

Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2024

Attendees at meeting: Holly Bushman (Le Sueur County), Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD), Troy Kuphal (Scott SWCD), Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD), Brad Behrens (Rice County), Linda Loomis (Lower MN WD), Anne Sawyer (BWSR), Barb Peichel (BWSR)

Welcome & Review Agenda

- The Lower Minnesota River East Meeting was held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024. The meeting was held virtually.

90 Day Review Update

- Holly provided an update about the 90-day Review Process
 - Mike, Troy, Doug, Holly, Barb, and Anne attended the Central Regional Committee Meeting on Monday, August 5th from 2:00pm-4:30pm. And the committee approved recommendation pending a few edits that MDH suggested as their final comments to the Plan.
 - The Plan then went the BWSR Board meeting on Thursday, August 29th at 9am and was approved by the BWSR Board with the conditions to incorporate MDH's minor changes.
 - ISG has already updated the draft of the Plan with these edits. Holly will send out a link of the final plan.

Updates for Resolutions to Adopt Plan and Boards Signing JPA

- Le Sueur County, Le Sueur SWCD, and Rice SWCD have approved the resolution to adopt the Plan and signed onto the JPA.
- Scott SWCD plans to get the resolution adopted and a the JPA signed tomorrow.
- Rice County anticipates all of this to go through next week Tuesday at the County Board meeting.

Summary Next Steps with WBIF

- Holly mentioned that there are still items that need to be completed prior to receiving WBIF. The Grant Agreement and WBIF Request need to be submitted and approved, a workplan needs to be completed and approved, cost-share policies and procedures need to be approved, we need to determine how to rank and track projects,

subagreements will need to be developed and approved, and lastly legal services will need to be established by next year.

- The ST had started working on many of these items already and should continue to work on the drafts so they are ready by the time the partnership can sign a Grant Agreement and receive WBIF.

Review Draft Bylaws

- Holly updated the draft of the LoMRE Bylaws.
 - The ST went through the draft bylaws and discussed edits that needed to be made to the document.
 - The few suggestions that were made were in regards to the agreements and data practices section.
 - Agreement Length and Designation of the Newspaper were established to meet current Statute.
 - Barb suggested to reduce the duplicative information in the Bylaws and the JPA. Just reference the JPA to make the Bylaws cleaner.
 - Barb mentioned to double check and make sure there is language consistency between the two agreements.

September Policy Committee Meeting

- Agenda Items
 - Overview of 90-day Review Period.
 - JPB Election of Officers will need to wait until October since JPA does not have all LGU signatures.
 - JPB Adoption of the Plan will need to wait until October since JPA does not have all LGU signatures.
 - Review Draft Workplan and receive PC approval to submit for WBIF request.
 - Review Draft Bylaws.

Review Updated Draft Workplan and Discussion

- The ST has been working diligently on the workplan over the last few meetings.
 - Overall, the ST agreed on the categories where funds would be spent and the allocation amounts.
 - Barb and Anne recommended a few edits to polish the workplan so I can be ready for the WBIF request and for elink.
 - Reference activities from implementation table for each workplan activity.
 - Reference priority areas from Plan for each workplan activity.

- The water testing clinic activity within the Groundwater Category is eligible for WBIF. Will need to track specific outcomes such as attendees, handouts, etc.
 - Update each workplan activity to add more flexibility in spending.
 - Spellcheck the workplan.
- Once the workplan incorporates the changes above, the ST can submit a WBIF request. Once the request is approved, the ST should be able to enter in activities, budgets, etc. into the elink workplan for WBIF.
 - This could potentially be approved and ready to go by the end of October.

Subagreements Discussion

- Holly showed examples of what other subagreements look like in other watersheds.
- Subagreements are needed prior to staff completing staff roles for the partnership.
- Troy recommended having one subagreement that spells out the scope of work and services for each partner.
 - Refer to specific role responsibilities in the appendix.
 - Modify contributions for each LGU based off workplan.
- Holly will work on completing drafts of the subagreements for each LGU and presenting at the next ST meeting.

LoMRE Project Database

- Holly updated the Project Database based off of August Comments.
- The ST agreed that we will need to try this sheet out to see if it works for us.
- Want to make sure that everyone has access to it and can enter project information in as soon as possible.
 - The ST agreed that GoogleDrive would work.
- There was some discussion about other funding sources and how we will track those efforts. For now, it is not a huge issue for the ST, but likely will be down the road once we are fully immersed into implementation efforts.
- Holly mentioned that other watersheds have created a spatial connection with progress towards goals. That way the public can visually see how the partnership is making plan progress each time a project is completed.

Updates & Next Steps

- BWSR Board Meeting: **Thursday, August 29th, 2024, 9:00am**
- Next Steering Team Meeting: **Wednesday, October 16, 2024, 10:00am-1:00pm**
- Next Policy Committee Meeting: **Thursday, October 17, 2024 3:00pm-5:00pm**