



Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Water Quality Coordinating Committee Water Protection Program

Minutes

May 15, 2007

WATER QUALITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

DNR Conference Center
1738 E. Elm Street
Bennett Springs Conference Room
Jefferson City, Missouri

May 15, 2007

10 a.m.

MEETING AGENDA

The Watershed Improvement Measure in EPA's Strategic Plan
Pete Davis, EPA Region 7

Update on Watershed Planning
Bob Broz and Dan Downing, UMC Water Quality Program

FY2007 Targeted 319 Request for Proposals
Greg Anderson, Watershed Protection Section, Water Protection Program

Other

Agency Activities

Meetings & Conferences

MISSOURI WATER QUALITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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MINUTES

Attendees:

Jaci Ferguson	EPA Region 7	Stacia Bax	DNR, Water Protection Program
Priscilla Stotts	DNR, Water Protection Program-WPCB	Cindy DiStefano	MO Dept. of Conservation
Betty Wyse	Environmental Resources Coalition	Buffy Santel	MSD
John Schumacher	USGS	Randy Lyman	Springfield Public Works
Candy Schilling	Environmental Resources Coalition	Bob Ball	USDA - NRCS
Anne Peery	DNR, Water Protection Program-WPCB	Bob Broz	University of MO Extension
Cecilia Campbell	DNR, Water Protection Program	Greg Anderson	DNR, Water Protection Program-WPCB
Georganne Bowman	DNR, Water Protection Program	Wendi Rogers	UMC - FAPRI
Trish Rielly	DNR, Water Protection Program	Ed Galbraith	DNR-Water Protection Program
Tim Rielly	MDC	Pete Davis	EPA Region 7
Tucker Fredrickson	DNR, Water Protection Program	Darlene Schaben	DNR, Water Protection Program
		Sarah Fast	DNR, Water Protection Program

Sarah Fast chaired the meeting. Sarah asked that anyone let her or Darlene know of ideas for presentations for future meetings.

Introductions were made.

The Watershed Improvement Measure in EPA's Strategic Plan, Pete Davis, EPA Region 7 PowerPoint Presentation

Pete said that EPA's Strategic Plan is available online at www.epa.gov/ocfopage/plan/plan.htm. More in-depth information about the plan and measures is in the national water program guidance. The National Water Program Strategic Plan and Guidance for 2008 can be found on <http://www.epa.gov/water/waterplan>. Goal 2 of the plan, Clean and Safe Water, defines the improvements that EPA expects to see in the quality of the nation's drinking water and surface water over the next five years. A sub-objective under this goal, the watershed improvement measure, Measure W, now known as SP-12, says that by 2012, water quality conditions should be improved in 250 impaired watersheds nationwide using the watershed approach. This is approximately five watersheds per state.

EPA supports the Department of Natural Resources' efforts due to it being in EPA's Strategic Plan. Using the watershed approach is the key to using the watershed improvement measure. Several EPA programs (Source Water, TMDL Program, Nonpoint Source Program, Stormwater Phase II, Wetlands Program, etc.) rely on the watershed approach. The hope is that more municipalities and water treatment plant operators will become involved in watershed planning and implementation efforts. EPA's nine elements must be addressed in Section 319-funded watershed management plans for threatened and impaired waters. The key could be for impaired water bodies to incorporate the TMDL, if one has been established, and estimate the load reductions that may be expected from the BMPs that should be implemented in the watershed.

Pete talked about progress in Missouri. About a year ago, EPA discussed Measure W and prospective watersheds in Missouri that are impaired and that have a relatively high restoration potential, primarily nonpoint source impaired water bodies on the 2002 303(d) list. The 303(d) list is the driver for the watershed improvement measure. Others

considerations for progress are the TMDLs that are approved and/or have a watershed plan in place or one is being developed, active local groups involved in watershed planning & implementation, and current active watershed water quality projects. DNR determined nine priority watersheds to target for the FY2007 funding - Big, Current, Sac, James, Elk, Lower Marais des Cygnes, Lamine, Missouri-Crooked, and Spring. Pete said that if we count the three water bodies in the Spring River Basin, Upper Shoal Creek, Lamar Lake, and North Fork Spring River, there are more than five 12-digit watersheds in that area. He said there is already progress on Lamar Lake and North Fork Spring River. Lamar Lake and Spring Fork Lake have Source Water Protection Plans. Others already have Watershed Management Plans. Pete mentioned that there is other EPA grant work going on in the targeted watersheds.

EPA will be relying on ATTAINS database. Headquarters will remotely track progress on the watershed improvement measure as well as other strategic targets related to the impaired waters list. The ATTAINS data system is a combination of the national assessment database and the national TMDL tracking system database. Pete felt they would not just track remotely but track on-the-ground progress and the identified watersheds too. He mentioned that Missouri's Annual Report included aggregated data on the 66 HUC 8 watersheds.

Pete said they are still pursuing 319 success stories in the NPS program activity measure.

Update on Watershed Planning, Bob Broz and Dan Downing, UMC Water Quality Program PowerPoint Presentation

About nine years ago Bob was asked to work with a group of government agencies that was trying to come up with a common denominator on what they wanted to do and accomplish. Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Fish and Wildlife Services, USGS, NRCS, and others (15 total groups) met in St. Louis. At the meeting each explained their reasoning for what they wanted to accomplish. Bob said they work with watersheds to get local people involved to make decisions and understand how to make the decisions to do more capacity building. Bob said they look at it as a community process. They developed a community based watershed process where they could counsel, educate, and cooperate with people so they can seek solutions, solve problems, and directly and indirectly effect the quality of life. Environmental quality effects the quality of life. People learn through interaction and participation. A holistic approach has to be used. The Community Development Process involves local-level decision-making, private and public sector participation, and long-term efforts and investments in pollution prevention measures that are essential. They identify what is needed, then keep it at the local level and increase citizen participation, look at community education and leadership development. They try to bring in everyone, private, public, and not-for-profit, to build trust and understanding. They look at holistic comprehensive planning to involve citizens and improve the quality of life.

The fundamental approach is the integration of organizations and individuals that have environmental knowledge, skills, and resources in water quality, comprehensive planning, land use issues, human resource development, and public safety. People will learn to live with decisions made if they are part of the decision-making process. The citizens will learn to take the lead on the next problem issue.

An agency role should be a catalyst, provide technical resources, then step back and let local people take control. If citizens learned why it is important and what they need upfront they will do what is needed. The technical people are needed to help put the watershed plans together. If collaboration and partnerships among agencies and citizens is based on the understanding of the problems, accomplishments of the citizens and agency goals become one. Bob explained the organizational considerations in forming group meetings. Questions to consider include: Is there a real connection between community involvement and a regulatory issue? What becomes of the facilitator's role once the group becomes self-sustaining? How do we become a part of the process without taking over complete control? and convincing the group the issues involve everyone and needs the input of a representative cross-section of stakeholders. Common sources of information and assistance include NRCS, SWCDs, DNR, University Extension, city/county officials/planners, state and federal agencies, and others.

Bob showed a map of counties where they have worked with groups. It helps them to have a tool to work with, like a Watershed Management Plan. Extension's role is to provide assistance with planning and organizing; to be a catalyst when needed; be a technical advisor when needed; be supportive; provide direction; and to assist, to listen and to help but not do it for them. In making watershed management successful, local people need to feel they are part of the process. They must have a role in meeting management and setting things up. They must buy into the process and to the plan itself. Let them make the decisions and come up with ideas. Local people are there for the long-term so they must be willing to make it work and live with the decisions.

Some groups will have to look at other potential sources than federal or state funding to support their work. Bob said that some groups will say they can't do anything because they just don't have the money. But, for example, the Lake of the Ozarks, just finished producing a brochure on pumping out a septic system and keeping stuff out of the water because someone believed in the project. Georganne noted that there is Section 319 Watershed Management Plan Development grant funding available. In response to a question, Bob said they are currently working with approximately 18 watershed groups.

Bob mentioned that they completed a very successful Water Quality Short Course again this year.

FY2007 Targeted 319 Request for Proposals, Greg Anderson, Watershed Protection Section, Water Protection Program
PowerPoint Presentation

Greg mentioned that the 2006 Nonpoint Source Annual Report is now available on the Nonpoint Source Web page. There is a general reporting section on progress. The most informative is the breakout of the 66 HUC 8 watersheds with maps, tables, listing of activities, watershed groups, and facts and figures associated with those watersheds. Greg thanked Stacia Bax, Trish Rielly, and John Johnson for getting it all together.

This year the 319 funding is being targeted to priority watersheds with impaired waters. The maximum amount has been increased to \$1,500,000, with the thought that a more significant impact will be made on the impairment. There is a 40% nonfederal match for a four-year period. Applications are due October 1, 2007. Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) non-profit groups, local governments, and educational institutions. Applications must address nonpoint source issues.

By targeting funding, the hope is to better utilize partners, consolidate funding sources, and try to focus on restorative efforts. The decision to target funding this year was based on several reasons. There has been a historical lack of implementation projects submitted; EPA's Strategic Plan and SP-12 (Measure W); the need to collaborate with partners to combine water quality efforts; and the Clean Water Commission requesting to see more on-the-ground efforts. In selecting the watersheds they considered impaired waters or outstanding resource waters, Measure W, existing programs like EQIP; existing environmental grants like SALT and other 319 projects; partner priorities and activities; active local watershed groups; watershed plans or a TMDL; and, the likelihood of meaningful impact. Greg went over the point system used in selecting the watersheds. Greg thought there might be 20 active watershed groups in the state. Bob added that the MDC watershed plan has six of the critical elements and the Source Water Protection Plan has seven. In answer to a question, Greg said before receiving 319 incremental funding, the watershed must have a nine-element watershed plan. They also considered impaired waters locations, approved TMDLs, and all on-going state and federal projects and plans. Therefore, the selected watersheds include Lower Marais des Cygnes, Lower Missouri-Crooked, Lamine, Sac, Spring, Elk, James, Current, and Big. These were narrowed down to a HUC 12 level and those that influence the impaired waters. Greg said they would consider other HUC 12 watersheds not identified if someone could demonstrate that that HUC 12 would impact the impaired water body. This information should be available on the Web this week. As said before, the hope is to involve a lot of partners and consolidate planning efforts.

Other

Sarah went over agenda items planned for the June 19 meeting. She mentioned the possibility of the July meeting being cancelled due to a conflict with another meeting.

Agency Activities

Anne Peery mentioned that there are 11 TMDLs on this year's schedule and they are on track for getting those completed.

Anne attended a Big River public meeting. This is a regional watershed group that is just getting started and organized. She's trying to get three other groups started—Big River, Spring Creek (Salem), and Mound Branch (Butler). There is already a watershed group and watershed management plan for Mound Branch. There are some other groups that she is trying to help revitalize – Boliver, Peruque Creek, Sedalia, and Jacks Fork.

Georganne Bowman mentioned that a Nutrient Criteria Advisory Workgroup is meeting May 23, 2007, to discuss lake nutrient criteria. She felt they have developed a workable plan.

She mentioned that an EPA 104(b) grant has been received for the PL-566 work. Sampling will be done in Fabius, Troublesome, and Grassy creeks. They are looking at doing a RAM study, invertebrate study, and a hydrology study. MDC will be working on this as well.

Bob Ball said that NRCS is funding the completion of the Rapid Watershed Assessments in 14 8-digit HUCs. Four are being completed by the University of Missouri by 2007. Five are being done within NRCS in 2007; an additional five have been approved to be completed 2008. A RWA is an approach looking at what are the real resource concerns. There is no planning or end product. The assessment is given to the local watershed group to do with as needed. Each watershed will have a profile and some may overlap. There is a heavy emphasis on GIS. The university's approach is people-based. They ask local people what they recognize as issues. This is then combined with CARES' different data layers available for that area.

Bob Ball said these include the Upper Black, Current River, Little Fabius, North River Bob's Creek, Lower Missouri-Crooked River, Sac River, South Grand, Lower Osage, Lower Gasconade; 2008 – Bear-Wyaconda, Little Osage River, Spring River, Upper Grand, Lower Marais des Cygnes. Several of these projects involve Iowa and Kansas.

Bob suggested possibly presenting this to the WQCC at a future meeting.

Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) contacted NRCS in regard to conducting 2-3 projects that would address hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico. NRCS suggested they look at the Lower St. Francis River. A series of public meetings will be held to promote state of the art nutrient management practices that would be applicable to reducing hypoxia. CTIC is heavily supported by the corporate sector.

Bob said that NRCS and DNR are participating in the Middle Mississippi Basin Partnership. They are doing things primarily on the Mississippi proper and heavily US Forest Service based activities with some involvement from The Nature Conservancy and others.

Bob Broz mentioned he would be attending a 4-state project meeting (June 4-7) on targeting watershed efforts, involving DNR, NRCS, UMC Extension, and others, looking at a training on how to identify targeted areas for watershed implementation of BMPs.