

Technical Advisory Committee

November 14th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

- Andover
 - Jason Law, Assistant City Engineer
 - Kameron Kytonen, Natural Resources Technician
- Anoka County Highways
 - Rebecca Haug, Environmental Project Manager
- Blaine
 - Megan Hedstrom, Water Resources Coordinator
- Coon Creek Watershed District
 - Tim Kelly, Administrator
 - Jon Janke, Director of Operations/Operations & Maintenance Coord.
 - Justine Dauphinais, Water Quality Coordinator
 - Erik Bye, Planning Coordinator
 - Jessica Lindemyer, Engagement Coordinator
 - Dawn Doering, Information Coordinator
 - Abbey Lee, Watershed Development Manager
 - Eileen Weigel, Senior Water Resource Engineer (Stantec)
- Coon Rapids
 - Tim Himmer, Public Works Director
 - Olivia Dorow Hovland, Sustainability Planner
- Ham Lake
 - Dave Krugler, City Engineer (RFC)
- Spring Lake Park
 - George Linngren, Public Works Director

Absent: Anoka Conservation District, Board of Water and Soil Resources, Columbus, and Fridley

1. Management Situation

Jon Janke provided the TAC with a brief update on recent weather and hydrology. Conditions have improved from Moderate Drought to Abnormally Dry. Creek levels are on the low end of average for the season.

Tim Kelly informed the TAC that a preliminary Draft WCA Rule has been posted on the BWSR Wetlands rulemaking page. Comments are due December 20th.

Tim Kelly shared that the DNR has announced its schedule for drinking water plan updates. Plans from 2016, 2017, 2018 should be updated in 2026, 2027, 2028 respectively. Erik Bye added that the DNR will be trying to group municipalities by region to streamline corresponding groundwater studies.

Rebecca Haug stated that the County has been meeting with the DNR about the Natural Heritage program and the Endangered and Threatened Species permit process, specifically how to streamline the process to reduce the impact on project timelines.

Megan Hedstrom added that Blaine has had similar meetings with the DNR related to threatened species permits holding up projects for up to a year. She also noted that Blaine has issued a notice to proceed with grading of phase one of the 105th project.

Dave Krugler added that Ham Lake has been in communication with Senator Michael Kruen about the issues they have been having with the Natural Heritage program and the Endangered and Threatened Species permit process.

Kameron Kytonen stated that Andover is in the process of updating city ordinances to meet the latest NPDES permit.

Jason Law added that Andover has wrapped up its underground contamination project.

2. Concerns

MS4 Status Check

Tim Kelly asked for any updates regarding MS4 audits.

Megan Hedstrom shared that Blaine had their MS4 audit meeting last week. The meeting went well with few surprises. However, the audit process was complicated due to the timeline overlapping with an internal data migration. The City had asked for the audit to be delayed until the migration was complete, but were only given one additional week.

Tim Himmer added that Coon Rapid's MS4 audit process was very similar and was conducted by the same MPCA staff member who did Blaine's audit.

There was general discussion about how frustrating the audit process can be.

Rebecca Haug shared that it appears the MPCA has become less stringent than they originally said they would be. These audits are acting as a training process for MPCA staff and as such they are being more lenient.

Floodplain Maps (HUC 8)

Erik Bye provided an update on the HUC 8 floodplain maps stating that Stantec is working on comment responses from the DNR. They will be meeting with the DNR next week to discuss next steps and will bring further information back to the TAC next month.

Other

Tim Kelly informed the TAC that he has had several conversations with out state folks about delayed permitting from state agencies. There is a lot of frustration surrounding undefined/unclear approval criteria. Tim asked the TAC for any additional examples they may be aware of:

- Erik Bye and Megan Hedstrom noted the Carlson McCain dewatering hold-ups
- Jon Janke noted the DNR Public Waters Work Permit and the lack of clarity regarding when it is required.
- Rebecca Haug noted that the County has had meetings with BWSR Conservationist, Michelle Jordan, regarding the same issue.
- Justine Dauphinais noted that other BWSR staff at the Water Resource Conference mentioned receiving similar complaints about the 401 process from west metro municipalities.

3. Briefs

Cost Share Program

Justine Dauphinais gave an overview of CCWD's cost share program including its purpose and history, as well as examples of funded projects. She then outlined the proposed changes for 2025 which included allocation of funds by categories, adjustments to the submittal deadlines, and changes to the scoring rubric.

Tim Himmer expressed his appreciation for the program and all the work Justine has put into it.

Joint Trainings

Jon Janke explained that the purpose of this item was to discuss potential opportunities for joint trainings. A lot of the required trainings have overlap between agencies and provide an opportunity for staff from different organizations to meet and discuss topics of shared relevance. An example of one such training would be the Floodplain 101 training provided by the DNR. While the idea of joint trainings sound good, we know that they take a fair amount of coordinated effort and want to make sure there is value in it before moving forward.

Rebecca Haug suggested Smart Salt Training. In person trainings are \$2,000 but allow for a lot of participants. An MS4 training may be more difficult to do jointly as each municipality would likely have questions very specific to their operations. A training related to the Endangered and Threatened Species permit process may also be a good option.

Municipal Insight Survey

Jessica Lindemyer reminded the TAC of the District's Municipal Insight Survey. The goal of the survey is to gain a better understanding of the needs, values, and priorities of our partners. The insight will help the District provide better support and more relevant resources.

4. Other Water Management Concerns

Tim Kelly informed the TAC that the CCWD Board of Managers officially adopted the new Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan on Monday, November 12th.

There was general discussion regarding changes to local councils after the recent election.

5. Announcements

Staff Changes

Dawn Doering is retiring from her position as Information Coordinator at CCWD after over 18 years of service. Her last day is December 13th. All TAC members are invited to join CCWD in celebrating Dawn's accomplishments on Thursday, December 5th at the Coon Creek office. An email invite will be sent out shortly.

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