pilot projects on NPDES stormwater control on construction sites (contact Steve Pahs, Rice SWCD regarding inspecting construction sites)
- City of Rochester (contact Barb Huberty)
- Winona County challenge grant (ordinance revision)

- Goodhue County P&Z works closely with SWCD on construction site review process— contact Steve Schmidt, Beau Kennedy
- Soil loss ordinances and enforcement of erosion control plans
- PCA stormwater rules

**SEMWRB 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – ideas for a celebration included a retrospective; new issue of mugs with 10 counties; hold it outdoors

**Wabasha County Board Decision on Nitrate Monitoring Project Participation** – Byron and Bea made a presentation to the board; a decision will be made at the January 16 Board meeting

**Purchase and mailing of sample bottles and mailers** – decided that this should be handled on a centralized basis for the duration of the grant rather than individual county orders; the grant includes funding for this purchase

**Select a Design Scenario for the Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Project** - Mark Zabel, MDA, reviewed his answers to the questions posed by Mark Gamm. Having taken the county staff through a process to define our monitoring goals, he arrived at a concept of statistical inference – that is, taking a sample to describe the whole population. To reduce bias, Mark recommends using a systematic grid using either wells in our database or residences that appear within a defined buffer around the grid point. To achieve statistically valid results, sample frequency should be semi-annually at a minimum. A minimum of 5 – 7 years of data would also be required. Using this scenario, the study question can be answered on a regional basis. The study may not be valid on a county by county basis. However, the region could go county by county after an initial sampling. Mark stated that the study question may change over time, so the design scenario could also change. He also suggested that the counties:

- Plan for long-term funding
- Lobby for funding for well sealing programs and to promote drilling of new wells
- Plan for using the information

Jim Lundy, MDH, gave a presentation on a monitoring design based on hydrogeology. If nitrates are above 1-3 mg/l, it can be attributed to land use. Nitrates only occur where ground water is connected to surface water because it needs oxygen. Local causes for spikes in nitrates are not systematic across the landscape so you can't say anything about regional nitrates. We already have mechanisms such as nitrate clinics and the well code to address individual well problems. To monitor whether BMP's (steps in a nitrogen management plan) have been effective in reducing nitrates, a regional ground water study has to have geologic information. Approximately 10 – 30 single aquifer wells would be needed to monitor a flow path. MDH offered to work with each county to choose these wells. Tim Thurnblad pointed out that because we will sample domestic supply wells from the tap, this could not be considered an aquifer study.

The staff agreed to meet later in the month to make the final design scenario decision.