

Chippewa River Watershed Project  
June 17, 2004  
Benson Fire Hall

Present: Glenn Matejka, WesMin/Douglas SWCD Supervisor; Gerald Johnson, Douglas Co Commissioner; Ronald Stager, Pope Co COLA Director; Doug Anderson, Swift Co Commissioner; Gregory Liebl, Jill Bonk, Maggie Clauson, Chippewa Co LRM Interns; JoAnn Blomme, Chippewa Co LRM; Mary Oslund, Kandiyohi SWCD; Marcus Shorter, Josh Bork, Kandiyohi NRCS Interns; Jeff Bredberg, Kandiyohi Co Environmental Services; David Sill, MN BWSR; Jack Frost, Met Council; Hannah Hacker, Douglas Co LRM Intern; Emily Wolr, Douglas Co LRM/Water Plan; Steve Nokleby, Chippewa SWCD Supervisor; LuVerne Norby, Swift Co Commissioner; Dean Shuck, Kandiyohi Co Commissioner; Amanda Liesinger, CRWP Intern, Jenn Hoffman, Paul Wymar, Kylene Olson, CRWP.

**Introductions:** Kylene called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

**In-Kind Contributions:** Kylene reminded all partners of the importance of recording and reporting in-kind contributions. In-kind reporting forms were made available.

**Watershed Updates:**

Paul presented information on the 2004 flow at Highway 40. Comparison to 63 yr average. This spring flow was low and now exceeding the highest stage in the last 3 years since spring flood of 2001. Atypical and highest level usually from snowmelt, this years peak event is occurring later during the beginning of the growing season. At Hwy 40 approximately 18 days of the last 31 had rainfall. Total rainfall since April 1 is 8 inches at Hwy 40. All samples are analyzed for Total Suspended Solids, Total and ortho phosphorus, Nitrate/Nitrite, Turbidity, Dissolved Oxygen, Fecal coliform bacteria, temperature, and transparency.

**Citizen Monitor meetings** will be held throughout the next month – check the newsletter for dates and times.

**Summer Intern:** Amanda Liesinger, student from Southwest Minnesota State University is working as a summer intern in the CRWP office. She helps with monitoring etc., also created a business data base to contact community businesses about supporting CRWP

**Resource Development Committee:** The database created by Amanda will be used to gather a fund raising committee. The business/professional community in the watershed is an untapped resource. Plan of an introductory card/letter to introduce watershed, get guidance, committee members. The committee will implement the strategic planning goals and ideas generated from the planning session the Executive Committee and staff had with Diana Anderson from the SW MN Foundation.

**Endowment fund:** A draft of the endowment fund brochure is available for review and comments. Work is being done to Create an endowment fund through the SW MN Foundation. With SWMNF we do not need to have a 501c3 since SWMNF will hold the money for our project and CRWP falls under the umbrella of Prairie Country RC&D's 501(c)3 status. We are very excited about where this is taking the partnership in terms of sustainable funding

**Low interest loan program:** CRWP received loan money of \$200,000 for the greater watershed and \$200,000 for the Upper Chippewa subbasin. The greater watershed loan money is split between Chippewa, Swift and Pope Counties. The Upper Chippewa subbasin money will be used in Douglas and Grant counties. Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project has loan money available in Kandiyohi County. All counties have signed their grant agreements. There have been articles in our newsletter. Chippewa County had three applicants before the article hit our local newspaper within a week of the paper all \$65000 was spent. We have contacted MPCA to see if more loan funds are available they said they would know by July. This is a great program to impact fecal coliform levels in the Chippewa River.

### **TMDLs:**

The Fecal Coliform Bacteria TMDL is in the process of being rewritten. CRWP will be a part of the public stakeholder process again.

For the Ammonia TMDL a public meeting will be held on July 22 at the Montevideo Community Center. MPCA and the EPA will be present. This is being approached as a delisting TMDL.

Turbidity TMDL: no work has been done yet.

**Canoe and boat route:** In 2000, the Chippewa River from Benson to Montevideo (48 miles of river) was designated a Canoe and Boat Route by the State Legislature. Kylene has been trying for the last 3 years to get the Chippewa listed on the DNR website as a Canoe and Boat Route. Finally this has happened and the DNR has released their new Canoe and Boat Route maps for the Upper Minnesota River, including the Chippewa, copies distributed for anyone interested. The impetus for the listing was to make Norby Landing at the mouth of Shakopee Creek, a DNR boat landing, which the DNR has developed in the last three years. Canoeing on the Chippewa is fantastic, there is much wildlife and lush vegetation, 50 to 150 ft bluffs, scenic and an easy paddle, great for families.

CRWP web page is up, [www.chippewariver.com](http://www.chippewariver.com) and we are looking to link up with your website. Contact Jenn to get a link to your site. We have a calendar of events that we update weekly, call Jenn to post your events on our site.

Jennifer was at the Heartland Girls Ranch in Benson last Tuesday. Their summer school session is learning about the Chippewa River. Jennifer spent the morning presenting to them information and answering questions with this class

LSP and CRWP have been working together with a grant from the DNR to do environmental education with elementary classes to look at watersheds, stream health and farming practices.

Monday July 12 the Benson Outdoor Learning Center at Ambush Park will be holding an open house, 6-9 p.m., Native plant id class, and master gardener tour around Benson.

**Chippewa County Ditch Digitization:** Chippewa County with the UMRDC digitized all public ditch info. Thanks to a BWSR Challenge Grant, three interns are now working for Chippewa Land and Resource Management to imbed the history of each ditch to the ditch in the database. Histories include costs, repairs, improvements, and status. The office of Land and Resource Mgmt is working with Kenny Nash, the ditch inspector, to convert the paper files to digital records, some of the paper records are so old that they are disintegrating. This work will help track what is happening to the ditches and help decision makers understand how to maintain them most effectively. They will also be able start looking at the relationship between soils, land use and repairs. Chippewa County will be figuring out who will be updating the ditch data as changes, repairs etc. are encumbered.

**CRWP will host a Summer Picnic**, Sunday July 18 at Swift Falls Park we will have basic info on the watershed. Free Food 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., fish painting, duck races.

### **Partner Updates:**

Douglas, NES (Natural Environment Lakes) ordinances are still being developed and there is not much information out there to help in the development of the ordinances. Douglas County has ~250 NES lakes. They vary from shallow duck lakes to 70 ft deep lakes. The county is looking at easements etc. for lakeshore ordinances and is finding it to be difficult. If anyone has done anything like this please let us know. They have placed a moratorium on platting NES lakes until December.

Jack Frost reported that MPCA standards would be changing. Fecal coliform monitoring will switch to e-coli monitoring. Lakes will be broken down into shallow lakes (80% under 15 feet) and deep lakes, this should impact TMDL designations.

**Next meeting July 9, Sunburg Community Center, Sunburg MN, 10:15 a.m.**