

# Meeting Agenda



Lower Minnesota  
River East  
Watershed

ISG

## Advisory Committee

Project Name: Lower MN River East One Watershed One Plan

ISG Project Number: 27009

Date: December 20, 2023

Time: 10am-1pm

Invitees: Joe Mulcahy (Met Council), Barb Peichel (BWSR), Anne Sawyer (BWSR), Travis Hirman (MDA), Mark Wettlaufer (MDH), Carrie Raber (MDH), Abby Shea (MDH), David DePaz (DNR), Brittany Faust (MPCA), Amy Timm (MPCA), Joni Giese (Prior Lake Spring Lake WD), Vanessa Strong (Scott County/WMO), Melissa Bokman (Scott County/WMO), Meghan Darley (Scott SWCD), Troy Kuphal (Scott SWCD), Linda Loomis (Lower MN River WD), Brad Behrens (Rice County), Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD), Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD), Holly Bushman (Le Sueur County), Bailey Griffin (ISG), Sarah Boser (ISG), Paul Marston (ISG)

Meeting via Microsoft Teams: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

---

## INTRODUCTIONS

- Name
- Entity/Agency
- Favorite Holiday Tradition?

## PURPOSE + GOALS

- Review comments and changes based on internal Plan reviews

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

### Introductions

10AM/5 MINUTES

### Review Plan Comments

10:05AM/2 HOURS 25 MINUTES

#### Plan Review Comments

- Groundwater Targeting Criteria
- Implementation Table
- Education and Outreach
- Reporting

### Questions?

12:30PM/20 MINUTES

### Timeline Updates / Next Steps

12:50PM/10 MINUTES

Lower MN River East CWMP AC Review

Legend

Plan Version: October 18th, 2023 Draft

Follow up / Homework Necessary

SMSC Things to consider during 60-day review

Review once new version is completed

Comments Received: November 10th, 2023

Comments Incorporated: December 13th, 2023

Advisory Committee Meeting 12-20 discussion topics

Content Number	Page Number	Chapter	Section	Commenter	Comment	Preference or Required Change?	Responsible Party	Steering Team Response	ISG Response/Action	Date Completed
87	42	Chapter 1	Aquifer Vulnerability	Abby Shea - MDH	If changing dataset(s) as described above, this section will need to be re-worded to refer to data not already introduced. Even if not changing the datasets, it may be better to reframe anyway, as not all "high" areas are restricted, even outside of the climate, counties with <3% ag, and low vulnerability DWSMA exemptions. Suggested edit: "In their Groundwater Protection Rule, the MDA defines vulnerable groundwater areas as areas with coarse textured soils, shallow bedrock, or karst geology. The rule restricts nitrogen fertilizer application on cropland in the fall (after September 1) or on frozen soils in quarter-sections of land where 50% or more of the land is in a vulnerable groundwater area. This rule helps to protect drinking water from nitrate contamination, as nitrate from nitrogen fertilizers	Strong Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Suggestion was first to compare and contrast Aquifer Vulnerability and Pollution Sensitivity of Near Surface Materials layers/extent within the watershed. If there are minimal differences in where these areas exist; not worth updating the maps. If they vary greatly in their extent, AC should have a discussion on how to move forward. Wait to make this change.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting See comment #99 about data set	
84	42	Chapter 1	Aquifer Vulnerability	Abby Shea - MDH	If changing dataset(s) as described in the comment above, edit text in the first paragraph to accurately describe the dataset(s) [required change if changes are made to dataset(s)]. Happy to review or provide suggested text depending on action taken. Regardless of what datasets end up being used, change "soil" in "pollutants can move through the soil and into the groundwater" to "near surface	Depends on action taken-see comment	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Suggestion was first to compare and contrast Aquifer Vulnerability and Pollution Sensitivity of Near Surface Materials layers/extent within the watershed. If there are minimal differences in where these areas exist; not worth updating the maps.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting See comment #99 about data set	
85	42	Chapter 1	Aquifer Vulnerability	Abby Shea - MDH	If changing dataset(s) as described in the comment above, the title of this section should change to accurately reflect the contents. Potential new title could be something like "Groundwater Contamination Risk Factors".	Strong Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Suggestion was first to compare and contrast Aquifer Vulnerability and Pollution Sensitivity of Near Surface Materials layers/extent within the watershed. If there are minimal differences in where these areas exist; not worth updating the maps. If they vary greatly in their extent, AC should have a discussion on how to move forward. Wait to make this change.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting See comment #99 about data set	
99	43	Chapter 1	Figure 1.18	Abby Shea - MDH	with the currently show dataset (not recommended), rename to: "Water Table Aquifer Vulnerability and Fall Nitrogen Fertilizer Application Restriction Areas". If changing to the recommended	Required	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Make changes and update title to simpler/all encompassing.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting Title update - need to update the data set	
170	86	Chapter 3	Arsenic	Abby Shea - MDH	While it is difficult (at times nearly impossible) to take preventative measures for the presence of arsenic in groundwater, there are measures to be taken to prevent <i>exposure</i> to arsenic, including testing and education on the effects of arsenic on health. While new wells drilled since 2008 are required to be tested for arsenic, there is a significant data gap for wells constructed prior to 2008. Education on the importance of testing is needed. Furthermore, even when well owners do test for arsenic (or it is tested for as part of drilling a new well since 2008) and the level is close to or exceeds the MCL of 10 ug/L, they are often not taking any action to reduce their exposure (MDH 2016 study referenced in an earlier comment). Additionally, more education is needed around the health effects of arsenic even at levels below the MCL - the EPA has set a goal ("MCLG") of 0 ug/L for arsenic. I believe arsenic is a significant enough issue to call out in its own goal under either GW issue statement. Arsenic stats for the planning area: Le Sueur County - of 399 wells drilled since 2008, 53.4% had levels >2 ug/L and 13% had levels >10 ug/L; Scott County - of 939 wells, 47.6% had levels >2 ug/L and 13.4% had levels >10 ug/L; Rice County - of 474 wells, 37.1% had levels >2 ug/L and 7% had levels >10 ug/L. Resource: <a href="https://mndatamaps.web.health.state.mn.us/interactive/wells.html">https://mndatamaps.web.health.state.mn.us/interactive/wells.html</a> .	Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. SC agreed that the issue statement was misleading in referencing both naturally occurring and human introduced pollutants. After some discussion, the SC agreed that adding a Goal C for arsenic is a good idea. We all do have concerns about arsenic concentrations. Would like Goal C to have similar language to the Chloride Surface Water Quality Goal. Ex: Develop and implement an arsenic campaign for Rice, Le Sueur, and Scott County.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting	

**Lower MN River East CWMP AC Review**

Legend

Plan Version: October 18th, 2023 Draft

Follow up / Homework Necessary

SMSC Things to consider during 60-day review

Review once new version is completed

Comments Received: November 10th, 2023

Comments Incorporated: December 13th, 2023

Advisory Committee Meeting 12-20 discussion topics

Content Number	Page Number	Chapter	Section	Commenter	Comment	Preference or Required Change?	Responsible Party	Steering Team Response	ISG Response/Action	Date Completed
183	89	Chapter 3		BWSR - BP	Assume the groundwater priority areas include all of the karst areas shown in Figure 1.17? Should this be explained more that this included in the aquifer vulnerability rating (Figure 3.5)?	Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as a subcommittee of Steering Team during the informal review process. Update narrative to discuss if karst areas included as part of aquifer vulnerability figure. Ac discussion.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting	
211	103	Chapter 4	Groundwater	Abby Shea - MDH SWP	Aquifer vulnerability ratings needs to be more specific. If not making any changes to targeting data (see comments regarding Chapter 3), specify <i>water table</i> aquifer vulnerability. If the recommended changes are made, change this bullet point to pollution sensitivity of near surface materials.	Required	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Agree this make appropriate changes depending on decision from AC for figure.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting	
230	106	Chapter 4		BWSR - BP	Need to be clear about what units the timeframe numbers are referring to.	required	Advisory Committee	Discussed as a subcommittee of Steering Team during the informal review process. Units need to be updated in implementation table.	AC Discussion Topic - Implementation Table Added units to each timeframe to simplify tracking	12/5/2023
259	118		ed & outreach	M Darley - Scott SW	general concern that the allotment to education is too low	need to discuss at	Advisory Committee	Discuss as AC.	AC Discussion Topic - Education and Outreach	
272	128	Chapter 5	table	BWSR - BP	infiltration bmps seem like they would fit the impaired and unimpaired lakes and streams goals not groundwater	Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as a subcommittee of Steering Team during the informal review process. Agreed to update table, should have discussion with AC to make sure table is accurate. Multiple goals can be associated with each topic.	AC Discussion Topic - Education and Outreach	
356	155	Chapter 6	reporting	BWSR - BP	Did you decide to put together a state of the watershed report?	SC discussion	Advisory Committee	Discussed as a subcommittee of Steering Team during the informal review process. Ask AC.	AC discussion Topic - Reporting	
376	106-107		Chapter 4, Implementation Schedules, Table 4.1	Holly B- Le Sueur County	Add metrics for timeframe columns.		Advisory Committee	Discussed as a subcommittee of Steering Team during the informal review process. Make changes. Discuss at AC meeting about implementation table updates/metrics.	AC Discussion Topic - Implementation Table See full comment list. Multiple other comments on this topic	
387	106-118	Chapter 4	Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4	Joe M Met Council	Asterisk in Estimated Cost column title: *Outside funding not needed ? Not sure what this means here		Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Update footnote and expand on what outside funding not needed means.	AC discussion topic - Implementation Table  Definition was added under estimated cost column definition. "An asterisk (*) was noted in the estimated cost column if the implementation table is fully supported by local funding and additional outside funding through WBIF or other grants is not necessary." No asterisks were included in the table. ST to determine where if any are needed.	

Lower MN River East CWMP AC Review

Legend

Plan Version: October 18th, 2023 Draft

Follow up / Homework Necessary

SMSC Things to consider during 60-day review

Review once new version is completed

Comments Received: November 10th, 2023

Comments Incorporated: December 13th, 2023

Advisory Committee Meeting 12-20 discussion topics

Content Number	Page Number	Chapter	Section	Commenter	Comment	Preference or Required Change?	Responsible Party	Steering Team Response	ISG Response/Action	Date Completed
390	110-112	Chapter 4	Table 4.2	BWSR - BP	Consider being consistent with Table 4.1 as those timeframe columns use outputs not dollar amounts	Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Make changes.  ST would like to update the timeframe columns in the tables to include only outputs of each activity (# of practices/projects and/or load reductions). We decided that is a better way to measure progress instead of budgeted amounts. The estimates are still valuable, not sure how we could keep those?	AC discussion topic - Implementation table  Will need verification on output / widgets for updating table from \$\$	
409	42-43	Chapter 1	Aquifer Vulnerability and Figure 1.18	Abby Shea - MDH SWP	It is critical that the text on page 42 and the figure on page 43 accurately reflect the data used - this is <i>water table</i> aquifer vulnerability, specifically. There is no blanket aquifer vulnerability as that would require a third dimension to see with all of the different layered aquifers that make up local geology. I don't believe this is the best dataset to use for the purposes of setting the stage for groundwater. In MDH's opinion, a better dataset to use would be the Pollution Sensitivity of Near-Surface Materials to show the potential for actions on land to impact groundwater. Mapping this data could assist in making connections between surface water and groundwater as well and this dataset is more detailed than the water table aquifer vulnerability dataset, distinguishing critical features like karst from the general "high" category. The color scheme also better displays the risk (blue dulls the risk). Another plus to switching to this dataset is less confusion between pollution sensitivity (vs water table aquifer vulnerability) and DWSMA vulnerability. Additionally, as you note on page 40, most wells in the planning area draw water from deeper aquifers. The distinction between the surface/water table aquifers and the deeper aquifers will be critical in implementation. Consider adding another figure showing the dataset "Geologic Sensitivity at Wells". This data is included in the WHAF package and can be accessed here: <a href="https://gisdata.mn.gov/dataset/water-graps-whaf">https://gisdata.mn.gov/dataset/water-graps-whaf</a> . *While this change is a strong recommendation/preference, if choosing to stick with the water table aquifer vulnerability dataset, proper naming of the data is a required change.	Depends on action taken-see comment	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Suggestion was first to compare and contrast Aquifer Vulnerability and Pollution Sensitivity of Near Surface Materials layers/extent within the watershed. If there are minimal differences in where these areas exist; not worth updating the maps. If they vary greatly in their extent, AC should have a discussion on how to move forward. Wait to make this change.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting	
419	85, 12	Chapter 3	Issue Statement #3 (Table 0.3 in Exec Summary)	Abby Shea - MDH S	This issue statement includes both naturally-occurring and human-introduced pollutants, yet the goals do not address any naturally-occurring contaminants like arsenic (see next comment for more on arsenic). A way to add this in could be with Goal B addressing the non-point and human-introduced contamination sources (failing SSTS and unused, unsealed wells), and then a new Goal C for naturally-occurring sources. Example Goal C: "Minimize exposure to groundwater source contamination of arsenic by providing private well sampling to X% if private well users in the watershed (or priority areas)". Other potential goals and strategies addressed in next comment. If the group does not want to add a goal for arsenic or other naturally-occurring contaminant, the issue statement should be revised to only include human-introduced pollutants. A brief explanation for the evolution of the issue statement can be provided earlier in the plan document.	Strong Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. SC agreed that the issue statement was misleading in referencing both naturally occurring and human introduced pollutants. After some discussion, the SC agreed that adding a Goal C for arsenic is a good idea. We all do have concerns about arsenic concentrations. Would like Goal C to have similar language to the Chloride Surface Water Quality Goal. Ex: Develop and implement an arsenic campaign for Rice, Le Sueur, and Scott County.	AC discussion topic - groundwater targeting	

Lower MN River East CWMP AC Review

Legend

Plan Version: October 18th, 2023 Draft

Follow up / Homework Necessary

SMSC Things to consider during 60-day review

Review once new version is completed

Comments Received: November 10th, 2023

Comments Incorporated: December 13th, 2023

Advisory Committee Meeting 12-20 discussion topics

Content Number	Page Number	Chapter	Section	Commenter	Comment	Preference or Required Change?	Responsible Party	Steering Team Response	ISG Response/Action	Date Completed
424	88-89	Chapter 3	High Vulnerability Ranking Aquifers and Figure 3.5	Abby Shea - MDH SWP	from Chapter 1, it needs to be specified what aquifers you are talking about/referring to. The dataset used is <i>water table</i> aquifer vulnerability, specifically. There is no blanket aquifer vulnerability as that would require a third dimension to see with all of the different layered aquifers that make up local geology. I don't believe this is the best dataset to use for determining priority areas for implementation. In MDH's opinion, a better dataset to use would be the Pollution Sensitivity of Near-Surface Materials to show where actions on land have the greatest potential to impact groundwater. Utilizing this data could also assist in making connections between surface water and groundwater, and this dataset is more detailed than the water table aquifer vulnerability dataset, distinguishing critical features like karst from the general "high" category. The color scheme also better displays the risk (blue dulls the risk). Another plus to switching to this dataset is less confusion between pollution sensitivity (vs water table aquifer vulnerability) and DWSMA vulnerability. For this figure in particular/to highlight areas to target, the categories of moderate, low, very low, and ultra low could be omitted for simplicity. Alternatively, consider including the entire dataset to display areas of low sensitivity to target well sealing (or consider a separate figure for targeting well sealing - see additional comment on this). This more detailed dataset, combined with some other visualization concerns I will mention in another comment, may result in simply too much data to show in one figure. If the group would like assistance with determining how to split into two figures or to see if there's a way to get all of this in one, please reach out to MDH SWP. If no changes to the data are made and the <i>water table</i> aquifer vulnerability dataset	Strong Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Suggestion was first to compare and contrast Aquifer Vulnerability and Pollution Sensitivity of Near Surface Materials layers/extent within the watershed. If there are minimal differences in where these areas exist; not worth updating the maps. If they vary greatly in their extent, AC should have a discussion on how to move forward. Wait to make this change.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting	
425	88-89	Chapter 3	DWSMAs and Figure 3.5	Abby Shea - MDH SWP	The DWSMAs that are shown in Figure 3.5 are only the municipal DWSMAs that have been delineated in the Planning Area. Consider adding in other DWSMAs that are available for non-municipal public water supply systems. If choosing to stick with only the municipal DWSMAs, clarify that in the text on pg 88. Examples: "Municipal DWSMAs with high and moderate..." or "DWSMAs for municipal water systems with high or moderate..." or similar. After looking at the data, it appears as though there may only be 1 non-municipal DWSMA in the planning area that is high or moderate vulnerability. However, if interested in including non-municipal DWSMAs, contact MDH SWP and we can be sure the data files are up to date - if there are more, we can get you the data. Resource: <a href="https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/swp/maps/index.htm">https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/swp/maps/index.htm</a> (bottom of page).	Preference	Advisory Committee	Discussed as at Steering Committee meeting reviewing informal comments. Need more information on where nonmunicipal DWSMA is located before we could make a decision on whether or not to include with figure.	AC Discussion Topic - Groundwater Targeting	
441	Chapter 4	Chapter 4	all tables	BWSR - BP	Estimated cost does not seem to be meeting Version 2.1 1W1P Plan Content requirements (page 7) - "The schedule must clearly identify the actions the planning partners will undertake with available local funds versus the actions that will be implemented only if other sources of funds become available". I note the asterisk and footnote but no rows are actually marked.	required	Advisory Committee	Discussed as a subcommittee of Steering Team. Need to discuss at AC meeting.	AC discussion discussion - Implementation Table	
447	Entire report	Entire report		BWSR - BP	May want to clarify how the implementation actions in the Plan will benefit fish communities (e.g., tying sediment reductions to fish habitat and streams) - (page 4 of 1W1P Plan Content Requirements, version 2.1)	required	Advisory Committee	AC discussion. Add narrative.	AC discussion discussion - Implementation Table	
446	Entire report	Entire report		BWSR - BP	Please clarify how the partnership will promote groundwater recharge with implementation activities (page 3 of 1W1P Plan Content Requirements, version 2.1)	required	Advisory Committee	AC discussion. Add narrative.	AC discussion discussion - Implementation Table	