

Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2023

Attendees at meeting: Holly Bushman (Le Sueur County), Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD) Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD), Meghan Darley (Scott SWCD), Troy Kuphal (Scott SWCD), Melissa Bokman-Ermer (Scott County/WMO), and Linda Loomis (LMRWD)

Welcome & Review Agenda

- The Lower Minnesota River East Meeting was held on April 19, 2023. The meeting was held virtually. Holly briefly went over the agenda. The main goals of the meeting were to discuss creation of subcommittees/groups, formatting of the implementation table, continue conversations about existing programs, regulations, and funding, continue conversations about Organizational Arrangement of the partnership, and lastly discuss the agenda/discussions items for the Policy Committee meeting tomorrow.

Recap Last Meeting

- The steering team continued conversations and discussions about measurable goals. Additionally, the steering team started to discuss how we wanted the implementation table to look, what existing programs, regulations, and funding we have for each LGU, and organizational arrangement.

Advisory Committee Creation of Subcommittees or Subgroups

- Holly wanted to ask the steering team how they feel about creating subcommittees or subgroups. This was something that we had discussed awhile back. Holly's thought was during development of implementation activities it would be a good time to bring in others.
 - Specifically, she was thinking municipalities and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community.
 - All are limited on capacity, but thought they could contribute to a few meetings to discuss implementation activities.
 - The steering team thought make it as simple as possible in having these additional partners participate.
 - Holly stated she will send out an email to gauge interest and then talk with ISG on how and when we want to include them during the next steps of the planning process.

Implementation Table Setup

- Holly developed an excel table for the steering team to review and provide feedback on before this meeting.
 - The table included information that was based off of the discussions we had at the March meeting.
 - Most of the information that was included referenced the formatting of the table.
- The group exercise was to go through each line item of the table and discuss whether the steering team would or would not like to include as part of the table.
 - The steering team agreed that they would like the 10 year measurable goal to be listed within the table and easily visible.
 - The steering team was split about how to include the budget within the table (either annually or biannually).
 - Mike made the point that the WBIF funds are based on a 2 year cycle and that is why he selected biannually.
 - Melissa stated that budgets are developed annually and that is why she selected annually.
 - There was no strong feelings either way, and the steering team would like to see both options presented.
 - Another item that came up was indicating what type of funding would be utilized for each activity.
 - Differentiate between 1W1P WBIF funds and other funding sources.
 - The next topic the steering team discussed was local priorities. These are not priorities that are included within the plan; however, local priorities do provide additional information on where other projects and priorities are within the watershed.
 - The steering team decided that in order to keep the table simple, leave the local priorities out. However, we would still like to have the local priorities mentioned in narrative form.
 - Melissa suggested referencing other plans and including links to those plans.
 - We then moved onto figuring out what to list first within the implementation table. Should the location of the activity or the activity be listed first?
 - The steering team was split about this, and had no strong preferences either way. We will wait to see what ISG develops.
 - Holly asked the steering team if we wanted to include the subwatershed as part of the location?

- Mike and Melissa stated that since we often work on subwatershed scales and have many of the priorities listed as a subwatershed scale this would be important.
 - The steering team then discussed how we want to organize the table? Should these activities be listed by issue statements, type of practices/projects, locations, etc.?
 - We agreed that organizing the table by practice made the most sense.
- Lastly, Holly wanted to share a few different examples of tables with the steering team. Most of the examples were from different states, but she did also share an example of the Rum plan.
 - The steering team agreed the Rum plan was more in align with our goals of keeping the table simple and including the items we want.
 - There was an example of a plan that included milestones every three years (reduction, # or practices, etc.) for project implementation.
 - The steering team thought this was a really good idea. Keeps us accountable and stay on track to getting activities completed.
 - Additionally, this would be helpful with our 5-year check in.
 - We weren't exactly sure where to include this, but will work with ISG.
 - Troy suggested included milestones for obtaining funding to complete these projects as well.

Continue Discussion with Existing Programs and Funding Discussion

- Holly developed excel spreadsheets for the steering team to fill out in regards to their existing programs, regulations, and funding programs they have.
 - This will help us identify where we can grow as a partnership and how we can share existing resources.
- The equipment spreadsheet had one addition and that was a plot master for Scott SWCD.
- The steering team went over the existing programs and regulations spreadsheets next.
 - For regulations, we added a buffer ordinance, steep slope rule, high value resource rule, and floodplain/drainage alteration rule.
 - For programs, we added pollinator to Rice SWCD. Additionally, Scott County/WMO stated they would add in information for Operation and Maintenance programs. Lastly, we discussed some education and outreach programs that the Lower Minnesota River WD, Scott County/WMO and Scott SWCD works with (educator mini grant and TA program).
- Holly will send these tables to ISG to incorporate into the plan.

Policy Committee April Meeting Agenda

- Holly wanted to go over the planned agenda for the policy committee meeting tomorrow.
 - ISG had revised the Habitat Restoration & Protection priority areas based off of comments received from the Advisory Committee and Policy Committee. We will be requesting approval of these areas.
 - The first “rough draft” of measurable goals will also be shared with the policy committee. While these goals are not finalized, the steering team would like guidance that we are on the right track with developing our measurable goals.
 - Most of the metrics have not been included with the goals yet because we are waiting on modeling from ISG.
 - The last item that will be discussed is continuing the organizational arrangement conversation. Holly developed a more robust powerpoint to help explain differences between partnerships. Additionally, she developed a questions to consider handout for the policy committee.

Updates & Next Steps

- Updates
 - Meghan wanted to let the steering team know that we had only budgeted 10 meetings for ISG and they have already lead 6 of the 10 meetings. We might have to dip into our contingency funds to cover costs of additional meetings.
 - She wanted to make sure that was okay with the steering team.
 - Also, she suggested making some of the advisory committee meetings a bit longer if that means we can make up some ground and have less meetings.
 - The steering team was supportive of this. Additionally, we suggested a few different ways to gain some more time during the meetings (no icebreakers and keep summary review short).
- The next steering team meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 17th** from **1:30pm-3:00pm**.
- The next policy committee meeting will be held **Thursday, June 22nd** or **Thursday, July 20th** from **3:00pm-5:00pm**.
- Next Advisory Committee Meeting will be held either **Wednesday, May 17th** **10:00am-1:00pm**.