

## **Chippewa River Watershed Project Committee Meeting Minutes**

May 13, 2005

Benson Fire Hall, Benson, MN

Present: Dean Shuck, Kandiyohi Co. Commissioner; Jerry Johnson, Douglas Co. Commissioner; Kenneth F. Koenen, Chippewa Co. Commissioner; Keith Naig, Pope Co. Commissioner; Dick Hanson, Swift Co. Commissioner; Glenn Matejka, Douglas SWCD Supervisor; JoAnn Blomme, Chippewa Co. Land & Resource Mgmt; Lucas Youngsma, Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project; Forrest Peterson, MPCA-Willmar; Randy Nelson, Prairie Country RC&D; Roger Rasmussen, Kandiyohi SWCD Supervisor; Michael Johnson, Swift County Parks and Drainage (WCA); David Sill, MN BWSR-Marshall, Muriel Runholt, MPCA-Marshall; Paul Wymar, Jennifer Hoffman, Chippewa River Watershed Project.

### **Introductions:**

Paul called the meeting to order and introductions were made. The sign-up sheet was passed around and a request for updated email addresses was made.

**In-Kind Contributions:** Jennifer reminded all partners of the importance of recording and reporting in-kind contributions. In-kind reporting forms are available online at [www.chippewariver.com](http://www.chippewariver.com) or can be obtained by contacting the CRWP office. Partners were reminded that many activities in their daily work related to the Chippewa River Watershed can be recorded as in-kind contributions. In-kind reports are important to fulfilling grant requirements.

**Restorable Wetlands Inventory:** Paul gave an update on the Restorable Wetlands Inventory (RWI) of Minnesota. Paul has been part of the working group involved with the RWI. Lead groups involved with the inventory include Ducks Unlimited and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Much of the information presented came from a presentation Rex Johnson, USFWS, gave to the governor. RWI work began in a nine county pilot area, including Kandiyohi, Swift, Pope and Douglas within the Chippewa River Watershed. The RWI used a variety of wetland delineation techniques but found manual stereoscopic photo interpretation to be most successful when compared to actual on the ground comparison. The RWI is intended to be used as a strategically targeted approach towards conservation of looking at areas for potential wetland restorations and then ranking each wetland/grassland complex based on a variety factors including waterfowl production, water quality, flood control and habitat. The long term goal is to restore wetlands on a quality versus quantity basis. The potential wetland restorations will be scored on fish and wildlife habitat, hydrologic function, flood reduction and water quality. Paul has been involved with the flood reduction ranking committee. Each individual group score for a proposed wetland would then be combined to determine the highest priority and most critical areas for restoration. This approach needs to be utilized across agency boundaries and will increase the probability of doing the right thing in the right place. It will be a highly useful tool for the Chippewa River Watershed Project and its partners. Future questions on the Restorable Wetland Inventory can be directed to Paul or Rex Johnson.

**Fecal Coliform TMDL Update:** Muriel Runholt, MPCA, updated the group on the status of the Chippewa River Fecal Coliform Total Maximum Daily Load. Last summer

a TMDL report created by TetraTech under contract of the EPA went out on public review and the CRWP hosted public meetings. As a result of the public comment period and more stringent interagency review, TetraTech's report was abandoned and the MPCA took over the study and report in-house under the guidance of Muriel. Instead of following a model approach, a spreadsheet matrix approach was used. The report has currently undergone one internal review and pending a few changes should be ready for public review in the near future. Muriel went through some of the study findings and found that the Chippewa River is impaired during the summer time frame (June, July and August). The Chippewa River Watershed Project will be contracted to host public meetings throughout the basin once the report is placed on public review.

**MN River Basin Alliance Update:** The most recent meeting of the MN River Basin Alliance was held on April 19 in Hutchinson. Unfortunately, none of the Chippewa River Watershed Project staff was able to attend. It sounds as though the group will try to focus on ways to address drainage, farm policy and public education. Still unclear as to what actions are to follow. More information and access to the online list serve of the MN River Basin Alliance can be found through the Minnesota River Basin Data Center web page or by using the following link <http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa>.

**CRWP Updates:** The monitoring season is in full swing and Paul has been busy out in the field collecting samples and recording flow data.

The "Watershed Logic-Go with the Flow" Earth Day event co-sponsored by the Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project and Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center held on April 23 was a success. Approximately 120 people attended the event. Attendees were able to take in some great music and listen to some great speakers on several watershed topics.

Jennifer and Paul were presenters at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Kids Groundwater Festival in Alexandria on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Over 500 Douglas County students attended the event.

Jennifer and Paul have been busy with the Benthic Macroinvertebrate Biomonitoring Network. Last week they were out in the field with students and teachers from the Benson and Hancock High Schools and have been making classroom visits this week to help with identification. The Biomonitoring Network continues to grow and provide valuable data from throughout the watershed.

The next meeting will be Friday, June 10, 2005, 10:15 am, Benson Fire Hall, Benson, MN. Please remember to park on the west side of the building.