

Chippewa River Watershed Project

Committee Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2005

Benson Fire Hall, Benson, MN

Present: Kenneth F. Koenen, Chippewa Co. Commissioner; Glenn Matejka, Douglas SWCD Supervisor; Clinton Schuerman, Swift SWCD Supervisor, Jerry Johnson, Douglas Co. Commissioner; Dean Shuck, Kandiyohi Co. Commissioner; Keith Naig, Pope Co. Commissioner; Jeff Bredberg, Kandiyohi Co. Environmental Services; Brad Olson, DNR-Appleton; Jean Diggins, Chippewa SWCD; Doug Anderson, Swift Co. Commissioner; JoAnn Blomme, Chippewa Co. Land & Resource Mgmt; Roger Rasmussen, Kandiyohi SWCD Supervisor; Kylene Olson, Jennifer Hoffman, CRWP

Introductions:

Jennifer called the meeting to order and introductions were made. Agendas were distributed.

In-Kind Contributions: Reminder that in-kind reports always appreciated and can be sent to Jennifer.

Jennifer plans to have up-to-date reports for each contributing partner before next month's meeting.

CRWP Updates:

Summer Intern Activities: Kyle Jarcho, Environmental Science Major from Southwest Minnesota State University served as the summer intern for 2005. Jennifer showed a photo slide show of some of the activities that he did for the project including: presenting at the Chippewa SWCD Conservation Field Days, Transparency Tube Transects, Water Sampling, Flow Measurements, Macroinvertebrates, Shoreline Restoration, River Morphology and Canoe Trips. Kyle finished his internship this past Wednesday.

Monitoring Briefing: Paul has completed all the analysis of the 2004 monitoring season and compiled all the information into the 2004 Monitoring Summary. Jennifer distributed copies of this report. It will also be available for download on our website www.chippewariver.com. Paul does an excellent job of both collecting and analyzing data; his work is held in high regard throughout the Minnesota River Basin. Interesting notes from this year's monitoring season thus far, the fecals continue to be high across the board. Nitrate/nitrite levels in the Dryweather and Shakopee Creek sub-basins are an issue with more than one lab report showing levels above the 10 ppm standard. 2005 flows have been high in the Chippewa River, at Hwy 40 flow discharges at have been above bank full flow ~90% of the time as compared to 20% of the time during the 2004 season. The Chippewa River currently accounts for ~50% of the flow in the Minnesota River at Montevideo.

Local Work Group: The local work group is comprised of technical staff from the various offices within the watershed (NRCS, SWCD, Environmental Services, etc) that meets to discuss cost-share and incentive applications within the implementation funded sub-basins. Three sub-basins have been awarded dollars: the East Branch, Lower Mainstem and Upper Mainstem. The East Branch is currently under a grant agreement, requests and payments can be made in that sub-basin. The original agreement was from 9/30/02 to 9/30/05. A one year extension has been granted until 9/30/06. Starting BMP total for East Branch was \$69,500.

After the last LWG meeting in July, a total of 8 buffer incentive requests were completed and sent for payment from the East Branch totaling \$3830, 76.8 acres of buffer installed by landowners. \$2500 was drawn from the East Branch Education Program Element to go towards the Pope COLA "We Love Our Lakes" DVD. There are three approved incentive requests pending payment until all appropriate supporting documents are obtained, totaling another \$595, 11.9 buffer acres. A shoreline restoration project went in on the Ron Rustman property on Gilchrist Lake, waiting for final receipts from Ron before cost-share is finalized.

Grant agreements for the Lower Mainstem and Upper Mainstem are not signed and distributed yet, but we do know the dates the agreements will cover. Lower Mainstem will cover October 2002 to June 30, 2007 with a starting BMP balance of \$113,500. Upper Mainstem will cover October 2003 to June 30, 2008 with a starting BMP balance of \$108,210. Requests can be brought to the LWG for these basins but no payments will be made until after the grant agreements are officially signed and distributed.

Project requests and ideas are needed in all three basins. If you have a project or landowner in mind, get the request to the next LWG group through a representative or by contacting Jennifer. The next LWG will be September 13, 2005 at 10:00 am at the Swift USDA Service Center.

Outreach Activities:

The CRWP shared a booth at the Chippewa County Fair with Chippewa SWCD, Chippewa Land and Resource Management and Hawk Creek Watershed Project. The display was a 24 foot long, 3-d model depicting a watershed system showing both good and bad management practices related to water quality in the both the urban and rural setting. Jennifer passed around pictures. It's a very impressive display and hopes are that it can be used at other functions in the future as well.

CRWP is sharing booth space with the Swift SWCD at the Swift County Fair in Appleton.

CRWP staff has been invited to be guests on the Open Line program on KXRA radio station by the Douglas COLA. Paul will be live on the air on September 14th.

Jennifer is on the planning committee for the Swift SWCD Water Festival to be held September 23. Both Paul and Jennifer will be presenters that day. Jennifer has also been asked to be a presenter at the Kandiyohi Conservation Days held at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center in October.

Input Session on Little Chippewa/Middle Chippewa Grant Application: The Little Chippewa/ Middle Chippewa Sub-basin is the next priority basin. This basin includes Lakes Minnewaska, Emily and Reno along with the Little Chippewa River and part of the mainstem Chippewa River. Lots of interest has been shown by the Lake Emily Improvement Association and Paul and Jennifer were given a boat tour of that lake in July. We are still waiting on the date applications will be due and the amount of money that is available. Some expected changes are that they will no longer fund proposals with buffer strip incentive payments and there will be more project specifics required rather than the somewhat loosely based program elements as in the past. To be successful we will need new and innovative programs/practices or specific projects. Anyone with input or willing to be a grant reviewer is encouraged to contact the CRWP office as soon as possible.

Agency/Organization Updates: The Lake Florida Project has hired an engineering firm to continue moving forward with their hook-up into the Green Lake Sanitary District.

The Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project will be meeting on September 8th at Sibley State Park to highlight the new wastewater system there.

Local EQIP work group meetings are going to be happening all over the watershed in the near future, contact your local NRCS for more details.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Friday, September 16, 2005, at 10:15 am at the Benson Fire Hall.