

Technical Advisory Committee

February 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

- Andover
 - Dave Berkowitz, Director of Public Works
 - Jason Law, Assistant City Engineer
 - Kameron Kytonen, Natural Resources Technician
- Anoka Conservation District
 - Chris Lord, Administrator
- Anoka County Highways
 - Rebecca Haug, Environmental Project Manager
- Blaine
 - Megan Hedstrom, Water Resources Coordinator
- Board of Water and Soil Resources
 - Michelle Jordan, Board Conservationist
- Coon Creek Watershed District
 - Tim Kelly, Administrator
 - Jon Janke, Director of Operations/Operations & Maintenance Coord.
 - Tyler Thompson, Field Operations Manager
 - Jessica Lindemyer, Engagement Coordinator
 - Erik Bye, Planning Coordinator
 - Justine Dauphinais, Water Quality Coordinator
 - Erin Margl, Watershed Development Coordinator
 - Abbey Lee, Watershed Development Manager
- Coon Rapids
 - Tim Himmer, Public Works Director
 - Mark Hansen, City Engineer
- Ham Lake
 - Dave Krugler, City Engineer (RFC)
- Spring Lake Park
 - George Linngren, Public Works Director
- Fridley
 - Jim Kosluchar, City Engineer/Public Works Director

Absent: Columbus

1. Management Situation

Jon Janke provided the TAC with a brief update on recent weather and hydrology. The current flood risk is relatively low but the District is keeping an eye on the frost depth and ice flows. Both the Mississippi River and Coon Creek are flowing well, it is largely the low-flow systems in the headwaters that are freezing solid at this time which is to be expected.

Eik Bye reminded the group that Anoka County will be holding the kick off meeting for their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) next week.

Legislative Update

Jon Janke shared that the District is keeping an eye on House File 8 (HF8) and how it affects wetland rules. There are a couple of other bills that may be coming forward, if/when they do, the District will provide updates on how they may affect water management work in our area.

Minnesota Watersheds is holding a legislative briefing on the 19th and 20th. The League of Minnesota Cities and others are holding similar meetings and briefings. District staff anticipate bringing further information on the topic to the March TAC meeting.

Dave Berkowitz provided an update on Andover's funding request that is in the governor's bill. They are asking for 8 million to complete Phase 2 of the Red Oaks Groundwater Mitigation Construction in 2026.

2. Concerns

Floodplain Maps (HUC 8)

Erik Bye provided an update on the status of the floodplain mapping effort. The general understanding at this point is that the new updated FEMA map will not match the District's current floodplain map. The DNR is not proposing to add any new areas that FEMA did not originally map, they will only be updating the information on FEMA's existing mapped areas. As such, the new FEMA maps will likely not have much utility when it comes to holistic floodplain management.

Subwatershed Reports

Erik Bye announced that the annual subwatershed check-in meetings for Springbrook, Pleasure Creek, and Ditch 39 will be held in March. Meeting invites will go out within the next week. Partners are asked to come prepared with any updates, insights, or emerging water resource concerns within their respective subwatershed jurisdictions.

TMDL Progress Update

Justine Dauphinais gave a presentation on the progress made to-date toward TMDL goals. Her presentation included a summary of water quality impairments and aquatic life stressors, water quality trends, and a summary of the TMDL progress to-date.

There are a lot of factors that go into measuring TMDL progress:

Total Maximum Daily Load = Wasteload Allocation + Load Allocation + Margin of Safety + Reserve Capacity"

Allowable # pollution = Regulated Stormwater Sources + Unregulated Non-Point Sources + 10% unallocated

When looking at just TMDL MS4 WLA Compliance, we're around 35% of the way there. However, when looking at the overall TMDL number that includes unregulated sources, we're making much more progress, especially in the area of sediment reduction.

Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) – Kickoff Meeting

Justine Dauphinais provided a summary on the background of the Watershed Based Implementation Funding non-competitive grant program and the purpose of the Kickoff Meeting. For this round of funding, the Coon Creek Watershed Area has been allocated \$294,100. With the required 10% funding match, the total cost of the selected project(s) should be at least \$323,510. Activities eligible to be funded are prioritized, targeted, & measurable projects/programs with the primary purpose of water quality improvement. The selected project(s)/program(s) must also be referenced in the implementation section of the CCWD Comprehensive Plan.

In order to access these funds, there is a specific process that must be followed. The group needs to establish a facilitator, decision-making criteria, and voting members. The group will then hold a formal convene meeting to vote on the final project(s)/program(s) to be funded. Once a project or program has been selected, a request gets submitted to BWSR and a grant agreement is executed.

The formal convene meeting is scheduled to take place at the March 13th TAC meeting.

Rebecca Haug volunteered to co-facilitate this process with Justine.

There was general discussion about selecting representatives for the decision making panel. Justine noted that the composition of the panel is set by BWSR. There must be one representative from a water management organization (CWCD), one from an SWCD (ACD), and two city representatives. In the

previous WBIF round the city representatives were Mark Hansen (Coon Rapids) and Megan Hedstrom (Blaine).

Justine walked the group through the following decision-making methods recommended by BWSR.

1. Committee Consensus (n=4). Re-vote if split.
2. Majority vote of committee (>3). Re-vote if split.
3. Tiered majority vote
 - Preliminary majority vote by whole group
 - Final confirmation vote by committee
 - If tie, discuss and vote again

The committee decided to select the decision-making process before selecting municipal representatives. There was general discussion about the process used for the last round (tiered majority vote) and came to a consensus to use the same process again.

George Linngren (Spring Lake Park) and Tim Himmer (Coon Rapids) volunteered, and were confirmed, for the roles of city representatives.

Justine walked the group through the following program/project selection methods recommended by BWSR.

1. Develop list of potential activities from eligible plans
2. Divide funding among eligible entities in equitable manner
3. Select priority water bodies or area(s)
4. Use agreed upon selection criteria (e.g. acres treated, \$/lb TP)
5. Use other process approved by BWSR

There was general discussion about the selection process and which ground-ready programs or projects would fit within the budget and criteria. Justine reminded the group that in order to be eligible the program or project must have the primary benefit of water quality.

Jim Kosluchar recommended that priority be given to activities that: 1) propel future plan activities and/or benefits, 2) are not eligible for other funding, 3) benefit multiple agencies.

Chris Lord inquired about the eligibility of projects that address aquatic organism passage and if they fit the requirement of having a primary benefit of water quality. Michelle Jordan confirmed that a project could have elements of habitat restoration, but it would need to have some level of measurable water quality benefits in order to be funded.

Both Chris Lord and Megan Hedstrom expressed a preference for the funds to be used for a project rather than another study or subwatershed plan.

Justine noted that she had created a spreadsheet that outlined the broad activity categories and potential projects. If the TAC is agreeable, before the March meeting, each member could review the spreadsheet and rank order both the activity categories and potential projects. This would help narrow down the number of projects to be voted on at the March 13th convene meeting. There was general consensus among the group to proceed with this method.

In summary, the TAC completed the following WBIF tasks at this meeting:

1. Selected Justine Dauphinais and Rebecca Haug as co-facilitators
2. Selected the following representatives
 - a. CCWD: Tim Kelly
 - b. ACD: Chris Lord
 - c. City Rep #1: George Linngren, Spring Lake Park
 - d. City Rep #2: Tim Himmer, Coon Rapids
3. Decided on using a tiered majority vote as the method of decision-making
4. Decided on using a combination of ranked categories and projects to select which project(s)/program(s) to fund.
5. Reviewed a draft list of eligible projects

At the March 13th TAC meeting, members will vote on the project(s) to be funded and select which entity will be the fiscal agent.

CCWD CIP Updates

Coon Creek will be updating its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), this will require a minor amendment to the 2025-2033 Comprehensive Plan.

3. Briefs

Atlas 15

NOAA will be publishing Atlas 15. Once it goes live in our area it will replace Atlas 14. At the end of January, NOAA hosted a webinar regarding their pilot work with Montana. The data and resources shared looked to be very useful and self-evident. Volume One of Atlas 15 provides the standard information we are used to with Atlas 14, Volume Two uses climate projections to forecast the range of likelihood for future advancements. NOAA is not making

recommendations or providing interpretation of the projection data, they are simply making it available for use. We should receive a draft of Atlas 15 this year, with a final version next year.

Monarch CCAA

Jon Janke noted that the Monarch is currently being considered for addition to the Federal Endangered Species List. There are two separate populations of Monarchs, the Eastern population that we have here in MN is less vulnerable than the Western population but is still considered to be vulnerable. Should the Monarch be added to the endangered species list, the biggest effect will see locally is with our vegetation management and restoration plans.

Rebecca Haug provided details on the Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for the Monarch Butterfly that encourages land managers (particularly those in the energy and transportation sectors) to adopt measures to create net conservation benefits for the monarch butterfly. Several states, including Texas, Colorado, and Iowa, have been participating in this effort for several years converting many of their rest areas and ROW sections to monarch habitat. Minnesota counties have started opting into this program with their highway departments dedicating around 5% of their ROW corridors to Monarch habitat by changing their mowing practices, invasive species work, and brush removal. Discussion of Anoka County participating in this effort is still in the very early stages and it has not yet been brought before the County Board. Anoka County has 40% of all threatened and endangers species in Minnesota, in talking with the DNR, there may be some potential for participation in this program to help offset some of the issues the County has been having with takings permits. There is a one-time application fee of \$8,000. Enrollment for the first year is estimated around \$9,000 and then ongoing costs for 2-25yrs that range from \$5,500 - \$6,000/year for monitoring and reporting. Benefits of the program include reduction in permitting uncertainty and the potential to incorporate benefits for the rusty patch bumble bee.

There was general discussion about the potential for this program to be incorporated into parks. Rebecca Haug clarified that this program is solely for ROW, transportation corridors, and utilities; it is not designed for parks.

Anoka County HMP – Floodplain

Erik Bye noted that the district has been working with Anoka County on the flood risk assessment for their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Once the plan is updated, the county will be making an interactive map available to the public. This map has brought up a larger discussion about the District's floodplain map which is currently not publicly available. The District has yet

to decide whether to allow Anoka County to use the floodplain model given this potential. If the county does not use the district model, they will be using the FEMA floodplain map.

MnDOT Transportation Research: Investigating Real Storms

Jon Janke explained that MnDOT has developed an extreme flood vulnerability tool to better assess the sustainability of their roadways, particularly bridge crossings. While our local resiliency and climate change adaptation efforts are slowly evolving, MnDOT is trying to find a more innovative and statistical approach to the effort. As a part of this work, MnDOT has reached out many metro organizations for any existing modeling data that they can compile into a database. The District provided its XP-SWMM model and has invited MnDOT to attend regular TAC meetings to get more involved in local planning efforts. Tim Himmer expressed his support for having MnDOT at future meetings.

4. Other Water Management Concerns

Commencement of Shallow Groundwater Study

Erik Bye shared that the District kicked off the shallow groundwater study with USGS last month in the hopes of better understanding chloride transportation within shallow groundwater. The deliverable for this project is a preliminary model which is anticipated to be done around June. After that USGS will help the District set up a shallow groundwater monitoring network which will help establish a long-term systematic approach to collecting shallow groundwater data.

The District is also working with the University of Minnesota on a similar study looking at chloride transport in groundwater. The District is one of several partners working with the U of Mn on this study. One new well will be installed in Blaine and four wells installed in Fridley. The report for this work is anticipated to be complete in the fall of 2026.

5. Announcements

Jon Janke gave a shout-out to Rebecca Haug for the MS4 training resource recently shared by Anoka County.

Tim Kelly announced that more conversations will be had at the March TAC meeting surrounding floodplain maps and the issue of floodplain management. Particularly as they relate to FEMA's efforts vs. the local needs.

Tim Kelly also asked that partners share any specific examples they may have of 401 or NPDES snags or delays that were a result of last-minute editions to permit requirements and can be documented as such.

All handouts, materials, and presentations for this meeting can be found on the TAC Resource Webpage: <https://www.cooncreekwd.org/tac/>