



## **Citizen Advisory Committee March 19, 2013 Meeting Notes**

### **Present**

Ozzie Arndt, Mark Bosacker, Pat Duncanson, Carl Guse, Mark Jenzen, Mark Krosch, Harold Loeffler, Greg Mikkelson, Kevin Sargent, Leon Schoenrock, Brian Loeffler, Scott Lynch, David Ward, Earl Ziegler, Allan Lynch, Paul Davis, Larry Gunderson, Brooke Hacker, Leo Getsfried, Kim Musser, Rick Moore, Patrick Moore

### **Overview**

The third Le Sueur River Watershed Network Citizen Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at Pemberton's Main Street Plaza. Twenty-two people attended from across the watershed. After introductions, the group heard a presentation about County Ditch 57 by Chuck Brandel from I&S Group and CAC member Pat Duncanson. Spurred by the engaging tile model demonstration that CAC member Leon Schoenrock gave at the last meeting, Paul Davis from MPCA provided another tile demonstration model that prompted another great discussion from the group.

The rest of the meeting was focused on revisiting the brainstormed list of suggested recommendations from the first day the CAC met. The group further refined the list and discussed what else should be included. A draft list of recommendations will be sent out to the group so they can further discuss and rank them at the next meeting.

### **Agenda**

- 7:00 Introductions /Announcements: Waseca County Farmer Forum
- 7:15 County Ditch 57 – Pat Duncanson (CAC) & Chuck Brandel (I&S Group)
- 7:40 Hydrology Discussion Continued – Paul Davis, MPCA & Leo Getsfried, MDNR
- 8:00 Break
- 8:10 Revisit CAC Brainstorming List/ Work on Recommendations
- 8:50 Arrange Next Meeting
- 9:00 Adjourn

### **Announcements**

Waseca County Farmer Forum on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at FarmAmerica. For more information:  
<http://www.co.waseca.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/201>

### **County Ditch 57**

Chuck Brandel ([I&S Group](#)) and CAC member Pat Duncanson provided an overview of the County Ditch 57 project. This large project addresses a 6,000 acre ditch system located near the City of Mapleton. It drains to the Big Cobb. The ditch system was an example of one of the many out-of-date systems across southern Minnesota. The goal was to increase drainage capacity and replace deteriorating portions of the system. The watershed includes runoff from agricultural as well as urban sources.

Major project components include: a surge basin that can hold a 100 year event, outlet weir and water storage area, a two-stage ditch, In-ditch sediment trap, and native grass buffers. The key was to balance

drainage and water quality improvements. The group discussed cost comparison of the cost-effective \$15,000 in-ditch sediment trap/rate reduction weir compared to the more costly surge basin (\$150,000).

The project also includes nine monitoring stations throughout the system that will record flow and water quality data along with photographs.

Total project budget totalled \$1.3 million, with \$485,000 paid by [LCCMR](#), the balance was paid by ditch system landowners. Only 6 acres were taken out of production and 6,000 acres are benefitting. This is a community-based water quality and treatment demonstration project in which landowners, local government, and state agencies have developed a watershed approach to improving water quality and replacing outdated drainage systems (I&S). Chuck commented that it took a lot of meetings and coordination and persistence for this project to come to fruition.

A recent article in Corn and Soybean Digest provides additional information about the project:  
<http://cornandsoybeandigest.com/print/conservation/upstream-downstream-drainage-issues>  
<http://www.is-grp.com/documents/portfolio/CD%2057%20Insert.pdf>

Patrick updated the group on Faribault County's efforts to address capacity problems with ditch system meetings. Like CD57, they are focusing on managing the entire system, getting all the upstream and downstream landowners together to understand the system rather than making piecemeal improvements.

### **Hydrology Discussion Continued**

Paul Davis from MPCA provided another tile demonstration model spurred by curiosity from Leon Schoenrock's model at the last meeting. Paul was interested in trying to show the relationships between tile lines and the water table and the connections between removing this water and the potential for stream erosion.

Everyone recognized that the drainage system is very complex and that there are many variables and local conditions (soil profile, time of year etc.). Paul referred to studies from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's [Discovery Farms](#) Highway 90 Project where tile-drained fields are monitored and show that after a rain event there is almost immediate response with tile flow. This removal of "excess water" to get to field capacity for production, in a short time frame, is where the questions of flow and streambank erosion come into play. Researchers are seeing these effects, especially in the spring when the soils are frozen or wet and there aren't plants to uptake moisture. When soils are nearly saturated, additional precipitation gets the tile lines flowing in a flashy, quick burst and can increase surface runoff. The question is: how can we slow it down? At [Red Top Farms](#) researchers experimented with alfalfa and corn rotation. When alfalfa was planted there was minimal to no flow coming from the tile system even after planting corn the following season when the alfalfa root system was still relatively intact. CAC members commented that cover crops may not be do-able in this area. A few farmers are experimenting

### **Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance –Scorecard**

A short video that details the [Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance's](#) Local Resource Management Scorecard was shown. The scorecard identifies county specific conservation efforts across the Minnesota River Basin. For more information about the Scorecard:

<http://www.lakepepinlegacyalliance.org/scorecard-2/>

### **CAC Brainstorming - Potential Recommendations**

We looked at the previous brainstorming list from the first CAC meeting. We revisited the water plan and SWCD priorities and Minnesota River CAC recommendations that were passed out at the last meeting. The following are potential recommendations from our brainstorming session. For the next meeting, members will discuss, rank and further refine this list.

- Less Red Tape
- More partnerships (City/Landowner/Multiple Agencies)
- More experiments & demonstrations with temporary water retention/storage
- More strategic buffers (with native grasses)
- More closed Intakes (where appropriate/ urban & rural)
- More communication/education in the watershed about these Issues
- More ravine stabilization
- More streambank erosion control (stabilization)
- Improved stormwater management
- More ditch (or sub-watershed) level meetings between engineers/SWCD's and landowners
- Create more in ditch storage (research & demonstrate flow rate structures)
- More terraces/grass waterways
- Consider and develop strategies to fund stream maintenance/tree removal
- More access to the river
- Make public more aware of unique geologic elevation/hydrologic features of the watershed

### **Questions & Comments**

How long do we need to hold back waters for flood control? Leo responded that it depends on local conditions but holding back a few days to a couple of weeks could be helpful in the upper watershed.

Can existing lakes be considered for potential future storage? Depends on many factors such as lake designations (e.g waterfowl production lake)

#### *Buffers*

Blue Earth County has impressive buffer compliance (95%?). A comment arose that while they understand habitat benefits of buffers, they wondered if a more strategic effort for buffers is worth considering.

#### *Rock inlets*

A debate arose about rock inlets and their effectiveness.

#### *Terraces*

Another way to retain water storage option might be use of terraces, to slow down water.

#### *Terrain Challenges*

Terrain and dramatic elevation change poses special challenges for this watershed.

### **Next Meeting**

Tuesday April 9

Pemberton Main Street Plaza